A BI-PARADIGMATIC ANALYSIS OF ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

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Abstract

Despite culture being a core focus of the study of organisations for over 30 years, the concept is marked by disagreement. The literature on culture tends to present a series of dualisms with each side displaying different meta-theoretical assumptions. Notwithstanding these differences the characterisations of culture are fundamentally the same. For those who view culture as 'corporate', culture is a shared set of values, beliefs and attitudes devised and disseminated by management. For those who view culture as 'organisational', culture is a more or less shared set of values, beliefs and attitudes produced through social construction. The production of these discrete sets of values implies that, from either perspective, culture is a normative structure. The only difference being in the derivation of that structure.

This normative structure means that, from the perspective of corporate culture, the ways in which people think and act are guided by the meta-theoretical assumptions which found the functionalist paradigm. In contrast, from the perspective of organisational culture, the ways in which people think and act are guided by the meta-theoretical assumptions which found the interpretive paradigm.

This thesis argues that the framing effect of these meta-theoretical assumptions strongly influences research outcomes. This is demonstrated through a bi-paradigmatic analysis of a single organisation's culture. The bi-paradigmatic approach is produced by sets of research methods consistent with the functionalist and the interpretive paradigms. The analysis generates two distinctive contributions. First a deeper understanding of how research outcomes are shaped by paradigmatic assumptions. Second a re-conceptualisation of organisational culture. Here the move away from a mono-method approach reveals contradictory views of culture. Rather than a unitary set of values, attitudes and beliefs culture is seen as consisting of disparate value sets in need of reconciliation. Culture is re-conceptualised as the rubric which guides that reconciliation.
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Throughout this thesis, the term “Food Co” has been used to denote the anonymous organisation studied.
Introduction

The 1970's saw the emergence of the concept of culture as a key focus within the study of organisations. Many questioned the motives behind the transfer of the concept; why culture had “strayed from its initial use in anthropology” (Bate, 1994: 5). Varied and sometimes conflicting reasons were suggested for this transfer. Dahler-Larsen (1994) argues that the transfer of the concept was motivated two issues. First, by the sub-optimal performance of Western organisations. Here, the drive to improve performance in global markets required a new mode of organisational control. This control was one in which “sentiment and emotion” (Axtell-Ray, 1984: 294) engaged the workforce with the values and beliefs of the “dominant elite” (Ibid). Second, Dahler-Larsen (1994) notes that the disintegration of any societal sense of community promoted significant changes to the work ethic. Individualistic motives were seen to supersede those of the collective good, and work eventually became “potentially meaningless” (Ibid: 5). At a fundamental level, the organisation simply replaced the “autonomous” with the “shared” (Ibid: 14). At a deeper level, those within this situation need to source a new locus of value. People are seen to be “responding to a societal crisis by turning inwards towards the company as a sacred realm” (Ibid). Bowles (1989) concurs with the idea that the transferred concept of culture had a substitutive role. However, his assertion is that, it was specifically the demise of the role of the church in society, which motivated people to look to the work organisation to provide a unified and cohesive sense of meaning.

In the difference between the two issues we see the emergence of a dichotomy. The locations of culture within the study of organisations appealed to two distinctive audiences, managerialist and academic. From the perspective of a managerialist audience, culture offered a “utopian ideal” (Bate 1994: 63), a means of exerting “a powerful effect on individuals and performance” (Kotter and Heskett, 1992: 9) and a mechanism by which managers could exact “a major impact on the success of the business” (Deal and Kennedy, 1982: 9). However, Parker (2000) notes how “much of the writing is theoretically suspect” (p. 10). Indeed, Axtell-Ray draws on the superficial nature of such conceptualisations by noting that managerialist views are simply a way of degenerating the “ought” (p. 290) into the “taught” (Ibid). On the other side of the

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1 Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992) disagree, asserting that to the transfer of issues of societal significance to the concept of culture is tantamount to “anthropological kitsch” (p. 333).
dichotomy, the academic audience perceived culture as "an academic paradigm and mode of analysis" (Bate, 1994: 55); as offering the potential produce "a theory and a method for displaying the complexity of an interpretive system" (Barley, 1983: 394) and as being "a way of thinking about social reality" (Alvesson, 1993: 2).

Today, this dichotomy prevails and there is an opportunity to question why, despite the concept of culture being presented and represented in various guises, does the literature remain "most unreflexive about its core assumptions" (Parker, 2000: 1). In the early part of this thesis I review this literature. What we will see is the way in which the authorial position influences the ways in which culture is characterised. Authors perceiving culture as a managerialist commodity, classify the concept in different ways²; as corporate, as a variable or as homogeneous. Each of these invokes functionalist underpinnings to position a view in which human behaviours, attitudes and beliefs are controlled at the behest of the corporate. Authors adopting an academic position by perceiving culture as organisational, as a metaphor for organisation or as heterogeneous³, imply that human behaviours, attitudes and beliefs are the product of social construction. Both managerialist and academic approaches are problematic. These oppositional positions constrain thinking. Rather than debate, what emerges is literature in defence of these either/or characterisations⁴. Fundamental to this problem is the need for both managerialist and academic characterisations to portray culture as an enduring set of features. Even where these portrayals are based on disparate metatheoretical assumptions, this characterisation of culture is the same. This characterisation of culture is constructed as a more or less rational composite of values, attitudes and beliefs. The contention is not about whether values, attitudes and beliefs have any relationship to culture. The contention is simply about how these values, attitudes and beliefs are derived.

It is my view, therefore, that by recognising the link between the characterisation of culture and the authorial motives for writing about the concept, the fundamentally paradigmatic nature of much writing on culture is revealed. In other words, the metatheoretical assumptions on which we premise our views of society produces both our views of culture and the mechanisms that we use to reify those views. Burrell and

² These will be discussed in depth later in this thesis.
³ These classifications will likewise be discussed in depth later in this thesis.
⁴ Martin, 1992; Parker, 2000 and Martin, 2002 being notable exceptions.
Morgan (1979) note the impact of these meta-theoretical frameworks, commenting that “To be located in a paradigm is to view the world in a particular way” (p. 24). Culture, thus considered, moves substantially away from being a neatly bounded construct. Instead, it is seen as a concept in which personal meta-theoretical assumptions frame both the views of culture and the ways in which we make sense of those views. This produces empirical implications. In the view of this thesis, research on culture needs to recognise the meta-theoretical assumptions which frame methods; and recognise the ways in which those methods privilege a particular view of culture.

To better understand the paradigmatic nature of culture it is necessary to review the literature on paradigms. I start within the works of Thomas Kuhn (1962/1970) and Burrell and Morgan (1979). Thomas Kuhn is credited with giving the concept of paradigms popular currency (Bird, 2003). Burrell and Morgan, building on Kuhn’s treatise, produce a heuristic device through which paradigm affiliations can be recognised. Although both works contain a number of contradictions and there are marked differences between their theses, a consistent theme emerges. The ways in which these authors define their views on paradigms produces a particular view of the world. What we will see is how language frames the view of the world and is therefore reflective of the meta-theoretical assumptions which underpin writing. We see the way in which a meta-paradigm guides our conceptualisation of paradigms. This issue is the basis from which I consider how language frames the world view by shaping the paradigm. Having defined what the paradigm is, the use of language imputes a specific structure. By constituting paradigms as having unique languages and unique taxonomic structures, the authorial perspective determines the extent to which those immersed in the paradigm are able to communicate with those immersed in alternative paradigms. As such, I will consider how the use of language privileges a specific position within the commensurability versus incommensurability debate.

I have drawn together two themes. By considering the fundamentally paradigmatic nature of culture and the ways in which paradigms produce a particular view of the world, two research questions emerge:

- How does the use of paradigm specific research methods shape the view of culture?
- Can the use of bi-paradigmatic research challenge the traditional views of culture?

Whose work we will consider later in this thesis.

These research questions form the basis for this thesis. In answering these questions I use methodological division as a means of commenting on the relationship between culture as it is viewed and the meta-theoretical assumptions which underpin the process of viewing. Here, a methodological divide is created by using two distinct paradigm lenses through which to view the culture of a single organisation. By applying “highly divergent” (Martin, 2002: 10) methodologies, I surface a range of manifestations of culture. A bi-paradigmatic approach was chosen to support a greater depth of analysis than would have been possible using four paradigm specific lenses. By viewing culture through two lenses I sought to create a depth of focus which may have been compromised by the use of four lenses. Moreover, by using different paradigm lenses I hoped to be able to generate rich comments on the views of culture in Food Co., and to draw on some of the emergent themes to challenge the traditional conceptualisations of culture. Here, I intend to offer different insights into the conceptualisation of culture, insights which would direct academic thinking away from the either/or positions discussed previously.

In deciding on an empirical focus for this research, the selection of a host organisation was required. Food Co was chosen for a number of reasons. First, Food Co is a well established company which has been located in Cenchester since the 1880s. Despite major changes throughout its business history, it was anticipated that the culture would be well established. Second, because the research sought to consider culture from different levels within the organisation, it was important to select a company with a strongly hierarchical structure. Third, the company had to be supportive of University driven research, in particular because my research would have resource implications for the company. Food Co was therefore chosen.

Having selected Food Co as the location for the research, the research methodology was then devised. Although the research used a bi-paradigmatic approach, it took a steer from the literature on multi-paradigm research. The literature considering multi-paradigm research is according to Lewis (1999) “ambiguous and fragmented” (p. 2). To try and address this ambiguity whilst moving away from “excessive theoretical compartmentalism” (Astley and Van de Ven, 1983: 1) the methodology used within this thesis has followed a distinctive approach. It is acknowledged that paradigms may be
either conscious or sub-conscious ascriptions to a particular worldview. As such the research is structured to consider both conscious and sub-conscious manifestations. To do this the 'applied paradigm' methodology purposely applies paradigm specific lenses, through which one could anticipate seeing paradigm specific results. Here, functionalist and interpretive (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) methods are chosen as the lenses through which to assess the culture in Food Co. Moreover, the notion of emergent paradigms is considered. Recognising the how paradigm specific lenses may ensure that we see only that which we specifically look for, the research takes the results of the applied lenses and uses these in an attempt to appreciate alternative paradigmatic ascriptions. Methodologically, the functionalist and interpretive lenses are used to note the emergence of attributes more readily associated with the radical structuralist and radical humanist paradigms (Ibid).

In adopting a bi-paradigmatic approach, the research takes account of pertinent issues raised in the multi-paradigm research literature. Lewis and Kelemen (2002) note the reasons for the under-use of multi-paradigm research as being:

- There is, as yet, no explicit philosophical framework underpinning this approach.
- There is little in the way of exemplars for practice (with a few notable exceptions i.e. Hassard, 1985; Kelemen, 1995).

This thesis addresses these issues by offering insights into the philosophical framework which founds this approach. By doing this it hopes to create another exemplar for research to encourage debate within the academic community. Although in doing this recognises that any explicit philosophical framework risks of itself becoming a paradigm for multi-paradigm research, potentially stultifying the development of newer and more innovative stances.

Structure of the thesis

In Chapter 1 of the thesis the literature on culture is reviewed and the fundamentally paradigmatic nature of the concept surfaces. Chapter 2 draws on the literature on paradigms to advise the debate and to form the basis for the construction of a robust research methodology. In Chapter 3 of this thesis I discuss my unique approach to

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Footnote:
8 Acknowledging Parker and McHugh's (1991) critique of this work.
multi-paradigm research in which I develop a bi-paradigmatic approach to view a single organisational feature. Here, paradigmatically tied lenses are used to view functionalist and interpretive perspectives. Moreover, these methodological lenses facilitate an appreciation of the emergence of radical structuralist and radical humanist (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) attributes. The objective here is to focus on the relationship between research intentions, research methods and research outcomes. As such the methodological combinations used here proffer the potential to critique the viability of paradigm exclusion⁹.

The research methods are framed within a case study approach. Within this, the Burrell and Morgan (1979) taxonomy was used as the basis from which paradigm specific methods were chosen. Crucial to retaining the integrity of these methods is a consideration of the meta-theoretical assumptions which found each of the functionalist and interpretive methods. The functionalist method is considered first. Here an externally derived instrument, the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI), was selected. By considering the historical development of the OCAI and by reviewing the questionnaire-based design, the instrument's functionalist sympathies are surfaced. The questionnaires were completed by two discrete groups, workgroups in the canteen (people located at the bottom of the organisational hierarchy) and workgroups in the restaurant (people located in the middle of the hierarchy). The interpretive method is considered next. Here a three method approach was devised to facilitate responses from people at the top of, in the middle of and at the bottom of the researched organisation. At the top of the organisation, the most senior person on-site was interviewed. In the middle of the organisation, focus groups were used across groups of middle managers. At the bottom of the organisation, non-linguistically based non-participant observation was used to research the work group who work on the shop floor. Two forms of analysis were selected based on the verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication. The interpretive analyses were undertaken before the analyses of the functionalist research to avoid a conscious or sub-conscious contamination of the results.

In Chapter 4, I present the results of my functionalist research. Application of the OCAI has produced a series of profiles which the authors of the instrument propose to be

⁹ Paradigm exclusion aligns the notion of incommensurability but from a purposive stance. Whilst incommensurability notes the inability to move between paradigms, exclusion notes the ability to dismiss a paradigm and as such implicates a similar degree of control to that of commensurability.
representative of the culture within the researched organisation. These results allow for comparisons to be made between what the respondents see as being the actual culture and what they see as being the ideal culture. Moreover, comparisons were also made between the results of the two respondent groups. Conclusions are drawn here which are reflective of the functionalist research. The profiles produced indicate a discrepancy between what the respondents see as the actual culture and the ideal culture.

In Chapter 5, I consider the results of my interpretive research. The application of a discourse analysis framework allowed me to understand the views of the organisational culture of the Senior Manager. That same analysis framework allowed me to elicit the views of culture as expressed by the Focus Groups. Lastly, an open form analysis was used to elicit the views of culture as indicated by the non-verbal behaviours of the workgroup at the bottom of this organisation. The conclusions of the interpretive research here reflect a marked similarity with those of the functionalist research.

In Chapter 6, I highlight my contributions to the literature by turning the results back to the original research questions. I present my contributions in two discussions. In the first, I consider the ways in which the use of paradigm specific lenses has privileged a particular characterisation of the culture. Here I consider how the use of a functionalist lenses produces a specific view of culture, before considering the manifestations of this in the researched organisation. I then explore the implications of this and the ways in which results, so produced can be seen as, at best, limited. I then consider how the use of a bi-paradigmatic research method has allowed me to expand on those views. In the second discussion, I outline the ways in which my research in Food Co has helped me to recognise problems with the traditional views of culture. I then use the results of my research to re-conceptualise culture, offering a new way of thinking about the concept.

In Chapter 7, I draw my conclusions. Here I re-iterate my findings and emphasise the ways in which they offer unique and challenging insights in to the use of bi-paradigmatic research and in to the ways in which those who study organisations characterise the concept of culture. Lastly, I will explain my re-conceptualisation of culture and discuss the rationale behind this.

In summary, this thesis makes three distinct contributions to contemporary thinking in the study of organisations. First, it demonstrates the ways in which the use of paradigm
specific lenses indicts a particular characterisation of culture; it highlights the ways in which the meta-theoretical assumptions which underpin the selection of research method, shape the outcomes of that research. Second, in trying to generate a richer understanding of the culture in organisations, it highlights how the use of a bi-paradigmatic research method addresses the limitations of using a single lens. Third, having used bi-paradigmatic research methods, this thesis offers a re-conceptualisation of organisational culture, one which challenges academic community to think differently about culture and about the impact of the traditional characterisations of the concept.
Chapter 1: Literature Review - Culture

1.0 Introduction

Culture is a borrowed concept (Reichers and Schneider, 1990; Sackmann, 1992). Although culture had been a critical theme for anthropological and sociological writing for some time (Chapple, 1941; Dalton, 1959; Jaques, 1951), it was only in the 1970's – 1980's\(^{10}\) that the concept moved substantially from these indigenous locations to the study of organisations. During this time, the success of Japanese management practices threatened to undermine the domination of Western industry. Organisations were seen to need to leverage a higher degree of control over the workgroup than was afforded by western management practices. The concept of culture was seen to be the Holy Grail.

Critical to the displacement of the concept were a number of articles (Pettigrew, 1979; Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Peters and Waterman, 1982; Barley, 1983; Astley and Van de Ven, 1983)\(^ {11}\), which habituated culture within the field. What becomes apparent from consideration of these articles is the way in which the differing authorial perspectives are seen to emerge from fundamentally disparate philosophical and meta-theoretical assumptions (Alvesson, 1993). As such, the cumulative influence of disparate antecedents, the lack of a consistent and coherent rationale for concept transfer (Bowles, 1989; Dahler-Larsen, 1994) and differing authorial motives has ensured that there is no universally accepted definition of what we understand as culture (Smircich, 1983; Sathe, 1983).

1.1 Defining culture

Alvesson (1993) notes that “definitions seldom succeed in giving such concepts any crystal-clear meaning” (p. 2). Moreover the process of ‘defining’ involves clear decisions regarding inclusion and exclusion (Wilson, 2000); definitions, then, conceal as much as they reveal. As Alvesson (1993) argues, the word culture is actually “a word for the lazy” (p. 3), an “economical” (Ibid) word which means something to everyone, though not the same to everyone. Bloor and Dawson note the nature of culture as being

\(^{10}\) For examples see Pettigrew, 1979; Barley, 1983; Gregory, 1983; Smircich, 1983; Schein, 1984, 1985.
\(^{11}\) See Reichers and Schneider (1990) pages 15-17 for a tabulated chronology of writings on culture and the primary emphasis of each.
problematic, arguing that it is a “polemical concept which does not lend itself to a single
definition” (1994: 152). Indeed, their conceptualisation of culture, as comprising
societal, historical and operational contents, each mediated through individual and
collective patterns of “signification, legitimation and domination” (p. 280) would
militate against defining with any degree of accuracy. Furthermore, the difficulties in
trying to conceptualise culture in order to define it are compounded by the uniqueness
of culture and its “assumed” identity as a characteristic of an organisation rather than of
the people within (Hofstede et al, 1993: 488). Nevertheless, it is observed and measured
via the behaviours and communications of those people (Sackmann, 1992). Trice and
Beyer (1995), basing their assertion on the works of Weber and Geertz, add to this
complexity by asserting that “Culture is not a phenomenon locked up in people’s heads,
but rather embodied in a collection of observable, public symbols” (p.182). The notion
of determining a single definition of culture is further frustrated.

Nevertheless, in order to render the concept measurable, some strive to achieve an
culture construct dictates the need for definitional precision” (p. 9). She proposes that
achieving such precision requires a thorough investigation of existing definition
contents. The output of this provides the basis for the construction of a unitary
definition of culture. Implicit within her argument is the assumption that, in all the
definitions so produced, there will be a degree of commonality sufficient to allow the
production of a broader relevance. Rather than definitional precision, we have a
definitional mean.

I see her assertion as being somewhat paradoxical. The definition of culture produced is
an aggregate of previous definitions. Thus, in searching to identify culture, those
charged with the study of the concept remain within an autopoetic (Morgan, 1986)
world in which what they see determines what they define, determines what they see. In
this self-referential world, authorial perceptions of the concept of culture determine
definition. Definition renders the concept measurable and the dimensions of
measurement produce a research output which feeds the authorial perceptions of culture.
The complexity of trying to define culture is increasingly apparent.

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12 See Feldman and March (1981) for consideration of the role of information as signal and symbol.
13 The impact of the process of selecting which definitions to include, which definitions to exclude and
the ways in which that choice invites potential bias, is left to one side here.
To illustrate, many of the definitions in use consider culture not as an entity in its own right, but as a holding bay for a series of authorially imputed components. Thus, according to Schein (1992) it is “A process of shared basic assumptions…” (p. 12), to Brown (1998) it is “the pattern of beliefs, values and learned ways of coping” (p. 9) and to Kotter and Heskett (1992) it is “the totality of socially transmitted behaviour patterns, arts, beliefs, instructions…” (p. 4). It is the nature and combination of these elements, so juxta-positioned, which evidences the paradigmatic affiliations of the author and subsequently supports any empirical stance to be taken. The components of culture therefore become a key consideration in determining what the construct is and how it is manifest.

What we see is a relationship between the perception of culture, the definition of culture produced and the ways in which the definition implicates the ordering of the components. Definitions, thus framed, serve two purposes. They present the reader with an image of culture, created and constrained by the framework of the language used to define. The language used is indicative of the authorially determined components of the culture and of the ways in which these are ordered. This ordering of culture allows for the production of the normative structures or models of culture.

1.2 Modelling Culture

Models of culture present the reader with a fait accompli. By determining what culture is, nominating the components and articulating the relationship between the components, authors offer convenience. This delineation of culture into components is encouraged by Meek's (1984) assertion that culture as a construct is far too “all embracing” (p. 455) and needs to be divided into smaller elements to facilitate meaningful research, and by Pettigrew's (1990a) warning against perceiving culture as being “akin to a Pandora’s box” (p. 430). Although Sackmann (1992) recognises the shortcomings of such a definitive focus, the normative models produced are popular. They persuade the reader that culture has a pragmatic utility within an organisation.

Illustrative of such models is the work of Hofstede and Neuijen (1990). Their ordering of the components of culture is clearly motivated by the desire to produce a representation of culture which is measurable. This desire for measurement necessitates

14 Where, once opened, people are overwhelmed by the contents.
a particular view of culture in which the non-visible attributes are inferred from visible behaviours. Indeed, Hofstede and Neuijen (Ibid) assert the need to find "operationalizable and independent dimensions" (p. 287) in order to be able to measure culture. As a result of this they produce a normative structure comprising a set of concentric circles. Symbols are located in the outer most ring, followed by heroes, then rituals and through to values in the inner most ring. However, in order to 'pragmatise' their structure they are forced to include a point at which behaviours are read. Accordingly, they insert the notion of practices which cuts across symbols, heroes and rituals but fails to permeate the notion of values. The ordering of such components presents a "neat and tidy" (Brown, 1998: 11) view of culture, one which is reflective of their need to measure rather than of "the uncertainties and ambiguities actual cultures exhibit" (Ibid).

The model which appears to dominate the literature is that of Schein (1984). Since being published this model has gained huge popularity despite being highly indicative of the ways in which the structuring of culture can be problematic. Schein (1984) posits a three level approach to culture. Artefacts are the level most readily visible. These include rituals, heroes and symbols. As the most apparent components, artefacts are potentially the most easily understood. However, the practice of converting organisational structure, rituals, ceremonies and myths (cf. Barley, 1983; Coombs, Knights and Willmott, 1992) into some verifiable and shared understanding, be that conscious or sub-conscious, presents significant difficulties. As these are perceived phenomena, the subjective nature of perception, ambiguity and interpretation makes them difficult to decipher with any sense of accuracy.

Espoused values are thought by Schein (1984) to underpin the superficial artefacts15. Although these values may originally be derived from the personal values of the founder, a "cognitive transformation" (Ibid: 19) takes place within which they become widely shared. This process of transformation is associated with political manoeuvring and emergent change and is dependent on the creation of stories and of myths to consolidate that change. Czarniaskwa (1986) notes the cognitive and the emotive impact of this dynamic. She explains, "a myth, unlike an ideology, is a narrative of events. This narrative has a sacred quality, which means that doubting it is equal to sacrilege" (p. 323-324). The sacred nature of myth here is premised on the continuing

15 These values are represented by the strategies, philosophies and goals of the culture.
validity\textsuperscript{16} of the shared values on which it is based. Over time this develops into a shared assumption that is implicitly understood, supported and reinforced.

Indeed, the concept of ‘values’ is critical to many other definitions of culture (Kilmann et al, 1985; Daft, 2000; Kreitner, 2001). There are, however, different interpretations of what ‘values’ are. Brown and Starkey (1994) suggest that values equate to the tasks and goals deemed important, whilst Gibb Dyer Jn (1983) asserts that values are evaluations of situations, acts and people which are made by people and which reflect the corporate goals and ideals. Arnold et al (1998) describe values as being a long-term guide for a person’s choices, based on what is good and what is desirable. Values in this context are generic and stable. Change is minimal but purposive. Brown (1998) links values with beliefs and asserts that both are key elements of the organisational cognitive substructure\textsuperscript{17}. Values in this context are ultimately concerned with what people think ought to be done and their associated moral and ethical prescriptions. Accordingly, beliefs act as an interpretative milieu, concerned with what people perceive to be truthful or untruthful. Brown and Starkey (1994) describe beliefs as the widely shared perspectives on how people should behave in the work environment. Whilst Sapienza (1985) concurs with Vickers’ (1965) classification of beliefs as being a “set of readinesses...to distinguish some aspects of the situation” (p. 67). Beliefs, thereby are consistently seen to provide an interpretative framework through which perceptions of any given circumstance or situation can be reified.

Basic assumptions are the deepest level of cultural components in the Schein (1984) model. They are the unconscious beliefs, thoughts and feelings that underpin the values and behaviours.\textsuperscript{18} They are differentiated from ordinary beliefs on three pretexts:

- They are unconscious and thus difficult to surface, whereas beliefs are conscious and therefore surfaceable.

- Because beliefs can be surfaced they can be challenged, debated and more easily modified than can assumptions.

\textsuperscript{16} Czarniaskwa’s (1986) representation of “anti-sagas” (p. 314) is considered later in this thesis.

\textsuperscript{17} Barley (1983) notes that “‘culture’ is somehow implicitly tied to notions of social cognition and contextual sense-making” (p. 393).

\textsuperscript{18} Here basic assumptions found cognitive stability and are only challengeable by double-loop learning.
• Beliefs are simplistic cognitions, whereas assumptions are beliefs to which a value and/or an emotion has been attached.

(Brown, 1998)

If one accepts Schein's description, it follows that in order to challenge the assumptions of a culture one has to present a situation which is either so incongruent or so traumatic that it de-stabilises the members by challenging or making them challenge for themselves their own and their shared assumptions and the processes through which those assumptions are validated.19

I would assert that accepting these normative frameworks of culture implies a linear protocol for research. One starts with a superficial view of artefacts before considering espoused values. The utilisation of the two becomes the precursor to an heuristic approach aimed at trying to recognise the basic underlying assumptions. In reviewing the ways in which culture is presented as a normative structure, it is important to consider the authorial motives which underpin that structure. Where culture is disaggregated into a narrow range of components, this reflects a need to render the concept measurable, rather than a need to reflect reality.

Schein (1990) insists that nominating components is necessary. He asserts that researchers must not "rush to measure things" (p. 118) until they know exactly what it is they are going to measure. The notion that people will then only measure what they intended to measure20 rather than being distracted by the appearance (or non-appearance) of alternative elements of culture fuels the debate surrounding the use of the native-view paradigm (Gregory, 1983: 366) and its relationship with empirical research (Van Maanen, 1979). Essentially, one needs to consider whether empirical research is simply a means of seeing what we intended to see, by using specific lenses and specific lenses only; or whether empirical research is driven by the emergent qualities of the researched.

What we see from this brief consideration of both defining culture and of imputing a specific set of components to the concept, is the way in which language is manipulated

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19 Within this I note the similarity to the onset of disquiet as a precursor to the Kuhnian (1962/1970) notion of scientific revolution to be discussed later in this thesis.
20 One has to consider the constraining impact of research simply becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy here.
to present a particular view of reality. Again we see the emergence of the idea that culture means something to everyone but not the same to everyone. As such, control of the narrative is crucial. Without authorial clarity in the use of language, readers will resort to their own interpretation of the concept, an interpretation which may be more or less in concert with the motives of the author. It becomes necessary for authors to use definition to construct the narrative on culture, within which they are able to construct the narrative of culture. The narrative on culture uses the process of definition as a framing device. Language is used to delineate inclusions and exclusions, to determine what can and cannot be perceived as culture. This framework then directs the narrative of culture to form the normative structure within which the ordering of components implies both a rank order and a utility. The use of language is crucial. Discourse components of culture both control and are controlled by the culture. The narrative on culture and the narrative of culture become symbiotic.

Conceptualisations of culture are thus given substance by a varied collection of imputed components, each of which may mean different things to different people. In other words, the relevance of these components is dependent upon the effectiveness of their mode of reification. As language is the means by which we make sense of the concept, consideration of the language elements of culture is critical to developing an understanding of culture.

1.2.1 Language elements of culture

Language has a pivotal role in sense-making (Bloor and Dawson, 1994; Weick, 1995). It is crucial to the ways in which we construct our perceptions, providing people with “a pre-defined set of categories to use in comprehending the commonsense world” (Silverman, 1970: 8). Within the context of culture the role of language is two-fold. First, it determines our perception of culture, what we perceive and how we make sense of that perception. Second, it becomes the means by which we indicate a desire to be included within that culture. Pettigrew (1979) considers this to be the enabling role of language by asserting that “language is (also) a vehicle for achieving practical effects” (p. 575). Language thus positioned provides a means of access to or egress from the culture and a mechanism through which cognition and or affect influence the socialisation process (Feldman, 1981; Trice and Beyer, 1993).
Language provides the means and modes by which messages are transferred and the medium through which meaning is extracted. Although rarely included in definitions of culture, communication as an independent and interdependent component of the concept will be assumed *a priori* because of its fundamental role. Communication provides the identity of the concept and the infrastructure to support the existence of other components and their contents. The role of communication to culture is so crucial that it could be argued that the two are symbiotic. Communication exerts control within culture. It founds the framework for social construction and sense-making and the means by which language is manipulated to invite a particular characterisation. Indeed, Czarniaswka (1986) sees "the management of meaning as an intentional process of communication in which one side is trying to influence another" (p. 323). Whilst communication provides this intended image of culture and determines the relationships that exist within, it is useful to consider some of the broader influences indicative of the role that language plays in stabilising and challenging culture (Schall, 1983; Grieco and Lilja, 1996).

Within the context of culture, verbal and non-verbal processes set cognitive, affective, behavioural and communication perimeters (Schall, 1983) to be used to direct future observable and measurable verbal and non-verbal behaviours. Inherent within this focus is the notion of a restrictive dynamic. Culture can develop, but only within the confines of the boundaries set.

Whipp et al (1989) contribute a reflexive element, asserting that interactions have an influence on both the outcome of the interpretation and on the re-shaping of the structures within which that interpretation takes place. This is a reinforcement of Jelinek et al's (1983) idea that "People's behaviour, so structured and constrained, recreates the structures that in turn guide thought" (p. 334). As such, culture becomes an emergent but bounded construct. Thinking on culture is guided by perceptions of behaviours, yet behaviours are constrained to within the permissible perimeters of the culture. The

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21 Aligning the Kuhnian (1970) notion of normal science and with marked similarities to both of his later definitions of the term paradigm to be discussed later in this thesis.
22 Sackmann (1992) proffers a useful framework for cognition, founded on labels, explanations, prescriptions and rationales.
23 It is useful to draw comparisons here with the constrained motility imposed on a scientific community by the Kuhnian notion of normal science which will be discussed later in this thesis.
24 The use of the plural here would indicate that culture and its generative processes are seen to be the input and the output of a process of social construction.
constraints to thought are therefore an intellectual reincarnation of the constraints to behaviour. Both are framed by the language in use.

Sackmann (1992) sees the use of language as the basis for shared knowledge, whilst Bate (1994) links the extent of that sharing to the perceptions of the culture. What emerges are three distinct influences. First, language provides the framing of the concept of culture. Second, the language of that framing implies the nature and the ordering of the components of culture. Third, language is the means by which those who are acculturated signify their acculturation. This theme of intra-cultural language can be considered through a range of media such as legends and myths, jokes and metaphors (Barley, 1983; Morgan, 1986; Coombs, Knights and Willmott, 1992). An exemplar of this is the role of stories and story telling as a means of influence.

Boyce (2000) in her critical review of story and story-telling posits three perspectives. Story-telling is a process of social construction; it disseminates a shared reality to a culture’s members (Wilkins and Thompson, 1991). Problems arise when new members are brought into the organisation and there is a need to share with them a reality based on previously established constructs. It is this need for inclusion that provides the impetus for “legitimation” (Berger and Luckman, 1967: 86), the process of creating a justification for the previously constructed collective traditions. Accordingly, story-telling can be seen as an illustrative medium through which the present reality (being a meld of historically constructed realities and present circumstances) is legitimately presented to those who need to share in that reality.

Moreover, she sees storytelling as just one of a range of symbol-bearing aspects, all of which contribute to the construction of meaning. However, the limitations should be recognised. As Wilkins and Thompson (1991) note, “most of the time for most people the story will be constructed to enable understanding and appreciation of only one part of a complexity of an organization” (p. 24). Often there is the difficulty of establishing congruity and consistency between the symbol bearing aspects of the organisation to ensure perceptions are correctly reinforced (Jones, 1991). This is especially problematic when considered alongside Smircich’s (1983) notion that all thinking is metaphorical.
Lastly, Boyce (2000) notes the purposeful use of stories to tie individuals into the organisation. With the loss of meaning as derived from the task itself, she argues that stories become a surrogate motivator by creating new and corporately congruent meanings (Dahler-Larsen, 1994). However, Czarniawska (1986) notes the antithesis to this pseudo-positive role of story. Her notion of “anti-sagas” (p. 314) notes the use of discourses to emphasise negativity and disenchantment in the relationship between the corporate and the workgroups. Yet, regardless of the evident fracture between the company and those within it, what we see is the sharedness of a “lack of commitment” (Ibid). This idea that the collective now see themselves as being “dispassionate observers” (Ibid) does produce a sense of belonging to a wider group. In essence the shared values are those of detachment.

A consideration of the discourse components of culture makes it possible to identify the links between the definitional structure which frames the concept and the ordering of components which forms the normative structure. What is apparent from doing this is the way in which the relationship between the two presupposes allegiance to a distinctive set of meta-theoretical assumptions. Accordingly, the use of discourse is seen as indicative of the authorial motives for presenting a specific manifestation of culture.

Within the literature, many of these manifestations present as dualisms. Meta-theoretical assumptions produce a particular characterisation of the concept of culture, ensuring that this fits neatly into one of two oppositional camps. Culture is deemed to be an ‘either/or’ concept. Smircich (1983) agrees noting how the “differences in approach to the organization-culture relationship are derived from differences in the basic assumptions that researchers make” (p. 339). The basic differences in underlying meta-theoretical assumptions are exemplified in her consideration of culture as a root metaphor versus culture as a critical variable.

1.3 Culture as a Root Metaphor Versus Culture as a Critical Variable

From a linguistic perspective organisational culture can be seen as a third generation metaphor, the first generation being the nomination of societies from the originally agricultural origins of the word. The second generation is the transfer of the societies

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25 It is noted here that the nature and the contents of specific stories could advocate concurrence with either the Radical Structuralist or the Radical Humanist (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) paradigms to be discussed later in this thesis.
writ small\(^2\) notion (Silverman 1970). The third is the positioning of culture as a metaphor for organisation (Smircich 1983).

It is interesting to note the process here. Meaning is transferred from agriculture to society to organisation. Culture becomes a metaphor for social order and organisation becomes a metaphor for the function of ordering (Ibid). The output here can be seen as a paradoxical hybrid of both expansionism and reductionism.

In expansionist terms, where a contemporary time-bounded view of organisation is sought, the idea of using culture as a lens presents the opportunity for new and novel perspectives. The use of culture as a mode of ordering and as a means of viewing the social order of the organisation raises some interesting issues. Whilst, in the first instance, the use of new lenses illuminates new facets of organisation and as such purports “considerable potential for developing new ideas and new forms of understanding” (Alvesson, 1993: 9), the limitations of this approach are also noted. Yet again one has to consider that, within this frame of reference, culture as a metaphor for organisation is viewed metaphorically. The lenses used will only reveal what those viewing culture are able to see. In short, even the expansionist perspective of culture as a metaphor is entrenched in the reductionism of bounded meta-theoretical assumptions. Reductionism is inherent in the use of culture as a metaphor. Fundamentally one is advocating the use of a simple expression to create an image of a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon\(^2\). Additionally, the use of any metaphor is limited by the nature of subjectivity, i.e. where organisation is viewed through lenses which are dependent on personal frames of reference the outputs become complex and chaotic. Indeed, Sennett notes a second level of complexity here, commenting that “a metaphor creates a meaning greater than the sum of its parts” (Alvesson, 1993: 10). As such, organisations are deemed to comprise that which is subjectively viewed alongside that which is imputed.

The idea of using a social phenomenon to view another social phenomenon and still being able to create any consistent (let alone unitary) meaning is complicated. And whilst culture as a metaphor thrives on the notion that organisations are “generally

\(^{26}\) Here Morgan (1986) perceives organizations as being cultural phenomena (p. 112), a meld of national cultures (p. 114) and occupational cultures (p. 113) which results in a range of different but similar value systems. The mixture of like and unlike characteristics leading to “A mosaic of organizational realities rather than a uniform corporate culture” (p. 127).

\(^{27}\) This is of particular relevance where a verificationist stance is sought.
complex, ambiguous and paradoxical” (Morgan, 1986: 17), Clegg (1990) fires a cautionary salvo asserting that

“The fate of our times, one might think, would be such as to encourage a profound pluralism with respect to interpretation. Yet pluralism need not mean nihilism, that anything is as good as anything else, that any interpretation will do.”

(p. 16)

Alvesson (1993) also notes the need for prudence by asserting that “A good metaphor depends on an appropriate mix of similarity and difference between the transferred word and the focal one. Where there is too much or too little similarity or difference, the point may not be understood” (p. 10). In recognising that the cognitive processes which underpin the perception of culture as a metaphor are “hermeneutical or phenomenological rather than objectivist” (Ibid: 14), a detachment of authorial metatheoretical assumptions is noted. By proposing culture as a metaphor for organisation, definitional acuity is eschewed in favour of the perceptual bias of the reader. The use of culture as a metaphor for organisation imposes a lens between the observer and the observed27, a frame through which the observer can only see that which is in concert with their own paradigmatic stance.

The notion of culture as a variable perceives culture as being something that an organisation has rather than something that an organisation is. Control here is in concert with the managerialist stance propounded by Deal and Kennedy, 1982 and Peters and Waterman, 1983. It is the responsibility of management. Culture is used both overtly and covertly as a means of exerting purposive control over processes, structures, people and systems. Smircich (1983) notes that here “Organizations are seen as social instruments that produce goods and services, and, as a by-product they also produce distinctive artefacts such as rituals, legends and ceremonies” (p. 344). Leverage is both instrumental and influential. The motives behind perceiving culture as a variable clearly imply that culture can be manipulated for corporate gain. Managers acting on behalf of the organisation, observe and interpret the internal and external dynamics and direct change through the manipulation of the components of culture. Accordingly, culture becomes the means of leveraging corporate success by creating an output which contributes to efficiency and effectiveness. In turn, achievement and affiliation

27 The notion of viewing the complex through the (comparatively) simple.
positively reinforce individual and collective conformance, resulting in what Peters and Waterman (1982) term a ‘strong’ culture\(^{29}\).

The reciprocal relationship between a strong culture and improved corporate performance is noted by Alvesson (1993) in his assertion that “Ideas about causality are crucial here; culture change is expected to have recognizable effects on important outputs such as loyalty, productivity, and perceived quality of service” (p. 14).Implicitly, Alvesson highlights the human cost of perceiving culture as a variable. Beyond the achievement of pragmatic output goals, the company exert control through which the psyche of members, individually and collectively is coalesced in support of the corporate. Culture as a variable provides sociological, psychological and historical (Louis, 1980) points of leverage through which those acculturated are directed and guided. Indeed, Smircich (1983) notes that:

“First, it conveys a sense of identity for organization members. Second, it facilitates the generation of commitment to something larger than the self. Third, culture enhances social systems stability. And fourth, culture serves as a sense-making device that can guide and shape behaviour.”

(p. 345-346)

There are a number of meta-theoretical assumptions which underpin this perspective.

First, the idea that culture conveys a sense of identity clearly locates the locus of control within the culture. Here the work group, as passive participants, become the recipients of the identity constructed for them by the corporate. Acceptance of this identity would imply either complicity or a power dynamic which renders resistance futile. Second, the idea of people committing to something larger than the self evokes the Durkheimian notion of morality (Starkey, 1998). In an attempt to be part of the collective, the self is subordinated to the corporate, the benefits of which are the avoidance of dissonance and anomie. Third, the idea of social system stability draws heavily on structural functionalist thinking (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) whereby an integrated social system is critical to maintaining “an orderly social life” (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 197). As such, having manipulated the functional in terms of skills and competences the

\(^{29}\) Peters and Waterman (1982) note a plethora of specific attributes which contribute to the notion of culture supporting excellence, e.g. “make people winners” (p. 277), “the elaboration of socially integrating myths” (p. 282), and a quote taken from Selznick “the creation of a homogenised staff” (p. 290).
organisation consolidates its control by turning its attention to the systems of social construction: Control is all consuming. Fourth, the entire process is reinforced and reiterated as culture becomes the means of thinking about and reconstructing culture (Jones, 2002).

What we see is that the idea of a self-perpetuating homogeneity is critical to perceiving culture as a variable. This is clearly aligned to the Kuhnian (1970) notion of normal science in which the stability of the social system is predicated on the acceptance and application of a consistent means of sense-making. The insular focus here determines that culture thrives by systematic "autopoiesis" (Morgan, 1986: 236). Accordingly, the use of culture as a means to construct culture provides the level of autonomy, circulation and self-reference which negates the need to engage external influence.

In many respects this seems inherently naïve. Culture thus framed fails to account for dissonance and disparity, complexity and paradox. Culture becomes the panacea regardless of the disease. The construct lacks integrity and the reality of being able to gain such levels of control over the wider organisation is challenged. Smircich (1983) agrees, noting the need to question how the idea that culture is a manipulable variable can be seen as "anything more than an ideology cultivated by management for the purposes of control and legitimation" (p. 346). This idea of legitimating such all consuming control calls into consideration the extent to which the culture, as articulated by management, is in any way reflective of the actual ways in which control is exerted over the workgroup. Allaire and Firsirotu (1984) elaborate on this. In recognising a divide between the espoused and the enacted culture, they note that "invocations of culture are not followed by any elaboration" (p. 194). Proponents of culture as a variable here present an articulable rather than demonstrable commodity. The concept of culture is fundamentally devalued, becoming little more than a "stenographic cue for 'values, norms, beliefs, customs' or any other string of convenient identifiers" (Ibid).

Within this consideration one can see a metaphoric relevance to the perception of culture as a variable. By viewing culture as a variable we are ostensibly viewing culture as a metaphor for control. Culture becomes a pseudonym for the corporate manipulation of all aspects of thought and of behaviour. The mechanisms of control are varied but all purport a means by which personal and collective direction is determined by the
organisation. The perception of culture as a metaphor for organisation and culture as a metaphor for control highlights both the idea that all thought is metaphorical and the dualist nature of the concept. Even where the meta-theoretical assumptions founding the view are diametrically opposed both have a metaphorical relevance in the study of organisations.

The perception of culture as a variable brings to the fore the need to consider the locus of control. For Smircich (1983) the dualism is the battle for control. Culture as something that an organisation has assumes that control is vested within a managerialist power dynamic. Culture as something that an organisation is assumes that control is dispersed across the organisation. It is this notion of focal versus dispersed control which underpins the dualism between corporate versus organisational culture and its entanglement with the homogeneity versus heterogeneity debate.

1.4 Corporate Culture versus Organisational Culture

Although the literature maps a divide between corporate culture and organisational culture, the use of the terms is rather inconsistent.

In Kilmann et al's 1985 book 'Gaining control of the Corporate Culture' different authors lurch between the two terms. Both Axtell-Ray (1986) and Hofstede (1986) use the two terms interchangeability and Kotter and Heskett's 1992 book entitled 'Corporate Culture and Performance' opens the first chapter by changing to organisational culture (emphasis added). Nevertheless these terms have been used to indicate substantive differences in approach; Linstead and Grafton Small (1992) are of particular note. Before trying to recognise the meta-theoretical assumptions underpinning each one, I will illustrate the basic distinctions between the two perspectives.

Perceiving corporate culture as a shared and unitary set of beliefs, values and behaviours (Meek, 1984) would appear to be a fundamental requirement of those authors advocating that culture can be managed to gain competitive advantage (Peters and Waterman, 1982; Deal and Kennedy, 1982). Corporate culture is seen as a unitary concept, an orientation which views culture as being consistent throughout an

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30 Smircich (1983) acknowledges that “Perception and knowing are linked in an interpretive process that is metaphorically structured, allowing us to understand one domain of experience in terms of another” (p. 40).
organisation. It is supported by a range of authors. Themes of consistency such as shared beliefs (Sapienza, 1985), rules for behaviour (Davis, 1985), and the internalisation of norms (Allen, 1985) present the foundation for a uniform culture. Kotter and Heskett (1992) expand this theme to note how this consistency is shared, in their assertion that "almost all managers share a set of relatively consistent values and methods of doing business. New employees adopt these values very quickly" (p. 15). Here, the "core proposition is that an 'effective' organization is a unitary system bound together by a common task and common values" (Bate, 1994: 55).

Underlying this unitary orientation, a range of definitions contextualise the specific components such as the collective will (Kilmann, 1985), shared expectations (Schwartz and Davis, 1981) and organisationally consistent values (Peters and Waterman, 1982). Furnham and Gunter (1993) emphasise the integration and coordination roles of culture. Here culture is responsible for the maintenance of culture. Culture is not simply a meld of components, but is the "social glue" (p. 70) which binds them together and counteracts those tensions which pull for differentiation.

For 'corporate culture', "organizational effectiveness depends upon creating cultures which are consistent with the organization's mission" (Drummond, 2000: 233). The emphasis is placed on culture as being a means to a corporate end (Willmott, 1993b). It gives the corporation primacy in terms of driving the culture; hence culture exists to support the achievement of the corporate objectives. Culture in this context becomes a managerialist property, a resource to be managed along with other more or less tangible resources. Corporate culture has a utility. Culture is commoditised and then adapted and changed by the managers as part of the strategic, tactical and operational planning processes.

It follows that organisational gain is associated with being able to change the culture (Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Gibb Dyer Jn, 1985). Accordingly, numerous change theories have been expounded resting on cultural interventions. These range from leaders as culture creators (Pettigrew, 1979) through the manipulation of key organisational structures to the creation and indoctrination of new corporate values and ideals (Peters and Waterman, 1982). Corporate culture presents a means by which people can be manipulated at the behest of the company. It offers a managerialist tool.
and is well illustrated in the works of Deal and Kennedy (1982), Peters and Waterman (1982), Davis (1985) and Sathe (1985).

Culture, thus characterised, is a resource to be manipulated in line with corporate demands. The corporate are able to recognise culture and recognise the degree of congruity this has with the values and beliefs the corporate wish to portray. The ideal organisation is achieved by reconfiguring the ‘what is’ to the ‘what should be’. The ability to manipulate the culture is a given. Indeed, Furnham and Gunter (1993: 71) assert that:

“Within the perspective, the management of culture is not seen as problematic….one only has to identify the presently existing culture, that is, its components, and then change it (the culture) or them (the components) toward the desired culture.”

(p. 71)

Despite the managerial popularity of such literature, it has been criticised on a number of fronts. First, corporate culture is perceived as being “incipiently totalitarian” (Willmott, 1993b: 517) as it exerts ideological, cognitive and affective controls over individuals for the sake of the corporate. Corporate culture is holistic and all consuming. Its pervasiveness subsumes everything and everybody. Second, the research underpinning the competitive advantage assertion has been heavily criticised for its naivety (Rowlinson and Proctor, 1999) and lack of analytical rigour (Sackmann, 1997). Third, Allaire and Firsirotu (1984) note the superficial nature of corporate culture as a concept, especially when this is based on the premise that organisations “breed meanings, values and beliefs, that they nurture legends, myths and stories, and are festooned with rites, rituals and ceremonies” (p. 194). They assert that the shallow perspective expounded in the works of Peters and Waterman (1982), Deal and Kennedy (1982) and Allen and Kraft (1985) has led to their “notoriety” (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 194) despite the notion that “cultural explanations of success or failure are vague and untestable” (Parker, 2000: 25).

31 Willmott (1993b: 516) cites Pettigrew and Whipp’s 1991 assertion that in the wake of Peters and Waterman “a multi-million dollar industry has grown up as others attempt to prescribe the rules of excellence".

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Given this, there was the desire to “try to extract organizational culture from the managerialist mission within which it is embedded” (Ibid: 20). The concept of organisational culture emphasises the link between culture in organisations and concepts from cultural anthropology, it is noted that; “organizations are conceived more or less explicitly as socio-cultural systems” (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1984: 199). Recognising this leads us to acknowledge the fallacy of assuming unitarist foundations of corporate culture. If organisations are:

“social entities brought into existence and sustained in an ongoing way by humans to serve some purpose, from which it follows that human activities in the entity are normally structured and co-ordinated towards achieving some purpose or goals,”

(Rollinson et al, 1998: 2)

then the devising of culture as a purely managerially driven commodity is likely to be constrained by other social objectives that individuals bring to their organisational life. These may threaten or subvert other cultural initiatives. Indeed, Martin and Siehl (1983) note the sub-optimal level of managerial control in their assertion that:

“Perhaps the most that can be expected is that a manager can slightly alter the trajectory of a culture, rather then exert major control over the direction of its development.”

(p. 53)

Acknowledging the social aspects of the organisation, Grieco and Lilja (1996) question the managerialist tendency to treat culture as a manipulable resource. The complexity is magnified when the nature of diversity between people individually and collectively is considered. Accordingly, ‘organisational’ culture is intended to convey a fuller picture of the variety of organisational goals that reflect social relationships, intra-group and inter-group dynamics, structure and strategy and context. It is influenced by the corporate framework but is not confined to this; cultural boundaries are permeable, people within the organisation are participants in or observers of other cultures, be they societal, ethnic or organisational (Bloor and Dawson, 1994; Parker, 2000). Organisational culture therefore differs from corporate culture by indicating a system rather than a commodity; a system in which meanings can be seen to be created rather than simply applied.
For Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992), therefore, corporate culture is one that is devised by management and then "imposed" or "sold" (p. 333) to the rest of the company. As a homogenous concept, culture is the carrier of rites, rituals and myths (Barley, 1983; Coombs, Knights and Willmott, 1992) all directed at creating worker 'commitment'.

In supporting this notion of homogeneity, Quinn and McGrath (1985) argue that it is necessary for all internal, external and individual information processing systems to be congruent. Van Maanen and Barley (1985) reinforce this by asserting that all members of the organisation would have to be subjected to similar situations and to deal with these by using similar normative processes. I would argue, however, that only exactness, rather than a basic congruity would suffice. Any minor discrepancy in the decision making process would be amplified in subsequent decision making processes, creating discrepancies within the collective of sufficient magnitude to undermine the notion of homogeneity.

To maintain a homogenous view of culture, authors tend to emphasise the negative aspects of pluralism. Bate (1994) notes how images of "internecine strife, degeneracy, stagnation and anarchy" (p. 56) are propagated to persuade a managerialist audience towards an integrationist perspective. Moreover, whilst Cameron and Quinn (1999) recognise some degree of difference in the culture across an entire organisation, they hold fast to their thesis of homogeneity with the assertion that, whilst there may be sub-unit differences within an organisation, "There is always an underlying glue that binds the organization together" (p. 15).

Contrarily, organisational culture is that which spontaneously emerges from within the organisation. A "sub-cultural aggregate" (Linstead and Grafton-Small, 1992: 333) in which heterogeneity allows for integration and differentiation (Martin and Meyerson, 1987; Martin, 1992; Martin, 2002) to peaceably co-exist. In justifying the heterogeneity of culture, it seems impossible for large, internally differentiated organisations to effect a "homogenous society" (Gregory, 1983: 365). O'Neill, Beauvais and Scholl (1997) recognise that unique subcultures may evolve for distinct departments. As Axtell-Ray (1986) shows, organisational structure militates against homogeneity. The existence of vertical divisions within organisations inevitably presents an inequity of access to the goals and the values of the "dominant elite" (Ibid: 361). The notion of heterogeneity of
culture is characterised in a number of ways. Ogbonna and Harris (1998a) emphasise the fractures caused by organisational hierarchy. Here disparate perceptions of culture are held by people at different levels in the organisation. Martin (1992) recognises the symbiotic relationship between differentiation and integration, whilst Louis (1985) asserts the existence of sub-cultures.

In tracing the development of these sub-cultures, Louis (1985) identifies two sources. First, a trans-organisational source acknowledges the external influences that permeate the boundary of the organisation. Once these factors have breached the boundary they begin to exert an internal influence; as the external environment is not exclusively controlled by the organisation, these influences are largely unpredictable in terms of both nature and magnitude.

Second, the intra-organisational source notes a range of different sites within the organisation from which different and endogenous sub-cultures emerge. It is perhaps here that the relationship between sub-cultures becomes most apparent. The recognition of endogenous sub cultures implies that these are exclusive of managerial intervention, emerging and evolving at the behest of those within the organisation rather than those who control the organisation. One explanation for the development of sub-cultures is based on the rationale that over time, different organisational units develop their own preferred responses (Mohan, 1993) to the situations they encounter. Here, Gregory (1983) notes the role of “cross cutting cultural contexts” (p. 365). Indeed, Schein (1985) posits that even those organisational groups which have a stable membership and a history of shared problem solving have the potential to develop a unique sub-cultural identity.

Ascription to the thesis of heterogeneity is problematic for those wishing to control culture. Clearly, fractures created by the existence of sub-cultures has an effect on the imposition of managerial control (Axtel-Ray, 1986). This relationship between heterogeneity and control can be viewed from two diametrically opposed positions: heterogeneity as a contributor to effective organisational control; and heterogeneity as detracting from effective organisational control. In considering how heterogeneity contributes to effective control, Axtell-Ray (1986) asserts that a homogenised culture is

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32 The term sub-culture is used here as a generic heading to encompass all modes of intra-cultural difference. The specific differences between Martin’s (1992, 2002) notion of integration, differentiation and fragmentation and Parker’s fragmented unity (2000) will be considered later in this thesis.
potentially a huge threat to management as the collective will (Kilmann, 1985) is only useful if it is congruent with the will of management. Thus, difference and disparity effectively dilute this collectivity into smaller and more manageable conflict zones for management to control. Indeed, Senior (1997) posits that a unified culture may become so all-pervasive that it stifles the non-conformity which often founds innovation and creativity.\footnote{Albeit this assertion still has managerialist overtones.}

In contrast, Gabriel (1992) cited by Bate (1994) asserts that the formation of sub-cultures (and counter-cultures) is usually a direct response to an impending threat; a threat which is sometimes derived from management itself. Consequently, sub-cultures form with the intention of undermining management intervention, it is the role of the sub-cultures here to be cynical. Bate (1994) concludes by arguing that no matter how powerful management is, sub-cultures will develop and will try to subvert control by using informal rather than formal organisational systems. Interestingly, this implies a purposive or motive driven, rather than emergent, development of sub cultures.

In summary, where culture is perceived as corporate, it is characterised by consistency themes. A homogenous culture is created and controlled by management. Culture is driven by the preservation of shared values which are seen as being reflective of an actual cohesiveness across the organisation. Where there are sporadic differences these are ameliorated by “the blanket application of unitary managerialist strategies” (Kotter and Heskett, 1992).

Where culture is perceived as organisational, the endogenous emergence of sub-cultures challenges an integrationist approach. Plurality undermines the commonality of the unitarist perspectives and challenges management’s ability to direct the culture. Here differentiation and integration can exist contemporaneously but it is the presence of difference which frustrates organisation-wide control. The recognition here, is that the ways in which culture is characterised and the ways in which culture is structured both have implications for control.
1.4.1 Control and Constraint

Contemporary perspectives on culture as a form of restrictive control can be traced back to origins of the concept in organisation theory. Thinking evolved with the emphasis being divided between the customs involved in work organisations (Chapple, 1941; Dalton, 1959; Whyte, 1948, 1951) and the perception of culture as a more comprehensive construct which encompasses the total body of belief as well as knowledge, sanctions and behaviours (Herskowitz, 1948). In this view, culture is seen to be all-consuming. Immersion within the culture is a necessary part of being accepted within the corporate family. Once immersed within the culture, compliance to the unspoken rules is demanded. Any dissent would imply exclusion. Indeed, the consequences of non-compliance can be inferred from Jaques’ (1951) assertion that,

“The culture of a factory is its customary and traditional way of thinking and of doing things, which is shared to a greater or lesser degree by all its members, and which new members must learn, and at least partially accept in order to be accepted into service in the firm.”

(p. 251)

To develop a better understanding of the key aspects of this cultural constraint, Jaques’ assertion will be considered in more detail. First, for Jaques, control over those wishing to become acculturated, is control over both thinking and doing.

Behavioural controls are exerted by procedures, by hierarchy, by structure and by technology. In maintaining the predictability of those behaviours, Martin and Siehl (1983) note that culture becomes the organisational mechanism for “informally approving or prohibiting some patterns of behaviour” (p. 52). Variability across the acculturated group, and indeed sub-sets of that group is reduced (Lebas and Wittgenstein, 1986; O’Neill, Beauvais and Scholl, 1997). The work ethic is determined and compliance demanded. Contemporaneously, the ways in which people make sense of the behavioural control implies a process of cognition. Control over what people think, the values they adhere to and the behaviours they demonstrate (Fitzgerald, 1998; Herskowitz, 1958; Hawkins, 1997) defines the relationship between the corporate and the workforce and sets the degrees of freedom within which challenges to the order are permitted.
The transactional nature of the relationship between the organisation and the workgroup becomes apparent. The company set a list of conformances, adherence to which guarantees inclusion. The workgroup simply exchange behavioural and cognitive compliance for a sense of belonging which gives value to what they do (Dahler-Larsen, 1994). The success of this organisational control depends on what Etzioni (1961), calls “the moral involvement by participants in the organisation” (Cited in Axtell-Ray, 1986: 291).

Second, Jaques notes that it is imperative that new members learn the accepted ways of thinking and doing. Therefore, the integrity of the culture in situ is not challenged. Rather, those who come into the organisation must be persuaded around to the corporate ways of thinking. Their inclusion within the collective is dependent on their acquiring the requisite ways of thinking, ways of doing and the value systems which underpin these actions.

The process of acculturation has, according to Mohan (1993), two distinctive elements. The first mode of acculturation is premised on a conscious and pragmatic learning of officially sanctioned behaviours. The new incumbents mimic the behaviours of those they see as being accepted. Alongside the replication of those behaviours, runs the implicit learning of the values and norms characteristic of the specific organisational sub-cultures. It is the notion of behaviours feeding values which in turn feed behaviours that ensures that those entering the organisation develop a culturally congruent mode of problem solving (Schein, 1990).

The idea of corporately sanctioned frameworks through which the acculturated acquire the desired modes of thinking and doing, represents the formal mode of acculturation. However, threats from newcomers to the values sets of the organisation impact the wider acculturated group, as well as the organisation. Those already acculturated have a vested interest in retaining the status quo. As such, informal modes of creating cultural conformance emerge. Work group socialisation runs parallel to the formal behavioural mechanisms to ensure a total immersion in the culture of the organisation (Berger and Luckman, 1967; Van Maanen, 1975; Louis, 1990).

34 Mohan’s implicit recognition of a heterogeneous rather than homogeneous culture is noted here.
Lastly, Jaques (1951) notes that conformance need not be complete, a "partial" (p. 251) acceptance is possible. This implies, therefore, that culture must be so coherent, that it has not only a distinctive set of criteria to which one needs to conform but also provides the basis for assessing the degree of fit within the organisation. The integration of this 'partial' perspective provides a means for output control, a mechanism which allows non-compliance to be discouraged by acceptable punishment or exclusion, and for conformity rewarded by positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement and inclusion. It is important to note the need for the cultural fit of the means and the mechanisms of both sanctions and rewards.

Value and belief systems constrain in the same inclusionary and exclusionary ways. By providing intangible behavioural and attitudinal perimeters they act as a means of control and a mechanism for reducing behavioural variation (Lebas and Wittgenstein, 1986; O'Neill, Beauvais and Scholl, 1997). Where situational variables are new, the lack of established sense-making processes frustrates the emergence of the desired levels of behavioural, cognitive or affective control. Culture thus described provides a frame of reference through which conformance to the demands of the organisation is assured. The presence of culture is seen as a means by which formal and informal mechanisms conspire to impose control. However, the idea that culture can be controlling by its absence is also considered.

Where culture does not provide perimeters of control, then people are unable to ground their actions in a social construction, they exist in what Thompson and Wildavsky (1986) term "the unviable void of formlessness where everything and therefore nothing is possible" (p. 276). The lack of personal meaning here can be traced back to Durkheimian roots and the human relations school. Where there is no identifiable cultural frame of reference (implicit or explicit) to guide the self, Durkheim's concept of anomie is induced (Starkey, 1998). Accordingly, we note the emergence of "A state of individual paralysis of social action due to the absence of effective norms of conduct" (Barnard, 1938: 118-119). Where newness is the result of organisational change, operating procedures and espoused values may change, yet specific components of culture remain as they were. The disparity between perceived social reality and actual symbolic interaction may lead initially to a state of cultural incongruence, and then to a state of cultural dissonance and organisational normlessness.
It is this notion of organisational change which brings us round to the dualisms discussed previously. Where one perceives culture as being organisational, as being heterogeneous and as being something that an organisation is, then change has to be gradual. Differences between organisational groups militate against the en-masse imposition of any uniform and widespread change. Contrarily, where culture is perceived as corporate, as homogeneous and as a variable, managerialist control is all pervasive, then organisationally imposed radical change and the concomitant onset of dissonance is possible. We see here how the characterisation of culture as an either or concept has implications for the ways in which we study organisations. There are those who oppose such dualisms.

1.5 Opposing dualisms

Martin (1992) notes the limitations of the dualistic manifestations of culture and opts for a triangulated view. Whilst her notions of integration and differentiation clearly align with the homogeneity and heterogeneity stances, she supplements this with the concept of fragmentation. Here culture is viewed as a construct in which certainties stand alongside ambiguities. Drawing upon empirical evidence to support her assertion, she notes that:

“If any cultural context is studied in enough depth, some things will be consistent, clear and generate organization wide consensus. Simultaneously other aspects of the culture will coalesce within sub-cultural boundaries and still other elements of the culture will be fragmented, in a state of constant flux, and infused with confusion.”

(p. 4)

In this assertion ‘integration’ depends on constancy of influence and of normative integration to determine consensus. Accordingly, ‘differentiation’ notes a clarity of inconsistencies and conflict. As such both exclude ambiguity. Despite the apparent exclusiveness of these frames of reference, Martin (2002) asserts that her perspectives fall short of being true paradigms and encouraging an “interplay” (p. 158) between them, she invokes the incommensurability debate. The implicit notion of commensurability subsequently allows researchers to enhance the

“awareness of irony and reflexivity that has enlivened the renaissance of interest in cultural phenomena while avoiding some of the turgid, self-limiting, and self-aggrandizing effects of any theoretical framework.”
Parker (2000) refutes Martin’s taxonomy. For him, the categorisation of ‘fragmentation’ is simply a meld of Martin’s differentiation and integration perspectives. As such ‘fragmentation’ provides a conceptual corridor within which one attempts to conflate two mutually exclusive perspectives. However, what appears to be more problematic is the idea that anything can be so definitive when related to the construct of culture. Whilst Parker refutes the notion of homogeneity, it is the paradigmatic nature of his assertion about prescription which can be extrapolated to note the danger of conferring any definitive structure on the construct.

Reflecting on his own research Parker notes that he is “simply unconvinced about the absolute importance of prescriptions against any particular research strategy” (Ibid: 218). Although he alludes to research strategies here, the notion of the potentially constraining influence of any exclusive set of meta-theoretical assumptions becomes clear. To opt for a clear advocacy for or against homogeneity predetermines what one perceives as culture, how one engages with culture and the outputs of that engagement. Essentially, by narrowing the focus thus, we are metaphorically taking a worldview of London.

Parker (2000) additionally refuses to use the term sub-culture, basing his rejection on the idea that the term simply implies a linear relationship of sub-ordination rather than alternative sources of difference. However, as the notion of cultural disparity has been noted previously to be premised on different levels of inclusion and exclusion across the organisational hierarchy, one has to question whether the term and its pejorative inferences is appropriate. Instead, he frames his heterogeneity perspective with elements of “unity and division” (p. 86).

He proposes that we can see “the culture of organizations as fragmented unities” (2000: 5). This fragmentation perspective acknowledges “contested ‘us’ and ‘them’ claims” (p. 227) along three types of division, i.e. spatial/functional, generational and occupational/professional (p. 189).\(^{35}\) In contrast, the unity perspective arises because

\(^{35}\) It is useful to note that Parker moves away from a simple expansion of exclusive frameworks by indicating that these divisions represent a convenient mode of identification rather than an attempt to comprehensively determine the location of fractures.
organisations operate within consistent frameworks of patriarchy, professionalism, management and organisation (Ibid).

The strength of his framework lies in the ability to focus on the 'fluid'. By accepting that both unity and fragmentation peaceably coexist without feeling the need to coalesce the two avoids the problems encountered in Martin's notion of fragmentation. Her attempts to impose a middle ground can be seen to incite "a form of schizophrenia" (Parker, 2000: 228) resulting from the imposition of order on disorder.

Despite the notion of integration, Martin's framework follows the traditional dualist divides by purporting a taxonomy of culture premised on mutual exclusivity. Distinctive sets of meta-theoretical assumptions suggest or are suggested by the resultant typologies. The persistent allusion to the meta-theoretical underpinnings of culture surfaces the need to consider the genesis of those assumptions. Meta-theoretical assumptions provide a distinctive set of criteria for ensuring that the way in which culture is manifest is in concert with the paradigmatic ascriptions of the author.

Paradigms propose "exclusive views of the world" (Burrell and Morgan: 1979, iix), a lens through which perceptions are translated into a comprehensible 'reality'. It is the role of meta-theoretical assumptions to consolidate that reality. The strength of the Parker (2000) framework lies in the ways in which it articulates the relationship between prescriptions of culture and the paradigmatic bias of that prescription. By avoiding immersion in any unitary set of meta-theoretical assumptions, he is able to surface the relationship between the functionalist notions of organisationally determined frameworks and the social construction of "us and them claims" (p. 227). Culture thus positioned is a dynamic entity, though this notion of dynamism has implications for the incommensurability claims to be discussed later in this thesis. A sequential relationship is charted from the paradigmatic stance of the author, through the ways in which meta-theoretical assumptions facilitate the requisite worldview. The two are made manifest in the modes of defining and modelling culture.

1.6 Conclusions

36 Albeit it would be interesting to consider what meaning Parker intended to convey in the use of the term schizophrenia.
In this chapter, culture was shown as constructed according to sets of assumptions held by authors. There is notable disagreement about these assumptions. Further discussion noted how the conceptualisation of culture is underpinned by philosophical frames of reference. These may be coalesced to produce relatively coherent paradigms.

Even with respect to definitions, there is a clear divide between those who problematise, and those who seek to stabilise the definitional process. Where the construct was seen as a manipulable commodity, definition was not only desirable, but definitional precision was crucial. Only by identifying clear manipulable components can one reinforce the construct of culture as a managerialist resource. Where the view of culture is one of an emergent and dynamic construct, definition is neither desirable nor possible; to constrain the construct to a specific manifestation would be at best disingenuous.

Having surfaced the difficulties encountered in defining culture, it was important to consolidate the view of what was being defined, some understanding of the construct per se. Therefore, the components of culture were considered. The literature produces a range of components.

Again the relationship between the worldview constructed and the motives underpinning that construction became apparent. Three conclusions are drawn. First, culture is a notional construct. Rather than a single entity, culture is a canopy under which various components are purposefully located. Second, the nature of the inclusions and exclusions reflects of the conceptual stance of the author. Third, for some authors, concurrence to their worldview is so crucial to the academic integrity of their work that components are not simply identified but given rank order.

Perspectives on culture are premised on a very distinctive set of meta-theoretical assumptions. In line with many of the definitions and frameworks of culture considered previously, the nature of the language used, the inclusion and exclusion of specific components of culture and the ordering of these can be seen to reflect the philosophical assumptions of the author. The review considered the differences between homogeneity and heterogeneity perspectives and between culture as a metaphor and culture as a variable.
Within the literature, this notion of disparate meta-theoretical assumptions is made manifest in the range of dualist perspectives on culture. Couched in overtones of mutual exclusivity, culture is often perceived as an 'either/or' construct. It is this notion of a definitive stance that makes it important to deconstruct these positions and the premises on which they are based. Ascribing to any particular stance on culture without a clear understanding of the political motives founding the ways in which that view of culture has been presented has major ramifications for any research stance. For example, ascription to the notion of corporate rather than organisational culture implies not only a set of values and beliefs about the nature of the construct but equally defines a set of more or less congruent research methods.

Here the paradigmatic nature of culture comes to the fore. Definition and the imputation of a normative structure constitute the frame of reference through which culture is viewed. The world view is narrowed in line with the meta-theoretical assumptions of the author. However, before I can argue in favour of the paradigmatic nature of culture it is important to consider what is understood by the term paradigm.
Chapter 2: Literature Review - Paradigms

2.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I asserted the paradigmatic nature of culture. In this chapter, I will review the literature on paradigms. I will begin by considering the Kuhnian (1962) stance and will identify its usefulness and limitations. I will then review the contributions of Burrell and Morgan (1979). Themes from the Kuhnian and Burrell and Morgan perspectives will be used to advise a discussion on the commensurability versus incommensurability debate. Lastly, I will present an account of the role of paradigms in research, and more specifically multi-paradigm research.

The conclusions drawn from this chapter will then be used to inform the creation of a robust research methodology.

2.1 Defining Paradigms

Within the study of organisations, the concept of paradigm has a relatively stable set of affiliations. A paradigm is a worldview (Houghton, 1998); it is a way of perceiving and understanding the context within which the scientific community find themselves (Kuhn, 1962/1970). Paradigms are seen as “alternative realities” (Morgan, 1980: 606) which are structured around a mix of “coherent rules” (Lewis and Kelemen, 2002: 3) and “ontological and epistemological assumptions” (Schultz and Hatch, 1996: 529).

The inclusion of assumptions about the nature of that reality and of the fundamental beliefs which underpin those assumptions is integral to many definitions of paradigms (Gioia and Pitre, 1990: 585; Lewis, 2001: 3; Schultz and Hatch, 1996: 529), however, as we will see, the ways in which such words are used is indicative of differences in the authorial stance. Handy (1985) defines the word ‘paradigm’ as a way of sense making; it is “a conceptual framework, a way of looking at the world, a set of assumed categories into which we pile facts” (p. 389). Paradigms become a repository within which pre-classified experiences of the world are aligned retrospectively to some notion of the truth. Handy (Ibid) asserts that, when new assumptions arise, they are in need of legitimation. Yet despite this need, the process of legitimation appears redundant. Experiences are legitimised not by the nature of those experiences but by the perception
of the relationship between those experiences and the selected “facts” with which they are associated. Legitimation is at the behest of the legitimator; fundamentally the paradigm controls the paradigm. This process of legitmation becomes the means of paradigm evolution.

However, Bryman’s (2001) definition of paradigms as “essentially divergent epistemological packages” (p.107) would militate against Handy’s idea of a simple transition between paradigms. His description of paradigms as “packages” (Ibid) imputes a sense of the discrete. Moreover, his use of the word “divergent” implies an increasing difference between the packages which would further impede any simple transition between the old and the new. Morgan (1980) adopts a similar stance. His definition of paradigms as “alternative realities” (p. 606) reinforces this emphasis on division. As we have seen, differences in definition have implications for the ways in which paradigms dissect the world. However, the genesis of these differences in contemporary definition can be seen as historic. Hassard (1993) identifies the roots of these divisions in the antecedents of the concept. By highlighting the philosophical divides between historic schools of thought, he recognises the foundations of paradigms as a divisive orthodoxy. Contemporary divisions reflect the conceptual and literary history of the concept.

In clarifying how historical context has influenced contemporary understanding, it is important to consider the work of Thomas Kuhn. His seminal contribution, ‘The Structure of Scientific Revolutions’ not only illuminates the concept of paradigm and its emergence as a conceptual framework, but also, by considering the paradoxical nature of his treatise, illustrates the tensions and complexities associated with a worldview premised on meta-theoretical assumptions.

2.2 Thomas Kuhn on Paradigms

Thomas Kuhn (1962/1970) recognised the concept of paradigms whilst challenging attempts by the existing scientific community to discredit the “development-by-accumulation” thesis (p. 2). This thesis argues that “later theories are better confirmed than earlier ones, and that rejected theories and less well confirmed than those that are accepted” (sic) (Bird, 2003: 2-3). Kuhn contradicted this. His argument was that instead of trying to recognise “the permanent contributions of an older science” (Kuhn, 1962:
3), the credibility of academic theory should be based on "an attempt to display the historical integrity of science within its own time" (Ibid). This is the idea that the usefulness of any theory should be judged with reference to historic relevance and the context within which the theory was originally devised.

Whilst seeking this historic relevance, Kuhn (1962) recognised the cyclical nature of scientific development. The early stages of most sciences are, he notes, characterised by both consistencies and differences. The magnitude of these differences compounds and is compounded by personal influences and the influences of the wider scientific community. Kuhn recognised a process in which periods of stability, where paradigm development was redundant, alternated with periods of instability where paradigm development took place. This idea of a cyclical relationship between activity and inactivity formed the antecedents to what Kuhn later defines as normal science and scientific revolution; events which occur within the framework of paradigms.

In his first publication, Kuhn (1962) describes paradigms as "universally recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners" (p. viii). However, there has been disagreement about the consistency with which he adheres to this definition. Masterman (1970) notes "On my counting he uses 'paradigm' in not less than twenty-one different senses"37 (p. 61).

Within the postscript of his second edition, Kuhn (1970) acknowledges this difficulty, noting the "gratuitous difficulties and misunderstandings" (p. 174) created by his initial work. He tries to clarify matters by delineating two distinct uses of the term, namely paradigm as "the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community" (Ibid: 175) and paradigm as "one sort of element in that constellation, the concrete puzzle-solutions which, employed as models or examples, can replace explicit rules as a basis for the solution of the remaining puzzles of normal science" (Ibid).

I note here that this distinction presents the concept of a paradigm as cognitively omnipotent; it is both the controlling and constraining overarching framework within which scientists do business, and the elements within that framework which determine

37Kuhn (1962a) acknowledges this criticism in his assertion that "For a particularly cogent criticism of my initial presentation of paradigms see: Margaret Masterman 'The nature of a paradigm' in Growth of Knowledge" (p. 174).
the answers elicited, and, (perhaps more importantly) the questions to be asked\textsuperscript{38}. Shapere (1981) considers the Kuhnian notion of paradigms as being beyond rules and laws, rather as "something more global, from which rules, theories and the like can be abstracted" \textsuperscript{39}(p. 36).

Yet despite this inferred omnipotence, the scientific community do not immediately concede to the demands of a new paradigm. Instead their conversion to a new world view is constrained by what Kuhn terms "normal science" (Ibid, 1970: 10). Normal science provides the status quo for the academic community, a period of universally accepted stability during which the crucial elements of the paradigm are substantiated and validated.

2.2.1 Normal Science and Scientific Revolution

Kuhn (1970) notes the existence of normal science, defining this as "the genesis and continuation of a particular research tradition, a domain in which research is guided by shared rules and standards" (p. 11). Both Masterman\textsuperscript{40} (1970) and Popper (1970) affirm the existence of normal science, however Popper includes a caveat. He refutes the assumptions that each domain of science ascribes to a singular dominant theory, expanding on the stultifying implications in concurring with this assertion. He notes instead that normal science has a fundamental role in the resolution of routine problematics. Normal science in this guise is demoted to little more than a rubric for problem solving.

De Mey (1982) notes the social aspects of normal science. Where a paradigm is "the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community" (Kuhn, 1970: 175) then normal science is the medium through which the paradigm becomes the modus operandi for the scientific community. The paradigm demands consensus in accepting the rules of engagement and a willingness to conform to these. The notion of community implies that a cultural medium of control contributes to the selection of scientific inclusions and exclusions. Inclusions are determined by a

\textsuperscript{38} The notion of paradigm as both constraining and constrained will be developed later in this thesis.

\textsuperscript{39} I note the use of the word abstracted here rather than extracted, indicative of a process of meta-theoretical elaboration.

\textsuperscript{40} Masterman (1970) notes "there is normal science- and that it is exactly as Kuhn says it is- is the outstanding, the crashingly obvious fact" (p. 60).
social and political dynamic as well as academic credibility. Indeed, Masterman (1970: 66) notes how the social aspects of a paradigm continue even in the absence of theory.

In Kuhn’s second (1970: 175) definition of paradigms ("one sort of element in that constellation, the concrete puzzle-solutions which, employed as models or examples, can replace explicit rules as a basis for the solution of the remaining puzzles of normal science"), normal science dictates the ways in which the paradigm influences the minutiae of research. It determines the nature of the problems to be identified and the frameworks used to reach solutions. This clearly incites the incommensurability debate to be expanded on later. If scientists are only able to seek the answers to questions determined within the confines of their own agreed paradigm, then immersion within the stable element of the paradigm is absolute and challenge only possible during the sporadic periods of scientific revolution.

Feyerabend (1970) rejects the notion of normal science. Recognising Kuhn’s emphasis on the "authoritarian, and narrow minded features of normal science" (p. 205). He notes how this leads to a "closing of the mind" (Ibid). Why, he asks, if the stability of normal science is so all-encompassing, do the majority not simply continue to solve puzzles according to tradition? De Mey (1982) identifies the ways in which this all encompassing stability of normal science is indicative of constraint. In particular, how the provision of dominant frames of logic reduces the magnitude of scientific research to that of "solving crossword puzzles, the filling in of elements into a prearranged pattern, according to various clues and restrictions provided" (p. 86). Hassard (1993) agrees, noting how paradigms indoctrinate scientists. Survival of the paradigm is assured as those within are denied original means of determining their own perspectives and any means of evaluating competing paradigms. Indeed he comments on the Orwellian nature of such an influence in his description of normal science as a "ruling dogma" which exercises hegemonic control" (p. 79).

The constraining nature of normal science has been made apparent here. The scientific community tries to retain its influence by the proliferation of autopoetic (Morgan; 1986) frames of reference. For change to occur, the types of questions people seek to answer and their established means and modes of investigation need to eventually concede to a

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41 Feyerabend (1970) notes this limitation as offering an “exclusive choice” (p. 201).
42 The expression “ruling dogma” was originally used by Popper (1970: 51) in his response to Kuhn’s critique of his views about science.
gathering pressure from non-conformist thinking inspired by a few (Kuhn, 1962: 92). A revolution then creates a new paradigm in the wake of the destruction of the old\textsuperscript{43}.

In persuading the scientific community to unite behind the new paradigm, Putnam (1981) recognises the need for this to be “striking” (p. 69) and “sufficiently impressive that the scientists...are led to try and emulate that success” (Ibid). Feyerabend (1970) doubts this is possible, asserting that not all members of the scientific community will coalesce with the new paradigm. As such, whilst the implications of seeing normal science as “very pervasive sorts of presuppositions” (Shapere, 1981: 35),\textsuperscript{44} become apparent, so do the implications for scientific revolution. For science to progress, the scientific community must concede to the demands of the new paradigm. Consensus needs to lie beyond the extant knowledge, the “one dominant theory” (Popper, 1970: 55) to a collective acceptance of:

i The identity and magnitude of the problem to be solved.

ii The decision to retain or reject the extant paradigm.

iii The decision to accept or reject the new paradigm.\textsuperscript{45}

The complexities associated with inhabiting a paradigm, the nature of scientific revolution\textsuperscript{46} and the relationships between the two are apparent. The stereotypical role (De Mey, 1982) of normal science anchors people to a collective and restrictive mindset within which “observation and experience can and must drastically reduce the range of admissible scientific belief” (Kuhn, 1962: 4). Paradoxically, the genesis of scientific revolution must occur outside the confines of the paradigm if it is to propose a new modus operandi. The relationship between the two purports a politically, intellectually and socially infused system directed by the “dominant coalition” (Kuchinke, 2001: 370). At the point of revolution, the world changes and the fundamental tenets to which the scientific community subscribes are changed irrevocably\textsuperscript{47}.

\textsuperscript{43} A point of distinct between scientific revolution and political revolution.

\textsuperscript{44} Shapere (1981) expands on this notion later to note three distinct types, i.e. presuppositions theory of meaning, presuppositions theory of problems and presupposition theory of relevance of facts to theory (p. 37).

\textsuperscript{45} The complexity of this sequence is enhanced when considered alongside Feyerabend’s (1981) notion of abstraction.

\textsuperscript{46} Which Bird (2002) describes as being akin to Gestalt psychotherapy.

\textsuperscript{47} Hassard (1993) asserts that the process is similar to that of a “religious conversion” (p. 77).
in favour of the new, science moves forwards in radical ways. Despite the radical nature of the challenges it is important to note that new paradigms do not spontaneously generate. Rather, they are nurtured and developed by a few within the field. Paradoxically, the Gestalt is incremental. Kuhn (1962) articulates the process by asserting that “no single argument that can or should persuade them all. Rather than a single group conversation, what occurs is an increasing shift in the distribution of professional allegiances” (p. 158). The Kuhnian proposition of the immediate and turbulent upset of the scientific community appears now to be diluted by a more insidious onset. Radical change is tempered by the inference of persuasion. For the scientific community, the gradual increase in un-answerable questions necessitates new and innovative ways of approaching these questions. The impetus for scientific revolution is no longer a unitary crisis, but “an accumulation of anomalies” (Bird, 2003: 9) from which the volume of unanswerable questions undermines the relevance of the extant paradigm. Crisis develops and the new paradigm emerges.

Despite this process moving the field of science forward, there is still within the Kuhnian (1962) notion of scientific revolution the inference of homogeneity. The idea that, across the scientific community, there will be a wide spread acceptance of the nature and magnitude of crisis is perhaps indicative of the assumption that a single question is being asked. Lakatos (1970) draws on this theme with his assertion that:

“The history of science has been and should be a history of competing research programmes (or, if you wish ‘paradigms’), but it has not been and must not become a succession of periods of normal science: the sooner the competition starts, the better for progress.”

(p. 155)

Watkins (1970) likewise recognises a tension. If normal science were to hold fast to the attributes suggested by Kuhn then it would be incapable of predicating revolutionary change. The issue is re-affirmed by Laudan’s (1981) assertion that “the actual development of science is closer to the picture of permanent co-existence of rivals and the omnipresence of conceptual debate than to the picture of normal science seems clear” (p. 153).

52 See Kuhn’s (1981) assertion that “Though they {anomalies} remain unassimilated, they impinge with gradually increasing force upon the consciousness of the scientific community” (p. 25).
2.2.2 Conclusions

Thomas Kuhn is credited with giving "the use of the word paradigm wide currency" (Bird, 2003: 2). His challenge was to note the discrepancies between; "the dominant theories of science – whether inductivist or deductivist" (Hassard, 1990b: 220) and reality. The emphasis on the nature of scientific revolutions drew attention to the potentially cyclical behaviour of science and presented a fundamental challenge to the positivist school of thought dominant at the time. His work implied a respect for, rather than dismissal of preceding traditions, and emphasised the importance of context in determining the relevance of scientific beliefs.

Despite the critiques surrounding Kuhn's work, paradigms are useful (Kuhn and Beam, 1982) in the ways in which they "typify in the most articulate way the conceptual scheme(s) of a specific normal science episode" (De Mey, 1982: 85).

However, the critiques remain powerful. Kuhn's work is dismissed on a range of levels. Feyerabend (1981) is vehement in his criticisms, describing Kuhn's work as "too vague to give rise to anything but hot air" (p. 161) and of instigating the invasion of the literature by "so many creeps and incompetents" (Ibid). He challenges the ambiguous presentation of Kuhn's work and questions the feasibility of normal science.

As we have seen, inconsistencies within Kuhn's thesis are widely recognised. In addition to his different usages of the word paradigm (Masterman, 1970) and his assumptions about the homogeneity of perspectives across a scientific community, the accuracy of his thesis is questioned by many. (Feyerabend, 1970; Lakatos, 1970; Masterman, 1970) Despite this, there is a value in the proposition that collectives ascribe to a set of shared meta-theoretical assumptions. The idea that discrete scientific communities think in stereotypical ways encourages a wider consideration of meta-theoretical assumptions. Additionally, the concept of community evokes a sociological focus rather than seeing paradigms as being tied solely into the realms of science. It is within Burrell and Morgan's (1979) book 'Sociological paradigms and organisational

53 For a comprehensive consideration see Feyerabend (1970) 'Consolations for the Specialist' in Lakatos and Musgrave (Eds) Criticisms and the Growth of Knowledge.

54 Functionalist overtones acknowledged.
analysis' (1979) that we see this connection between the concept of paradigms and the field of social science being more overtly made.

Whilst the work of Thomas Kuhn distinguished the concept of paradigms, the work of Burrell and Morgan transferred the concept of paradigms from science to the realms of sociology\textsuperscript{55}. Their work determined to challenge "academic sectarianism" (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: ix) by encouraging theorists to recognise the "meta-theoretical assumptions" (Ibid: iix) that they bring to an area of study. According to Burrell and Morgan (1979), recognition of the boundaries of paradigms would enable people to explore the unexplored; by implication, it is only by viewing the world from alternative perspectives that theorists can ever understand their own.

\textbf{2.3 Burrell and Morgan on Paradigms}

In developing an account of what a paradigm is, Burrell and Morgan (1979) produce a schema against which they examine the philosophical assumptions which underpin studies in social science. The schema is based on a "convenient conceptualisation" (p. 1) which sets out four dimensions. Paradigms, positioned against this frame of reference are defined as the "meta-theoretical assumptions which underwrite the frame of reference, mode of theorising and modus operandi of the social theorists who operate within them" (p. 23). Here the "meta-theoretical assumptions" (Ibid) are related to four specific positions (Figure 1). The ontological position notes the divide between beliefs in the existence of reality versus the construction of the social world. The epistemological position notes the divide between a positivist, truth seeking perspective and an anti-positivist, subjective perspective. The "mode of theorizing" recognises the focus on human nature and the use voluntarism or determinism as a precursor to thought. The "modus operandi" determines a mode of engagement based on the preceding assumptions.

\textsuperscript{55}Deetz (1996) notes that their willingness to accept Kuhn's "loose conception of paradigms" (p.191) invites a reification which determines a problematic.
Having determined clearly defined categories of meta-theoretical assumptions, Burrell and Morgan use these as the basis from which to develop a taxonomic framework for thinking about sociological schools of thought. Consideration of ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology are used to locate sociological schools of thought along the subjectivity versus objectivity axis of their taxonomy. The second axis they label is that of the Sociology of Regulation versus the Sociology of Radical Change. The resulting framework (Figure 2) identifies “four paradigms in social theory” (Ibid: 24), each founded on “different meta-theoretical assumptions” (Ibid), or more accurately a unique meld of meta-theoretical assumptions. The role of the framework is not simply to note the typologies but to provide “a heuristic device” (Ibid: xii). In presenting the taxonomy as a heuristic device, Burrell and Morgan (1979) propose that “all theories of organisation are based upon a philosophy of science and a theory of society” (p. x). The nature and configurations of the conceptual ascriptions to each of those presupposes a set of assumptions around which the key tenets of theory are located.

Ascription to a specific set of meta-theoretical assumptions presents an “intellectual map” (Ibid: xi) which allows schools of thought to be plotted in accordance with their conceptual and intellectual traditions. I consider plotting schools of thought as such to have a number of advantages. It clearly indicates similarity and difference, illuminating

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56 The functionalist, interpretive, radical humanist and radical structuralist paradigms.
the point at which once-shared traditions diverge or why rival traditions are located within their own unique territory. Moreover, recognition of founding meta-theoretical assumptions has implications for emergent theories within the same frame of reference. This allows people to predict developments within the field. Last, the world map presented illustrates those areas of intellectual engagement well served by the academic community and of those areas of intellectual engagement that are less well served.

**Figure 2**

The Sociology of Radical Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjective</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radical humanist</td>
<td>Radical structuralist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretive</td>
<td>Functionalist</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Sociology of Regulation

Conceptually, the framework presents four distinctive paradigms. It is this notion of distinctiveness which founds the basis for Burrell and Morgan's assertion of incommensurability. Each of the four paradigms is based on a unique set of meta-theoretical assumptions, thus each takes a different view of the world. These differences result from each paradigm using "distinct analyses" (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: iix) to construct their views of the world. The taxonomy thus presents four paradigms that are in "fundamental opposition" (Ibid). Incommensurability is assured as each of the paradigms "is sustained by a different language" (Jackson and Carter, 1991: 122). It is the distinctiveness of the paradigms which is key to upholding Burrell and Morgan's (1979) claims of incommensurability. Each of these paradigms will be considered individually before the thesis explores the incommensurability debate more widely.

57 Albeit this assertion has implications for the incommensurability debate and the ability to move within and between paradigms

56
2.3.1 The Functionalist Paradigm

The functionalist paradigm is located within the “objective” and “sociology of regulation” (Ibid: 22) quadrant of the taxonomy, integrating “realist, positivist, determinist and nomothetic” (Ibid: 26) stances. Assumptions on which the paradigm is based include the use of rational explanations for social affairs, and a problem-oriented approach in which reality exists as an objective and value free phenomenon. The overt relationship with the external environment implies that externally driven control is used to mediate and moderate social relationships. It is an essentially deterministic approach. The paradigm has a range of degrees of conformance, allowing for distinct genres of sociological thinking to be located closer to or further away from the boundaries constituted by the axes.

Morgan (1990) elaborates on the major contributions of a functionalist paradigm:

- The organisation both creates and refines a language which enables management and control. The implications here for the uniqueness of language to predicate incommensurability is discussed later in this thesis.

- The functionalist organisation helps to create ‘codified theories’ which are used to re-assess itself. This reflects the previously espoused notion of the inherently cultural nature of writing about culture (Jones, 2002), and is seen as being consistent with Morgan’s (1986) notion of “autopoesis” (p. 236) mentioned previously.

- The functionalist organisation perceives that problems relate to a loss of control, thus organisational structure and problem solving become the means of creating change. Within this context, it becomes apparent that problem solving is confined to the rules determined by the corporate. An analogy is drawn here with the Kuhnian notion of normal science.

- The functionalist organisation generates generalised knowledge which is perceived as being both verifiable and valid, despite the contentious issue of trying to quantify the qualitative.

- The functionalist organisation creates an environment of certainty.
Lewis (2001) recognises the “blindspots” (p. 9) associated with the functionalist paradigm. There is an emphasis on neutrality over and above any consideration of a political dynamic, rationality takes precedent over affect or emotion. There is also a failure to integrate “more latent cognitive, symbolic and social processes that impact implementation” (Ibid).

Gioia and Pitre (1990) emphasise the functionalist focus on “regularities and relationships” (p. 590) which, according to Lewis and Kelemen (2002) places the emphasis firmly on stability and structure.

2.3.2 The Interpretive Paradigm

The interpretive paradigm is located within the “subjectivist” and “sociology of regulation” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 28) area of the taxonomy. The premise here is that reality is socially constructed, and comprises a “network of assumptions and intersubjectively shared meanings” (Ibid: 28-31). Within this context, the notion of complicity is inferred, being based on the individual’s willingness to contribute to the process of social construction. Despite the emergent nature of any socially constructed reality, the issue of regulation is important. The construction of any reality is premised on the need for there to be an underlying sense of order and of integration (Ibid).

Within the interpretive paradigm, meanings, individual and shared, are confirmed through interaction. Contributions to the emergent reality are subjective, internal and homogenised. Subjectivity is the frame of reference through which the individual engages with the process of social construction. The notion of internality is indicative of the idea that the construction of reality is specific to those integral to the process. Lastly, the issue of homogeneity reflects consensus. The sharedness of the paradigm is implicit. All those included participate in the construction of a reality which they subsequently inhabit.

Lewis (2001) notes a fundamental weaknesses with the interpretive paradigm, in particular its sole dependence on interpretation. She recognises that where the social construction of reality excludes the influence of structure, systems and technology, then
the approach is deemed to lack breadth; the validity of perceptions can be challenged\textsuperscript{58}. It is the lack of any dialogue between these concepts and social construction which I would use as the basis for critiquing the isolative nature of both the functionalist and interpretive paradigms. Within their presentation of the interpretive paradigm, Burrell and Morgan (1979) imply an awareness of the difficulties by citing Bittner’s (1965) attempt to delineate construction from structure. Despite noting that Bittner’s work is premised on “a series of organisational and societal relationships which seem to be accepted unquestioningly” (p. 264) they still locate this work within the confines of the interpretive paradigm.

A second critique is that of achieving a consensual output that is a socially constructed reality. Lewis and Kelemen (2002) note that where a “structuring process” (p. 262) is used to achieve a view of reality, then the dynamics of the group involved need to be reconcilable. Here I would argue that if the integrity of the interpretive paradigm is to be upheld then motive, political dynamic and personal power are disenfranchised for the sake of constructing a unitary view of the world.

2.3.3 The Radical Structuralist Paradigm

The radical structuralist paradigm is located in the quadrant formed between the “sociology of radical change” and “objectivist” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 33) dimensions. The objective focus aligns that of the functionalist paradigm, with the sociology of radical change forming a realist and deterministic emphasis on the modes of domination. Structural conflict and contradiction are inherent within what is an essentially positivist perspective.

The radical structuralist paradigm presents a milieu for the “radical critique of contemporary society” (Ibid: 357-358), within which structures change following the advent of serious conflict. Underlying this conflict are four key tenets, namely totality, structure, contradiction and control.

The notion of totality encompasses all facets of the social world. As a shared worldview, the paradigm engulfs all facets of “social formations” (Ibid: 358). The notion of structure sees control as exuding from externally existing social relationships. These relationships portray differing worldviews and “exist independently of men’s

\textsuperscript{58} Verificationist connotations acknowledged.
consciousness” (Ibid). The notion of contradiction pulls on the tensions emerging from the level of structural control. During periods of social change, tensions build within society until crisis forces a revolutionary change moving people from the extant paradigm to the emergent paradigm; moving them “from one totality to another”59 (Ibid: 359). The cyclical nature of revolution implies that a mounting disenchantment with the new paradigm initiates the disquiet which builds into the next revolution.

The principal critiques of the radical structuralist paradigm relate to the notion of collective objectivity and totality. Collective objectivity assumes that for “structural dislocation” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 359) of an extreme form to occur, there is a consensual notion of crisis, even though contradiction is inherent within the paradigm. Accordingly, all those existing within the paradigm experience the externally existing crisis in exactly the same way. Perhaps what is experienced here is a bounded disenchantment which is consensual amongst the politically dominant. Contradiction is inherent within the community even though those opposing revolution are powerless to resist.

Thus one has to consider whether the founding tenet of contradiction itself militates against totality. To elaborate, where there exists a tension between structure and relationship, at what point does that tension become intolerable, who makes that decision and is it possible to exclude any form of subjectivity and interpretation? This complexity is compounded when one considers what totality actually is. For those located within the paradigm, totality becomes the sum of the world that they experience. Thus structured incommensurability (to be discussed later in this thesis) becomes a given.

Gioia and Pitre (1990) also note the exclusion of the human element from the notion of “transformation” (p. 589) and the emphasis on “dysfunctional structural relationships” (Ibid) as the prime motivation for revolution. The tendency here is for the structural to take precedent and simply “negate(s) the influences of ideologies and rhetoric” (Lewis, 2001: 12). Essentially, one needs to question how a group who are completely impotent whilst existing within the paradigm can suddenly regain control at the time of revolution?

59 Analogies are again drawn here with Gestalt psychotherapy.
2.3.4 The Radical Humanist Paradigm

The radical humanist paradigm is located against the "sociology of radical change" and the "subjectivist" (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 32) axes, the main emphasis being on human consciousness. The subjectivity aspects are aligned to those of the interpretive paradigm considered previously, however, the sociology of radical change creates an emphasis on control via "radical changes, modes of domination and deprivation" (Ibid). Control is voluntaristic and assumes a subjective albeit collective mantle. Voluntarism is indicative of "intentionality" (Ibid: 280). Individuals use interpretations to create an external world. The individual here is both captor and captive as the discourse produced ensures that "they are locked in a dialectic relationship in which one defines and influences the other" (Ibid). Kelemen and Lewis (2002) recognise a complexity here between "reified deep structures\(^{60}\) and communicative distortions" (p. 262). Consistency of meaning is drawn from the reified structures whilst distortions undermine consensus.

Critiques of the paradigm can be levelled from two perspectives. First, although one can perceive the paradigm as being a pejorative means of alienation, i.e. people become trapped within their own mode of constraint, this mode of constraint may posit a means of survival. The notion of man separating himself from his "true being" (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 280) may have a utility. Where the "true being" (Ibid) is intolerable to the individual a pseudo-being presents a preferable mode of incarceration. Second, Burrell and Morgan (Ibid) use the term "pathology of consciousness" (p. 306) to describe the means by which the entrapment takes place. The notion of pathology implies a "deviation from the normal healthy state" (Oxford English Dictionary), inferring that either this is the exception rather than the rule, or determining a chronicity which it would be difficult to substantiate.

2.3.5 The Strengths of the Burrell and Morgan Taxonomy

In considering the strengths of the Burrell and Morgan taxonomy, Willmott (1993a) notes that as a fundamental "textbook" (p. 681) it provides a valued resource for those wishing to contextualise contemporary studies of organisation. The discussion of schools of thought and the relationships between these schools provides a road map, indicative of the development of sociological thinking. Indeed, Morgan (1990) notes

\(^{60}\) Albeit there is a potential debate regarding the appropriateness of locating 'reification' within an interpretive paradigm.
that the taxonomy so constructed fulfils the dual purpose of classifying social theory as well as offering to those engaged in organisational research “an invitation to discern and explore the deep structure of assumptions which underlie different modes of theorizing” (p. 14). This idea could be expanded to assert that, in the same way that Hassard (1991) recognises the ways in which Burrell and Morgan dissect social science, the taxonomy facilitates empirical and philosophical dissection at the next level of abstraction.

Lewis and Kelemen (2002) note that the value of the taxonomy expands beyond its contribution at a philosophical level and has practical implications for research. The taxonomy encourages reflexivity in research; an emphasis not only on what we look at but on exploring the meta-theoretical assumptions with which we underpin that worldview. It opens research to a “vibrant field, replete with diverse theoretical views” (Lewis, 1991:1) and encourages people to challenge the domination of positivism. Willmott (1993a) concurs, acknowledging that the work “emancipates organizational analysis” (p. 682).

Within the study of organisations the taxonomy challenges stagnation in thinking by presenting alternative frames of reference. Indeed, in their introduction, Burrell and Morgan (1979) note their concerns with “academic sectarianism” (p. ix). The paradigms they nominate collectively determine an incisive schema (Parker, 2000) which facilitates a greater “breadth and quality of empirical approaches to the study of organizations” (Martin, 1990: 30). Accordingly, researchers move away from the “mono-method monopolies in organizational analysis” (Ibid) and the founding verificationist stance; engaging instead in “translating, penetrating and investigating different modes of rationality” (Lewis and Kelemen, 2002: 253).

Despite the wide-ranging contributions made by the Burrell and Morgan taxonomy, it is important to consider the limitations associated with the framework.

2.3.6 The Weaknesses of the Burrell and Morgan Taxonomy.

Building on the philosophical and research orientated strengths of the taxonomy, the weaknesses too can be seen from these perspectives (Hassard, 1993). From a philosophical perspective, there are a number of criticisms. Deetz (1996) suggests that rather than moving away from the hegemony of functionalism, in defining alternative
paradigms by their degree of alignment with functionalism, paradoxically the taxonomy reinforces that hegemony. The three remaining paradigms are seen simply as appendages of the functionalist stance.

Hassard (1993) notes the negotiable location of some of the schools of thought, in particular the location of Silverman’s action theory at the subjectivist end of functionalism rather than within the interpretive paradigm. This notion of degrees of conformance to the meta-theoretical values of each paradigm has implications for the incommensurability debate to be discussed later in this thesis.

Moreover, Deetz (1996) notes that the taxonomy has led to a “tendency to reify concepts” (p. 191). The resultant framework is thought to conceal rather than reveal areas of difference (Ibid). Willmott (1993a) too recognises the limitations imposed by structure. The creation of four neatly bounded paradigms, each with its own specific components presents a “self-consciously nominalist device for underscoring the diversity of forms of organisational analysis” (p. 683). Rather than allowing diversity to emerge, it is de facto confined to four discrete units. This idea of division or fracture (Parker, 2000) can be explored to note the potentially constraining impact for research, with each discourse being located in “hermetically sealed intellectual compartments” (Hassard and Kelemen, 2002: 336).

Indeed, these concerns are in concert with Kuhn’s (1962) assertion that “each paradigm will be shown to satisfy more or less the criteria that it dictates for itself, and to fall short of those dictated by it’s opponent” (p. 109-110).

Although the usefulness of the taxonomy is perceived as encouraging people to articulate a priori the assumptions founding their perspectives, I have to express a concern. Assumptions are broad based and impact all facets of perception, as such one needs to consider the notion of incompleteness. How many of our assumptions are we as individuals able to surface? This issue of incompleteness reflects the omissions within the Burrell and Morgan text. Although in many areas the taxonomy is seen as definitive and prescriptive, e.g. the specific configuration of the meta-theoretical assumptions underpinning each of the typologies61, in other areas the lack of specificity

61 “Derived from diametrically opposed assumptions about the basic nature of the social world” (Burrell and Morgan: 1979: x).
is seen as problematic. As such, despite the clarity of definition and the demarcation between paradigms, Burrell and Morgan (1979) assert “We advocate our scheme as a heuristic device rather than a set of rigid definitions” (p. xii). Moreover, although Burrell and Morgan (1979) acknowledge that “Some inter-paradigm debate is also possible”\(^6\) (p. 36) there is little evidence to suggest how this is enabled against a backdrop of incommensurability.

From a research perspective, Hassard’s (1993) key concern is that of isolative application with little or no regard to internal validity. To elucidate, where researchers are presented with a “heuristic device” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: xii), the temptation is to utilise research to validate that device, rather than to engage a subject-focused dialogue. In this situation, the research output becomes a singular commentary on validity of the taxonomy rather than on the empirically broader results. Within the context of this thesis, the idea of research outputs being skewed by the method in use is of crucial importance. I will return to this later in this thesis.

2.3.7 Conclusions

The strengths and the weaknesses of the Burrell and Morgan framework are manifold. The taxonomy does not purport to be right or wrong, simply a means of inspiring a greater depth and breadth of considerations regarding organisations. Yet within this, the taxonomy, and the intrinsic claims of incommensurability between the paradigms, stands in opposition to this notion of “opening up alternative forms of analysis” (Willmott, 1993a: 681).

When Burrell and Morgan (1979) challenge the validity of having a “dominant orthodoxy” (p. ix) they do so by asserting “we advocate our scheme as a heuristic device” (Ibid: xii). Yet by defining each paradigm as “mutually exclusive” they essentially militate against that challenge. The taxonomy, thus constrained becomes a means by which one can empirically use a singular paradigm lens to view the paradigm within which one is immersed. Incommensurability is invoked by the ways in which they characterise the concept of paradigms.

\(^6\) Emphasis added.
This notion of incommensurability is crucial, not only to the viability of the taxonomy, but also to the ability of those in the field of social science to engage with anything other than the predominant mode of thinking.

2.4 Paradigm Incommensurability

Within the field of mathematics the concept of incommensurability is clear. (Sankey, 1998) It exists where there is an absence of any comparable unit of measurement. The discrete nature of two or more elements negates the possibility of any comparison. Within the study of organisations the concept of incommensurability is less clear. Ambiguity is created because the fundamental premise of the incommensurability debate is, according to Weaver and Gioia (1994: 569), a matter of linguistics. We have noted previously (see sections 1.1 – 1.2) how the use of definition imputes a normative structure to the concept of culture. The same applies here. The use of language in defining paradigms and within the definitions of incommensurability presupposes a particular normative structure. The nature of that structure implies a type of incommensurability. Four types of incommensurability will be considered.

Semantic Incommensurability

Semantic incommensurability is premised on the idea that people immersed in different paradigms speak different languages. From a Kuhnian (1970) perspective the failure to communicate is between sequential paradigms in the wake of scientific revolution. This is problematic. In considering some of the contradictions in Kuhn’s thesis, we have previously recognised the insidious rather than spontaneous onset of scientific revolution. Where a scientific community is constrained by the lexicon of the extant paradigm, and, on the understanding that this language is disparate from that of the emergent paradigm, then transition between the two is not possible. To facilitate scientific revolution one would have to reconcile one of two factors. First, the necessity for those leading the revolution to speak the two languages contemporaneously or second, the ability for people to construct a totally new language without recourse to any previously known forms of language.
Taxonomic Incommensurability

Taxonomic incommensurability relates to the inability to “transfer the natural categories employed within one taxonomic structure into the categorical system of another such structure” (Sankey: 1997: 425). Here the fundamental differences in the nature of what is being studied prohibits an exchange between the two and “trans-paradigmatic reasoning of scientific knowledge is no longer possible” (Scherer, 1999: 2). The scientific community remains tied to their meta-theoretical assumptions. The scientific community works within clearly defined categorisations of knowledge. These categories frame the questions they can ask and the answers they can generate. Again this is problematic for the Kuhnian conceptualisation of scientific revolution. Although the notion of the creation of new modes of thinking is accepted, one is minded of Smircich’s (1983) assertion that “all scientists create knowledge about the world through the drawing out of implications of different metaphoric insights for their subject of study”63 (p. 340). Scientists judge contemporary knowledge by comparing this to historic models of knowledge. When asserting taxonomic incommensurability this is not possible. Disparities between the sense-making schemata prohibit comparison. Scientific revolution is frustrated as scientists are unable to judge the contemporary relevance of new modes of thinking.

Consideration of semantic and taxonomic incommensurability focuses on the content aspects of paradigms. In the former, the use of an exclusive language is defined into the characterisation of paradigms (cf. Jackson and Carter, 1991). In the latter, the ways in which knowledge is classified are deemed exclusive to each paradigm. Exchange between the old paradigm and the new paradigm is not possible. This focus on the idea of ‘old’ and ‘new’ paradigms draws attention to the time value of paradigms and to the notions of parallel and sequential incommensurability.

Parallel Incommensurability

The Burrell and Morgan (1979) account of paradigms invokes the notion of parallel incommensurability. For Burrell and Morgan, incommensurability is predicated on “the co-existence of four distinct and rival paradigms defined by very basic meta-theoretical assumptions in relation to the nature of science and society” (p. 36). The structure of each paradigm is both inclusive and exclusive. It defines a view of reality confined to

63 Emphasis in the original.
those immersed in that frame of reference. Exclusion is such that “in their pure forms they {paradigms} are contradictory” (Ibid: 25). Parallel incommensurability then is premised on a number of issues. At a fundamental level, co-existing paradigms demonstrate “commitment to opposing beliefs in the nature of the foundational assumptions” (Jackson and Carter, 1991: 110). Paradigms “separate a group of theorists in a very fundamental way from theorists located in other paradigms” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 23). This idea of paradigm specific identities invokes consideration of semantic incommensurability. Indeed, Jackson and Carter (1991) are vehement in their assertion that not only does “each paradigm has a discrete language of its own” (p. 110), but that the integrity of these languages should be preserved. Their characterisation of paradigms produces a situation in which individual taxonomies are so clearly different that paradigm communities are unable to communicate in any language outside their own. This aspect of incommensurability has a resonance with the constraining nature of normal science discussed previously. Language guides the questions to be asked and the answers to be given. In elaborating on parallel incommensurability, Scherer (1999) recognises how this language constraint determines the “criteria of scholarliness which are recognised within a certain school of researchers.... But not in other schools” (p. 1-2). Sankey (1998) elaborates on this theme by noting that whilst the language-in-use between rival paradigms may be in concert, incommensurability occurs because of a “translation failure between the vocabularies of theories” (p. 2). Moreover, the notion of disparate taxonomies and of the failure to communicate between paradigms evokes another dimension of incommensurability, that of “absence of common standards of appraisal” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 22). Cumulatively semantic differences, taxonomic differences and disparate standards of appraisal imply confinement within a specific school of thought. This is unproblematic if one is content to remain within the confines of a specific paradigm \textit{ad infinitum}.

\textit{Sequential Incommensurability}

Sequential incommensurability is premised on the inability to communicate between the extant paradigm and the emergent paradigm. The notion of a new paradigm replacing the old paradigm is fundamental to Kuhn’s (1962) account of scientific revolution. Sequential incommensurability is premised on the same divisive aspects as parallel incommensurability\textsuperscript{64}. Sankey (1999), however, explores this concept further by noting the way in which the radical transition between the old paradigm and the new

\textsuperscript{64} Namely, taxonomic disparity, different languages and lack of shared means of evaluation.
paradigm impacts the incommensurability thesis. To uphold the thesis of incommensurability, in the first instance taxonomic disparities must exist. There must be a “radical difference between the systems of orientation” (p. 2) and these “systems of orientation” (Ibid) need to be so discrepant that they necessitate the rejection of the old in favour of the new. Compromise is not an option. To compound these differences, Scherer (1999) notes that there needs to be “at the same time also a relationship of competition or conflict which makes it necessary to decide between the systems of orientation at issue” (Ibid). This notion of competition concurs with Burrell and Morgan’s (1979) assertion that the relationship between paradigms is one of “disinterested hostility” (p. 36). With the paradigms juxta-positioned, Scherer (1999) notes the lack of acceptable standards to facilitate a decision between the two competing paradigms. Ronan (1998) posits that the decision is frustrated by a lack of “common reference” (p. 1). Putnam (1981) concurs with this lack of a shared evaluative framework recognising the absence of any “neutral historical or methodological cannons to which to appeal” (p. 36). Clearly, where there are no decision-making criteria, the potential for the political dynamic rather than reasoned scientific debate to determine the nature of the emergent paradigm should be considered.

2.4.1 Ambiguity within the Thesis of Incommensurability

Despite the clear delineation of factors contributing to the assertion of incommensurability, there is ambiguity within the thesis.

Although many of Burrell and Morgan’s (1979) assertions recognise their taxonomy as premised on parallel incommensurability, they create a somewhat paradoxical stance. By asserting that “the unity of the paradigm thus derives from reference to alternatives views of reality which lie outside its boundary” (p. 23-24) they imply that people can view alternative worldviews. Additionally, that people are able to understand the language of alternative paradigms even though the philosophies underpinning those paradigms are “in fundamental opposition” (Ibid: iix) to their own. Their assertion would appear to acknowledge some degree of comprehension between social theorists located within each of the paradigms, rather than the idea of paradigm exclusive

65 Lakatos (1970) terms this radical transformation “mob psychology” (p. 178).
66 “The four paradigms are mutually exclusive” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 25) “In their pure forms they are contradictory” (Ibid), there are “four conflicting paradigms” (Ibid: 36).
languages\textsuperscript{67}. It would appear that the language in use evokes meaning but is insufficient to persuade the community towards a new set of meta-theoretical assumptions. Burrell and Morgan continue by noting that although these alternative paradigms propose a frame of reference, this may not actually be "recognised as existing" (Ibid: 24). The complexity is in understanding how a group can use information that they might not know exists, which is premised on disparate meta-theoretical assumptions and which is articulated in a different but comprehensible language. Additionally, how does one ensure that the collectivity use this information to reinforce the unity of the paradigm in which they currently reside?

Burrell and Morgan's (1979) notion of incommensurability is founded on the assertion that between each of the paradigm typologies, "the differentiation is...of sufficient importance to warrant treatment of the paradigms as four distinct entities" (p. 23). Yet within their discussions they note that there are degrees of conformance to those criteria used to nominate a specific typology. In doing, this they note that each paradigm presents a range of "intellectual territory" (Ibid: 24) and that "extreme positions in terms of one or two dimensions" (Ibid) can be adopted. The implication is that intra-paradigm mobility exists. It is interesting to note that the Kuhnian notion of normal science and scientific revolution could be being played out here in miniature.

If, as is implied, intra-paradigm mobility exists, then the integrity of incommensurability is compromised. Where it is asserted that there is the freedom to move within the confines of a specific paradigm, then one has to consider why it is not possible to move across what can be construed as a arbitrary barrier between paradigms. Accordingly, within any paradigm movement is permitted along either or both of the axes but not across. The way in which schools of thought are positioned within the taxonomy would appear to indicate a decreasing affinity with the fundamental tenets of the labels, the further one moves away from the poles. Thus we see a continuum which charts progression towards the opposing paradigm. Accordingly, the greater the movement along an axis, the further away from their original conceptions the person can be seen to have moved. Hypothetically, the magnitude of change from crossing the boundaries between paradigms may therefore be significantly less than the preceding progressions up to the boundary. Despite this, Burrell and Morgan (1979) assert that inter-paradigm journeys are "not often achieved" (p. 24). Implicit within the Burrell and

\textsuperscript{67} See Jackson and Carter, 1991.
Morgan taxonomy is the understanding that the “map” (Ibid: 24) they provide allows for one directional movement only. Once a person has moved their thinking along an axis, they cannot, in the future, revert to their previous level of conformance. This is because any iterative process would allow people to straddle the paradigm boundaries, holding the dual membership that Burrell and Morgan refute in their statement that “one cannot operate in more than one paradigm at any one time” (Ibid). Interpreting Burrell and Morgan thus one can infer that cross paradigm communication is possible as a means to frame one’s worldview, and that within the confines of that worldview thinking can move incrementally up to the lines that divide the paradigms, but the step across the paradigm is a bridge too far. As such, movement is halted at the boundary and regression not possible. The disparity between the meta-theoretical assumptions underpinning the paradigm are too great.

Donaldson (1998) asserts that incommensurability is not caused by disparate theories of organisation creating fragmented perspectives, but by the ways in which the social groups mediate those theories and then place emphasis on differences as a political means of creating incommensurability. In its simplest form this predicates the whole commensurability versus incommensurability debate, i.e. there are varied perspectives (individual and collective) on what constitutes a paradigm, language is used to define the concept and the use of language implies a normative structure through which the researcher can hopefully convince the audience of the viability of their case. Authors position and counter-position to sell their arguments. Incommensurability is no longer a world view, but a view of a world view.

Burrell and Morgan’s (1979) notion of incommensurability does not fit easily with the issue of irreconcilable differences. Although they assert radical differences between each of the paradigms (each occupying a unique location along the two axes), they also recognise the similarities (“contiguous because of the shared characteristics” Ibid: 23). It is the recognition of these shared dimensions of differentiation that can be seen as the basis for any comparison, a comparison based on the notion that shared dimensions of differentiation would indicate at least a minimal congruity between vocabularies. This ability to communicate then becomes the foundation of a persuasive dialogue, one which reflects the Kuhnian notion of the insidious onset of scientific revolution.

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In considering incommensurability, Kuhn’s thesis of scientific revolutions implicates a transient plurality. The insidious challenges to the extant paradigm which are already in train, allow for the co-existence of dual perspectives. Once the emergent paradigm takes precedence, homogeneity resumes. Homogeneity is reinforced as the new paradigm provides sufficient problems for the scientific community to continue to resolve. Consensus towards and a belief in a particular research tradition is part of the perpetuating process. As such, past achievement guides present perceptions, recognition of problems and the search for resolutions. New ideas are not possible as the framework for problem identification and action remains confined to the new paradigm. It is only as the existing paradigm becomes increasingly unable to answer the questions asked, that challenges from some in the scientific community begin to emerge. Despite this, Hassard advocates that residents of a specific paradigm “can never concede to the premises of another” (1990b: 221), the elements of each paradigm being so disparate that the distinctions negate even communication between the two. Whilst this notion could be seen to support the notion of parallel incommensurability, it would be undermined by the notion of sequential incommensurability, in which the destruction of the old paradigm (Hassard, 1990b) presents the laggards of the scientific community with a fait accompli. Indeed, Kuhn asserts that the “normal-science tradition that emerges from a scientific revolution is not only incompatible but often actually incommensurable with that which has gone before” (1962: 103).

In summary, incommensurability is the second level of reductionism within the construct of paradigms. The first level is the definition of paradigm itself. Paradigms are a product of human construction; the ways in which authors use language and the values they impute reflect their conceptualisation of paradigms. Yet these conceptualisations are often problematic. First, they are subjective and as such are more reflective of authorial motive than they are of any objective sense of reality. Second, defining a worldview against, for example, the dimensions of a 2 x 2 matrix constrains thinking. Such a reductionist approach serves little purpose other than to feed into the existing literature, be that critically or uncritically.

To assume that paradigms constitute a view of the world in toto would be naïve. As Deetz (1996) points out “paradigms are incommensurable as they strive to maintain coherence, but are commensurable to the extent that they encounter the ultimately
indeterminant outside world” (p. 193). It is this idea of contact with the outside world which has repercussions for the roles of paradigms in research. Scherer (1999) recognises that although many writers adopt a position of incommensurability, their work implicitly recognises that a continuing dialogue between the paradigms is possible, indicating the fact that paradigms are not entirely closed. This position can be seen as taking the concepts of incommensurability and commensurability and merging both as a single concept. What becomes apparent here is that in conflating the two, the magnitude of one is inversely proportional to that of the other. Incommensurability is dismissed in favour of a ‘degrees of commensurability’ perspective, a conceptualisation which is seen to support the role of paradigms within research.

2.5 Paradigms in Research

Within the study of organisations Morgan (1990) notes that there is a gathering pressure for a wider systematic exploration of organisations. Multi-paradigm research is proposed by many (Hassard, 1985; Graham-Hill, 1994; Lewis, 1997; Schultz and Hatch, 1998; Kamoche, 2000; Lewis and Kelemen, 2002) as a means of investigation appreciating plurality and paradox within the study of organisations. This is not without contention. Objections are seen from two perspectives, one in which multi-paradigm research is deemed not desirable, the other in which multi-paradigm research is deemed not possible. In this section, I will consider the driving forces for a focus on paradigms in research before discussing whether multi-paradigm research is appropriate.

Morgan (1983) notes the usefulness of identifying “the basic paradigm that serves as a foundation of inquiry” (p. 21). By identifying the paradigm one is better able to see how the use of method has informed the characterisation of the results. Being sensitised (Lewis, 1999) to the roles of paradigms in research enables comment going beyond the views of organisations seen, to the ways in which those views have been privileged. The nature of the relationship between what the researcher saw and why they saw this can be explored to give depth and richness to the research results.

However, where one retrospectively acknowledges how a paradigm-specific approach has informed the relationship between research and results, one is commenting on a race already run. The benefits are limited. Research grounded in a “comparatively narrow set of meta-theoretical postulates” (Willmott, 1993a: 684) will be seen to conform to the boundaries of those postulates. The ways in which research in a singular paradigm
tradition offers no more than a commentary on a single view of organisations is problematic when viewing the complex phenomenon that is an organisation (Deetz, 1996). Difficulties emerge because of plurality and the multi-faceted nature of organisations (Glynn, 2000). Diversity of function and diversity across and within workgroups is compounded by the idea that "difference accumulates" (Morgan, 1983: 40). Even where insightful reflection recognises how a paradigm-specific lens has shaped a particular view of organisation, one is simply acknowledging the ways in which research has "proceeded along the lines of homogenizing an increasingly diverse set of stakeholders" (Glynn, 2000: 3-4).

This critique is levelled at both a retrospective consideration of the paradigm-specific lens used and the purposive application of a paradigm-specific lens. Either way, such a singular focus fails to acknowledge the breadth and depth of complexity within an organisation. The inadequacy of mono-methodologies (Martin, 1990) becomes apparent. Where one tries to "capture effectively the salient world-views and intellectual traditions" (Kamoche, 2000: 69) of the researched through a single lens, one is adopting a reductionist stance, a "monocular view" (Ibid: 74). Lewis (1997) notes how the narrowness of such a view simply "fosters polarization, limiting the insightfulness and the usefulness of the resulting theory" (p. 15). Research contributes greater breadth and depth to the thinking about organisations when no one set of assumptions are privileged (Graham-Hill, 1996).

In considering whether multi-paradigm research is desirable, Hassard (1993) notes how some academics are "unsure whether analytical fragmentation represents a threat or an opportunity" (p. 49). Many recognise the need for a liberating approach to research (Schultz and Hatch, 1996; Willmott, 1993a, 1993c; Lewis, 1998; Gioia and Pitre, 1999) whilst others see this penchant for eclecticism as prostitution. Indeed, Pfeffer (1993) notes the detrimental impacts that this eclecticism creates. By diluting a dominant focus, multi-paradigm research reduces "the field's ability to make scientific progress" (p. 599), primarily because "consensus is a necessary, although clearly not sufficient, condition for the systematic advancement of knowledge" (Ibid). As such the development of multi-paradigm approaches to the study of organisations "presents a serious obstacle to scientific growth in the field" (Ibid: 600). Deetz (1996) disagrees

69 Defined as "devotion to an unworthy cause" Chambers Dictionary.

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noting how a dominant focus “over time becomes inward looking, isolated from the problems of the larger society and filled with blinders and trained incapacities” (p. 204).

In considering whether multi-paradigm research is possible, Parker and McHugh (1991) note the constraining nature of the meta-theoretical postulates to position their objections to multi-paradigm research. Where paradigms are accepted as exclusive frames of reference challenged only by scientific revolution then incommensurability prohibits a view of anything other than the paradigm within which one is immersed. The ability to adopt different paradigmatic positions is nullified. Deetz (1996) agrees noting how the “multiperspectival cosmopolitan envisioned by Morgan (1986) or Hassard (1991) is often both illusionary and weak” (p. 204).

What becomes apparent here is that the way in which one characterises the concept of paradigms is crucial to whether or not one can justify multi-paradigm research. Parker and McHugh (1991) hold fast to Burrell and Morgan’s (1979) assertion of incommensurability, accordingly paradigm integrity is the only way in which “researchers can keep their core assumptions inviolate and coherent” (Parker and McHugh, 1991: 451). There are within this claim a number of assumptions. The first is that one can classify core assumptions against the perimeters of a two-by-two matrix. To contain one’s view of the world to the dimensions nominated in the Burrell and Morgan taxonomy presents a substantially reductivist approach. Reality constitutes no more than a position along two axes. Second, there is an inherent determinism. Once one is located within a paradigm one is not only tied to viewing the world through that paradigm but one is also charged with defending that paradigm against the threat of violation. Coherence implies research in the tradition of Deetz’s (1996) notion of “blinders and trained incapacities” (p. 204).

In challenging these ‘trained incapacities’, Hassard (1985) used a multi-paradigm research strategy to generate richer insights into the researched organisation. His approach was not without criticism. First, the idea that one can purposefully immerse oneself into the philosophical traditions of four discrete paradigms is problematic (Parker and McHugh, 1991). Second, the idea that this approach then produces an

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70 Hassard’s (1985) research in particular.
71 Despite the contradictions in the Burrell and Morgan text which I have discussed previously.
72 Being aware at the same time of the discussion previously regarding how one becomes located within a specific paradigm.
73 The Fire Service.
"authentic" (Hassard, 1991: 278) account of the organisation implies a functionalist epistemology. By positioning paradigms as a partial view of the world and as sets of meta-theoretical assumptions over which one has some degree of cognitive control, the ability of paradigms to incarcerate researchers is substantially reduced. This approach is cognisant of Parker and McHugh’s (1991) suggestion that what Hassard (1991) demonstrates is not multi-paradigm research but rather multi-method research. The difference is again taxonomic. Where one perceives paradigms as impenetrable then what Hassard has produced is simply multi-method research. Where one constructs paradigms as being a partial characterisation of reality then the transient and purposive application of different paradigmatic positions is possible. According to Scherer (1999), what becomes important is the adoption of “an intermediate position between dogmatism and relativism” (p. 4). There are a number of approaches to this.

Lewis and Kelemen (2002) have distinguished three mechanisms for multi-paradigm inquiry. In “multi-paradigm review” (Ibid: 259) researchers contextualise the role of paradigms in the study of organisations. By considering how the existing literature reflects paradigmatically induced representations of the world, researchers become sensitised to the ways in which paradigmatic affiliations shape the characterisation of the research results. In “multi-paradigm research” (Ibid: 261) researchers seek disparate representations via immersion within “alternative paradigm cultures” (Ibid). To support this assertion, there are a number of ‘givens’ here. Their conceptualisation of paradigms as offering only a partial containment is apparent. The idea of immersion in rather than simply an affiliation with the meta-theoretical postulates of each paradigm may be more problematic. This implies an ability to suspend oppositional value sets at will. Moreover, there is a need for researchers to be able to distinguish between their own paradigmatic ascriptions and the paradigm ascriptions of the researched group.

The idea of multi-paradigm research necessitates the selection of appropriate research methods. Researchers need to consider how their own conceptualisation of paradigms invites a particular research focus (Schultz and Hatch, 1996) and how that method can be demonstrated to be in concert with the meta-theoretical assumptions of the paradigm-specific lens being used (Lewis and Kelemen, 2002). Schultz and Hatch (1996) suggest a number of approaches. Sequential multi-paradigm research invites the consecutive application of paradigm-specific lenses, such that the output of one becomes the input to

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74 Based on the work of Lewis and Grimes (1999).
the next. I would argue that this successive narrowing of focus implies that the research output here would be narrower than that obtained by using a single paradigm lens. Parallel multi-paradigm research involves the application of distinctive paradigm lenses in isolation. The outputs here are kept as distinct and used to form the basis of cross paradigm comparisons. Lastly, Schultz and Hatch (1999) note the use of interplay. Interplay is an approach in which the researcher moves backwards and forwards between the paradigms in order that "multiple views are held in tension" (p. 535).

Lewis (1999) focuses on the use of bridging and bracketing as means of multi-paradigm research. However, the practice of bridging emphasises areas of exchange between paradigms and is criticised for coalescing rather than comparing paradigms. Within the context of this thesis, the notion of bracketing has the greater affinity with the research traditions of organisational culture. The dualisms prevalent in the literature on organisational culture invite an engagement which is at a basic level in concert with that cleave. Lewis (2001) agrees, noting that bracketing as a strategy for multi-paradigm research is particularly advantageous where one is studying an area with "vast and polarized literature" (p. 5). Moreover, the discrete packaging of each method allows for an empirical engagement which is truthful to the philosophical antecedents of each paradigm. This notion of retaining the distinctiveness of the paradigms simplifies comparisons (Hassard, 1993).

2.6 Conclusions

Within the context of this thesis, paradigms are seen as distinctive sets of meta-theoretical assumptions which frame a partial and partisan view of the world. The view is partial because it is limited by bounded rationality. The view is partisan because, whilst acknowledging the fundamentality of the "correspondence between paradigm models and the philosophical principles upon which they are founded" (Hassard, 1990: 220), it is also noted that emotion, affect and political circumstance drive the human condition. Paradigms are not seen as being of the religious stature that proponents of the incommensurability thesis would imply. To concur with this would undermine the fundamentally voluntaristic nature of people, negate free will and confine people to clearly delineated scientific communities from which they have little chance of escape.

75 See sections 1.3 – 1.4
The notion of framing becomes important. Paradigms imply a philosophical heritage both for those immersed in the paradigm and for those viewing the paradigm. As such it is useful to acknowledge that frame. Taxonomies articulate typical normative structures (De Mey, 1982), and in doing so codify the meta-theoretical assumptions integral to the paradigm. Where the taxonomy encases these assumptions inside rigid cognitive frameworks then paradigms equate to the worldview. Here incumbents are constrained to thinking in stereotypical ways and the ability to bracket paradigms and perceive these from outside the paradigm boundary is compromised. Where the taxonomy recognises meta-theoretical assumptions as being partial and partisan views of the world then paradigms contribute to the world view. Here the incompleteness of paradigms is acknowledged and researchers can bracket the philosophical traditions as a precursor to honest investigation.

Within this chapter, I have discussed the concept and the conceptualisation of paradigms. By considering the perspectives of Thomas Kuhn and Burrell and Morgan I have drawn on some of the “logical inconsistencies” (Hassard, 1993: 79) in their work. By critiquing the notion of incommensurability, I have recognised how the framing of the concept of paradigms facilitates or negates an engagement in multi-paradigm research. My stance, therefore, is one in which paradigms are perceived as sets of meta-theoretical assumptions which presuppose a specific but not contained view of the world. Bracketing of paradigms is not seen as being problematic as long as this remains true to the philosophical heritage of the paradigm. Paradigms thus framed form the basis from which to build a research method that respects the conceptualisation of organisational culture and the conceptualisation of paradigms.

In the next section, I will describe and discuss the research methods selected within this thesis. I will explain why they are seen as epitomising the meta-theoretical assumptions founding the functionalist and the interpretive paradigms and will discuss the ways in which the analysis methods chosen retain the integrity of those paradigms.
Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I considered the concept of paradigms and the implications of the incommensurability debate for multi-paradigm research. In this chapter, I will describe and discuss the research methods devised in order to address the research questions, namely

- How does the use of paradigm specific research methods shape the view of culture?
- Can the use of bi-paradigmatic research challenge the traditional views of culture?

My objective was to produce a research method capable of “exploring divergent theoretical views challenging the taken for granted assumptions and portraying organizations in new light” (Lewis and Grimes, 1999: 673).

The bi-paradigmatic method has been selected to allow a greater depth of exploration than would be possible from using a four paradigm approach. Within the philosophical traditions of the functionalist and the interpretive paradigms this research sought to explore the relationship between research method and research output, and to use the insights gained to comment on concept of organisational culture. The selection of the functionalist and interpretive paradigms was premised on the affinity these paradigms have with the literature on culture and on the contiguity between the two.

The bi-paradigmatic stance adopted necessitated methods which retained the integrity of the functionalist and the interpretive paradigms. Having refuted the view of paradigms as hegemonic and isolative orthodoxies (see sections 2.4 and 2.5), a paradigm bracketing (Lewis and Kelemen: 2002) approach was used. Here, paradigm-specific lenses were chosen to “give up the idea of impermeable and imperialistic paradigms, while yet maintaining distinctive perspectives within organizational inquiry” (Weaver and Gioia, 1994: 1). In this chapter, I consider how the complexity of bi-paradigm research presupposes a case study approach. Noting how this approach frames my research I then discuss the functionalist method. Having justified the selection of this specific research method, I then demonstrate how this method indicates a functionalist
view of reality. The interpretive methods are considered next and connections made between the meta-theoretical assumptions which found the interpretive paradigm and the methods designed.

The application of research methods in concert with the meta-theoretical foundations of the Functionalist and Interpretive paradigms creates the applied paradigm aspect of this research. It is only by ensuring the paradigmatic integrity of the lenses used that one can comment on how these produce a particular view of reality. In devising this method I recognised that, simply using paradigm-specific lenses and paradigm-specific analyses, constituted no more than a directive view of reality; A view in which I would seek to recognise that which I had structured the methods to help me look for. I considered it important not to exclude alternative views of reality. As such, the concept of 'emergent' paradigms gave rise to additional analysis. Using the data collected via the applied paradigm lenses, an emergent paradigm analysis sought to recognize manifestations of the radical structuralist and radical humanist paradigms. This analysis was used to further illuminate the commentary on culture and the ways in which the lenses used to view reality presuppose a specific view of reality.

The concluding section of this chapter outlines the analysis processes and the production of data which then constitutes the results.

3.1 Case Study Approach

A case study approach is well suited to developing an understanding of complexity (Soy, 1998). It allows the researcher to engage with a “contemporary phenomenon within its real life context” (Yin, 1981: 59; 1994:13). A case study research strategy forms the framework within which the bi-paradigmatic methods are positioned to answer the research questions.

Despite their relevance in empirical investigation (Haigh, 2003), case studies as a means of research are not without criticisms. Many of the criticisms detach case studies from the favoured quantitative methods associated with functionalism, seeing the two as fundamentally oppositional. As such, case studies are accused of lacking representativeness. They are deemed incapable of holding a firm statistical control of the research context and therefore producing results which are not representative of the
population. In many case studies, however, the motive for the research is not to make statistical generalisations to a population, but rather to pattern match the relationship between the observer and the observed. ‘Generalisations’, as such, note the relationship between the research and the theories and concepts (Yin, 1994), rather than the relationships between the researched. Gibb Dyer and Wilkins (1991) emphasise this in their assertion that case studies “lead researchers to see new theoretical relationships and question old ones” (p. 614).

A second criticism is that of repeatability. Similar to representation, weakness is assumed because subsequent applications of the research methodology are unlikely to produce the same or even similar results. Whilst this is accepted, the strength of the approach is in the creation of a robust research framework which can be re-applied to recognise and interrogate difference and similarity, not simply replicate results. A further value of case studies is recognised where the output contributes to further research. Lewis (1998) affirms the use of existing case studies to engage a process of “iterative triangulation” (p. 456). Recognising Mintzberg et al (1976) and Kelley’s (1986) use of previous cases, she enhances their work by building an inductive strategy to enable the further investigation of established case studies.

A third criticism of case study methods is outlined by Tellis (1997a) in his consideration of the Giddens versus Yin debate. Whilst Giddens asserts that case studies are “microscopic” (Ibid: 3) because they lack a “sufficient number of cases” (Ibid), Yin argues that it is not simply a matter of numerics that would transform the research into a “macroscopic study” (Ibid). Rather this is done by depth of investigation and a rigorous application of method. Moreover, Tellis proposes that “It is a fact that case studies do not need to have a minimum number of cases” (Ibid: 4). His argument supports Hamel’s (1993) consideration of Granger’s assertion that a singularity is a means of concentrating “the global in the local” (Ibid: 38).

The notion of singular versus multiple cases studies predicates a fourth contention regarding cross case comparison and its role in theory building (Eisenhardt, 1989). Whilst this may be deemed useful within the context of a Functionalist methodology (where validation and verification predicate an objective view of reality), Yin (1981)
posits that for comparison "the extraction of single factors from a case study unduly simplifies the phenomenon being studied" (p. 62). In their critique of Eisenhardt (1989), Gibb Dyer and Wilkins (1991) note further that where case studies are used for theory construction, there is a methodological bastardisation in which the precedent given to hypothesis testing detracts from "the context, the rich background of each case" (p. 613), and *ipso facto* "neglects some of the strengths of the classic case study method" (Ibid).

Accordingly, a single case study approach has been used to provide a framework within which both Functionalist and Interpretive methods (Gibb Dyer and Wilkins, 1991) are used to give "rich insights into a specific situation" (Yin and Heald, 1975: 371).

### 3.2 Functionalist Research Method

Key to the integrity of this research was the selection of research methods sympathetic to the meta-theoretical assumptions underpinning each of the chosen paradigms. For the Functionalist paradigm, I needed to select a method in which reality was perceived as an externally existing and value free phenomenon. Devising a research instrument with the requisite detachment of personal values would have been impossible. Devising such an instrument would mean that I had invested my own motives, preconceptions, values and intentions. The resulting framework would be politicised and the methodology skewed towards defending the method\(^\text{77}\) rather than producing results. I decided to select an externally devised Functionalist instrument. In doing this, a range of factors needed to be considered. Rousseau (1990) notes the need for the adoption of "public methods" (p. 167) that have a greater affinity with objectivity because of the emphasis on standardisation and replication\(^\text{78}\). Likewise, it became important to recognise that some instruments fail to make a clear distinction between "assessment and interpretation" (Ibid: 153). The instrument selected had to eschew interpretation, focusing on the production of a definitive output. As such the analysis needed to be rigidly structured, exclude open adjuncts and include integral measures of reliability and validity\(^\text{79}\).

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\(^{77}\) See Hassard's 1993 comment regarding the temptation to skew research towards a commentary on the methods rather than a commentary on the results.

\(^{78}\) As opposed to private methods which are research driven, contextually variable and have a greater affinity with the interpretive paradigm.

\(^{79}\) These will be discussed later in this thesis.
Although in this thesis no prior definition of culture has been proposed, Xenikou and Furnham (1996) note the relationship between the definition of culture selected and the focal element of assessment. Within the literature review on culture\textsuperscript{80}, it was noted that values appear to be a fundamental tenet of most definitions of culture, be those definitions functionalist or interpretive in orientation. As such, an instrument which placed the emphasis on values as the mode of assessment was deemed most appropriate. Ashkanasy et al (2000) expand on the notion of value measuring instruments in their assertion that these can be sub-divided as ‘typing’ and ‘profiling’ schemata. ‘Typing’ schemata are those which produce a unitary descriptor of culture, whilst ‘profiling’ schemata produce a rank order of attributes resulting in a multi-dimensional view. Although typing instruments quantify the qualitative aspects of culture and thus have an affinity with the functionalist paradigm, the prospect of being able to rank the order of attributes of culture offered a greater opportunity for analysis. The use of a ‘typing’ assessment was therefore rejected on the premise that although the production of “ostensibly mutually exclusive categories” (Ibid: 140) is functionalist in its nature, the ability to rank order attributes gives a greater scope for cross culture comparisons.

Cognisant of these issues, the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) was selected. The instrument and the supporting literature were evaluated with regards to their alignment to a strictly functionalist orthodoxy. The OCAI was selected because it offered a standardised and validated assessment instrument located clearly within the Functionalist paradigm. It is structured around an effectiveness profiling stance premised on values and is well supported by the reliability and validity measures critical to upholding the verificationist stance on which much functionalist research is predicated.

In considering the OCAI, a descriptive history will outline the essentially Functionalist antecedents of the instrument before consideration is given to the structure of the instrument and the ways in which this epitomises a functionalist approach to the study of culture.

\textsuperscript{80} See section 1.2 ‘Modelling Culture’. 82
3.2.1 Descriptive History of the OCAI

The motivation behind the design of the OCAI is seen as reflecting a corporate and functional need for quantifiable indicators of organisational culture. Founded largely within the managerialist school of thinking considered earlier (see section 1.4), this approach perceives culture as a manipulable variable (Smircich, 1983; Kilmann et al, 1985; Kotter and Heskett, 1992) through which management can leverage control of the work groups.

The OCAI was derived from the Competing Values Framework (CVF) thus we will consider the paradigmatic ascriptions of the CVF. Devised by Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983), the Competing Values Framework is a functionalist framework for the analysis of organisational effectiveness. In devising this they considered Campbell’s 1977 research in which he “reviewed the relevant literature with the stated intent of providing a comprehensive compilation of effectiveness criteria” (Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983: 365). The effectiveness criteria Campbell elicited initially were then collated by using a multi-dimensional scaling analysis and the analysis used as the premise from which the CVF was constructed. Despite these theoretical antecedents, the instrument is described as being “empirically derived” (Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983: 363) even though that derivation “does not emerge from observation of actual organizations” (Ibid).

In the second stage, seven academics undertook a “two stage judgement task in order to reduce and organize the list of 30 criteria”\(^{81}\) (Ibid: 366). Here, the academics involved were given “explicit definitions of each term or phrase”\(^ {82}\) (Ibid), highly specific decision rules and a Likert scale against which to judge the similarity/dissimilarity between the criteria. The affinity with the functionalist paradigm becomes apparent. Where there is any opportunity for interpretation to compromise the value free nature of the criteria, those involved are given clear and explicit instructions based on definitional precision. The third stage of validation was a simple repetition of the process with a second and larger group of theorists\(^ {83}\).

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\(^{81}\) The 30 criteria being those determined by Campbell 1977.

\(^{82}\) See McKinley and Mone (1998) for their assertion that such clarity of definition should be rife across the field of organizational theory.

\(^{83}\) Although it is interesting to note that this research did not engage the group in the reduction of Campbell’s original 30 criteria. Rather they were given the already reduced criteria from the initial research.
The output of the research, albeit theoretically rather than empirically derived, suggested that “organizational theorists and researchers share an implicit theoretical framework or cognitive map, for describing organizations” (Quinn et al, 1991: 216). The cognitive map produced was based on three classifications of effectiveness, each arranged along a continuum, namely flexibility – control; internal – external and means - end. These continua become the “three axes or value dimensions” (Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983: 369), of the Competing Values Framework. Graphically (see Figure 3) the x-axis notes an internal versus external focus, the y-axis notes control versus flexibility and the distal axis notes the means-end continuum. Accordingly they produce four definitive models of organisational effectiveness, asserting that “because each model is embedded in a particular set of competing values, it has a polar opposite model with contrasting emphases” (Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983: 371).

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**Figure 3**

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                    Flexibility
                        Ends

                     Human Relations
    Internal                Open Systems
                     model                   model

                        Internal Process
                        model

                        Means

                   External

                        Rational Goal
                        model
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84 It is interesting to note here the similarity between the OCAI notion of x and y axes and the Burrell and Morgan (1979) taxonomy.
3.2.2 The OCAI Framework

Despite having an overtly Functionalist antecedent in the CVF, I had anticipated that any further ascription to Functionalism would need to be derived from an interrogation of the OCAI text. Although reliability and validity data provided evidence of the quantitative and scientific focus associated with the functionalist paradigm (Hussey and Hussey, 1997), I needed to identify ascription to an objective and externally verifiable reality. The authors were, however, explicit in their allegiance to the meta-theoretical assumptions underpinning functionalism. Their ontological stance is demonstrated by the assertion that, “we assess how things are...rather than how people feel about them” (Cameron and Quinn, 1999: 134), and their epistemological stance by positing that, “culture is treated as an attribute of the organization that can be measured separately from other organizational phenomena” (Ibid: 133).

This commitment to a functionalist orthodoxy is reinforced by an almost dismissive acknowledgement of interpretivism. One paragraph, in particular, feels stylistically cynical towards the notion of the interpretive paradigm; Here I feel that the subtext implies the futility of perceiving culture as anything other than manipulable, but does so by making a series of assertions rather than engaging any debate.

“The primary distinctions...... are differences between culture defined as an attribute possessed by organizations versus culture defined as a metaphor for describing what organizations are. The former approach assumes that researchers and managers can identify differences among organizational cultures, can change cultures and can empirically measure cultures. The latter assumes than nothing exists in organizations except culture, and one encounters culture any time one rubs up against any organizational phenomena. Culture is a potential predictor of other organizational outcomes (e.g. effectiveness) in the former perspective, whereas in the latter perspective it is a concept to be explained, independent of any other phenomenon.”

(Cameron and Quinn, 1999: 132)

In their design of the OCAI, Cameron and Quinn (1999) are explicit about their affiliation to the functionalist paradigm. From a selective reading of the literature on culture, they have determined that three areas of controversy surround the concept,
namely "how to precisely define culture (definitional issues), how to measure culture (measurement issues) and what key dimensions should characterize culture (dimensional issues)" (p. 132). It is immediately apparent that their 'interpretation' of controversy is based a priori on a decidedly functionalist set of meta-theoretical assumptions.

3.2.3 The Design of the OCAI

As a premise for the design of the instrument, Cameron and Quinn consider briefly the definitional, measurement and dimensional issues alluded to previously.

Definitional Issues

The definitional issues note that Cameron and Quinn (1999) situate their philosophical position within the "functional, sociological tradition" (p. 133). They assert the need to "capture accurately the reality being described" (Ibid: 29). Indeed, concurrence with the idea that "researchers and managers can identify differences among cultures, can change cultures and can empirically measure cultures" (Ibid: 132) founds the rationale behind the construction of the model (see section 3.2.1).

Moreover, their commitment to functionalism is apparent from the use of reliability and validity measures. What is being sought here is a "theory of truth which states that theory can be tested against irreducible statements of observation" (Johnson and Duberley, 2000: 57). Such verification would be needed to sell the framework to a managerialist audience.

Functionalist ascriptions underpin the practical design of the OCAI. The use of a questionnaire format (see Appendix 1) indicates an emphasis on an objective and value free reality. The rigid structure of the questionnaire reduces the ability of the researcher to influence the respondents by the use of verbal cues. Rather, organisational culture is statistically reduced to a limited number of components. These are measured and the results present a profile of the culture of the organisation. Blakie (1993) describes this process as 'naïve enumeration' in which "Knowledge is produced about a restricted class of things or events (organisational culture) from a limited number of observations" (p. 133). It is this notion of the "production of knowledge" (Ibid) which locates the

85 On the premise that the Competing Values Framework (CVF), from which this instrument was derived, is also of this tradition.
OCAI firmly within a functionalist ontology. The emphasis on naïve enumeration also highlights the disadvantages of using psychological archetypes. Although stereotyping can be seen to expedite decision-making within an organisation, to reduce organisational culture to six questions against four dimensions continues to present a significantly limited view of the concept.

The use of the questionnaire format implies value-free data gathering as the basis for value-free analysis. The rigid structure reduces the ability of the researcher to influence (consciously or sub-consciously) the respondents by their use of language. However, to assume the total exclusion of researcher influence is naive, especially when one notes that “the relationship between subject and researcher is an indicator of ontological and epistemological assumptions on which a given study is based” (Johnson and Duberley, 2000: 56).

**Measurement Issues**

In line with the traditions of the Functionalist paradigm, Cameron and Quinn (1999) do not question whether or not culture can be measured. Rather their focus is on how to measure culture. Their exploration of measurement issues only very briefly considers some of the complexities. For example the influences of sub-cultures and the qualitative measurement versus quantitative measurement debate. Having acknowledged these complexities, they decide that all cultures have core components, which when the unit of assessment is the organisation, should be the focus of analysis. They characterise culture such that organisations are seen as “holograms” (Ibid: 134) in which, despite local level differences, each element “contains common information from which the entire image can be reproduced” (Ibid). Their treatise lacks any ‘evidence’ to support this assertion. Instead, they assert that these “common elements” (Ibid) become the foci of measurement because they are relatively consistent throughout the organisation.

In considering the design of the OCAI, Cameron and Quinn discuss three potential means of measurement. However, those methods which would appear to have a

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86 A process of cognitive stereotyping on which the construction of the OCAI is premised, see Cameron and Quinn, 1999.
87 Although Cameron and Quinn (1999) acknowledge the complexities associated with such a reductionist stance, their exposition does little to substantiate anything other than their own views.
89 In-depth participant observation, language approaches (analysis of conversations, documentation etc) and quantitative approaches using questionnaires.
greater affinity with the Interpretive paradigm (Participant observation and Language approaches) are rejected. Quantitative analysis is selected by Cameron and Quinn on the premise that this alone allows multiple viewpoints and gives comparative data.90

Dimensional Issues

Cameron and Quinn (1999) recognise that no analysis of culture can consider all aspects of that culture. In line with their Functionalist ethos they divide the view of reality into two convenient dimensions as a means of focus. These dimensions are used in two ways. Content dimensions are the cues used in the scenarios (see questionnaire at Appendix 1) to enable recognition by the respondent. Once people have responded to the cues, the results are used to construct a map of the culture. Pattern dimensions are these output maps.

The content dimensions are based on psychological archetypes. Archetypes are consistencies in cognitive frameworks which indicate that people, despite individual difference, have some similarities in the symbolic images they use91. The implications are that the OCAI has been devised to align the "fundamental organizing framework used by people when they obtain, interpret and draw conclusions about information" (Ibid: 36).

Although the framework uses only six92 dimensional issues, the text notes that this "has proved in past research to provide an adequate picture of the type of culture that exists in an organization" (Ibid: 137). Assessment against these six dimensions provides the frame of reference against which the culture of an organisation can be plotted.

The design of the OCAI is sympathetic to its functionalist antecedents. The use of language reinforces the meta-theoretical assumptions which underlie functionalism, and, structurally it carves up reality into convenient categories of assessment. In support of this, there is a need to emphasise the truth-seeking element of functionalism. Within the OCAI this is done by the emphasis on quantitative methods and by the statistical testing of the instrument

90 It is interesting to note the assumption that data collected via interpretive methods cannot be compared.
91 Albeit historically this "cognitive map" (Quinn et al, 1991: 216) was found to be prevalent within the specific confines of an academic rather than wider organizational community.
92 Dominant characteristics, leadership style, management of employees, organizational glue, strategic emphases and criteria of success.
3.2.4 Statistical Testing

In recognising the affinity between the Functionalist paradigm and quantitative methods, Bryman (1992) notes that:

"The epistemology upon which quantitative research is erected comprises a litany of preconditions for what is warrantable knowledge, and the mere presence of numbers is unlikely to be sufficient."

(p. 12)

Although the production of simple graphic profiles panders to a managerialist audience, it lacks credence unless substantiated by those measurements of reliability and validity which feed the verificationist stance sought by the authors. From a Functionalist perspective, such measurements are seen as crucial in demonstrating to the wider scientific community that the instrument has "gone a long way towards gaining scientific acceptance" (Carmines and Zeller, 1979: 15). It is this idea of scientific acceptance which founds the basis for believing that the results convey the truth.

Reliability

Reliability is a statistical measure which determines the consistency of the instrument across repeated measurement. Reliability acknowledges "accuracy, stability and the relative absence of errors" (Burns, 2000: 337). As such, the validation of the instrument in reliability terms relates to the proportionate lack of variance across responses, where \( X_{\text{obs}} = X_{\text{true}} \pm \text{error} \).\(^9\) The notion of being able to determine the number of observations classed as being the truth fits neatly with the functionalist ethos.

Statistically, perfect reliability has a value of +1.0, i.e. there is no error component. Rather the number of observations and the number of true observations are the same. For the OCAI, reliability measures have been calculated by Cameron and Quinn (1999) from three principal studies and were determined on the basis of rater response consistency across the questions posed. The results show (see Table 2) reliability measures between and across analyses, with a maximum error variance across studies of +/- .09

\(^9\) The observed score = the true score plus or minus any error, with error score being negative or positive depending on over or underscoring.
Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliability Measures</th>
<th>Clan</th>
<th>Adhocracy</th>
<th>Hierarchy</th>
<th>Market</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quinn and Spreitzer (1991)</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeung, Brockbank and Ulrich (1991)</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zammuto and Krakower (1991)</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accordingly, Cameron and Quinn (1999) assert that:

“Sufficient evidence has been produced regarding the reliability of the OCAI to create confidence that it matches or exceeds the reliability of the most commonly used instruments in the social and organizational sciences.”

(p. 140)

Despite this assertion, it is worthwhile noting two aspects of criticism of reliability testing. First, in disputing the fallacy of perfect reliability, Carmines and Zeller (1979) note that “the goal of error free measurement – while laudable- is never attained in any areas of scientific investigation” (p. 9). Their contention is reinforced by Stanley’s (1971) note that perfect reliability scores are only ever attributable to the crudeness or naivety of the measurement of them. Second, Burns’ (2000) notes that even where a test per se is demonstrated to be perfectly reliable, it may in real terms “not measure anything of value” (p. 350).94

**Validity**

The validation of the Competing Values Framework has focused on three distinct elements of criterion-related validity. Criterion-related validity checks the accuracy of the test instrument against externally generated criteria. This is an indirect comparison with criteria not directly associated with the instrument. Nunnally (1978) notes the importance of criterion related validity when “the purpose is to use an instrument to estimate some important form of behaviour that is external to the measuring instrument itself, the latter being referred to as the criterion” (p. 87). In determining “the extent to which phenomena that are supposed to be measured are actually measured” (Cameron

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94 The principal danger here is researcher confidence in results that are consistent but wrong (functionalist overtones acknowledged).
and Quinn, 1999: 140), concurrent validity, convergent validity and discriminant validity are measured\(^9\)\(^5\).

### Concurrent Validity

Concurrent validity "is assessed by correlating a measure and the criterion at the same point in time" (Carmines and Zeller, 1979: 18). To measure the concurrent validity of the instrument, the outcome of the assessment stage, in terms of the dominant culture type was compared with the "domain of excellence in which the organisation excelled" (Ibid: 141). Accordingly, as the OCAI is predicated on effectiveness as a precursor to the culture type determined, the relationship between the key organisational dimensions of effectiveness and the type nominated should indicate of the level of concurrent validity. The use of effectiveness domains here counters one of the main difficulties with concurrent validity measures, i.e. finding a relevant domain for comparison.\(^9\)\(^6\) In three of the four output typologies, the organisational key domains of performance were consistent with the attributes accorded to the typology. Only the hierarchy culture did not excel on any of the performance domains.

### Convergent Validity

Convergent validity measures the extent to which the output of the instrument being measured 'converges' with the output of instruments that have a similar purpose. In the case of the OCAI, only one other instrument was used as the comparator and the results demonstrated that "convergent validity was supported" (Ibid: 142).

### Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity determines whether measures which should not be related are or are not related, validity being proven where there is a low level of correlation between these. For the OCAI three measures of discriminant validity were used. The first measure looked at the correlation of scales across the same and different culture types using "separate instruments" (Ibid: 142). Secondly the process was repeated using the same measure. Thirdly, the two measures were then brought together as the basis for coefficient analysis. The results demonstrated strong evidence of discriminant validity.

\(^9\)\(^5\) It is important to note that validity measures are measuring the validity of the instrument in relation to its stated purposed, rather than measuring the instrument per-se (Carmines and Zeller, 1979).

\(^9\)\(^6\) Carmines and Zeller (1979) note the difficulty in establishing a comparator for measures of self-esteem, where there are no predetermined behaviours indicative of high or low self-esteem.
3.2.5 Structure of the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument

The OCAI is a questionnaire format which asks individuals to consider six categories of organisational culture. These specific categories have been selected by Cameron and Quinn (1999) because of “the robustness of the dimensions and the richness of the resulting quadrants” (p. 32). The categories are then used to construct four labels, one of each is then attached each of the four quadrants, indicating the “core culture types” (Ibid).

Respondents are asked to assess the ‘actual’ culture, (the culture that they perceive exists in the organisation at present), and the ideal culture (the culture that they feel should exist within the organisation). The results are used to produce a graphic representation of the organisation’s actual and ideal culture types.

**Rating Mechanism**

The questionnaire presents six questions with four ‘competing’ statements. It is completed using an ipsative scale where 100 marks are divided between the statements in accordance with how accurately they reflect the culture within the organisation. See Figure 4.

**Figure 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Dominant Characteristics</th>
<th>Ideal</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The organization is a very personal place. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of themselves.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The organization is a very dynamic and entrepreneurial place. People are willing to stick their necks out and take risks</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The organization is very results oriented. A major concern is with getting the job done. People are very competitive and results oriented.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. The organization is a very controlled and structured place. Formal procedures generally govern what people do.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results are then analysed by grouping responses by letter and determining the arithmetic mean across the sample. See Table 3.

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97 Dominant characteristics, organizational leadership, management of employees, organization glue, strategic emphases and criteria of success.
98 Namely, clan culture, adhocracy culture, market culture and hierarchy culture.
Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1A</th>
<th>1B</th>
<th>1C</th>
<th>1D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2A</td>
<td>2B</td>
<td>2C</td>
<td>2D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3A</td>
<td>3B</td>
<td>3C</td>
<td>3D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4A</td>
<td>4B</td>
<td>4C</td>
<td>4D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5A</td>
<td>5B</td>
<td>5C</td>
<td>5D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6A</td>
<td>6B</td>
<td>6C</td>
<td>6D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>Sum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean rating for each category (a, b, c, & d) is then plotted on to a two dimensional matrix. See Figure 5.

Figure 5

3.2.6 Piloting the OCAI

Before the in-company research was undertaken, it was important to pilot the use of the questionnaire. Although this had been externally derived, it was necessary to consider the time the questionnaire took to complete, the ease with which the questionnaire could be completed and any problematic issues around comprehension, ambiguity or clarity. The pilot also allowed me to test the mode of analysis.
Ideally, any pilot scheme should be run with a sample of similar calibre to the intended respondent group (Bell, 1993). At this stage, access to the people at the bottom of the organisation had not been negotiated, although permission to access those in the middle of the organisation had been given. Accordingly permission was sought for the questionnaires to be piloted within the University of Leicester Management Centre. The questionnaires were converted into email format so the feasibility of electronic distribution could be tested. The electronic document comprised three pages, a front instruction sheet, the questionnaire itself with reminder instructions at the top and a feedback sheet considering the logistics of completing the questionnaire. Forty copies were distributed to named recipients, although the responses could be returned anonymously. In monitoring the logistics, three aspects were considered. First, the time-frame for completion. Second, a five point Likert scale99 sought to establish the ease of completion. Third, an open adjunct for personal comments hoped to catch qualitative data in a free text format.

Results of the Pilot.

Of the forty questionnaires distributed, thirteen (32.5%) were returned completed. Four people sent emails to say that they could not access the questionnaire electronically as they could not manage to move from the front sheet to the second and third sheets. Of the thirteen returned questionnaires, ten completed the logistics section in addition to the actual questionnaire.

Most of the respondents thought that the questionnaire was easy to complete. Completion took an average of 11 minutes. However, a number of issues emerged. Difficulties with the technology indicated that electronic distribution may be problematic within the organisation. Issues of navigating between the front sheet, the questionnaire and the logistics sheet prevented a number of people from completing their questionnaire. As the technological competence of the intended respondent group was unknown, it was decided that it would be safer to use a hard copy format.

Three respondents identified that the language used in the questionnaire made understanding difficult. Having recognised that this might be problematic for respondents at the bottom of the organisation, a system of support was built in. Support was given in terms of reading the questions to respondents as well as in translating

99 Potential for central tendency acknowledged, but the eventual results bore no evidence of this.
complex words or phrases into more comprehensible forms of words. To retain the affinity with the functionalist paradigm, a standardised list of translated words/phrases was used.

Last, comments from the pilot study noted the need for a clearer front sheet. This was adapted to include the motives for the research, clear instructions and a graphic illustration of a completed questionnaire.

3.2.7 Data Collection Strategy

Sample size and frame

In line with the functionalist ethos, accessing a representative sample would have been ideal, however, the size of Food Co (circa 1,700 employees) and the resource implications for the company were prohibitive. As such, the intention was to distribute as many questionnaires as was logistically possible to ensure the largest sample size possible. The Senior Manager within the company allowed me to use two middle managers to help with the distribution of the questionnaires to the staff grade people. Staff grade people are those who work within the offices of the company. As such, they work in areas such as the Human Resource Department, Finance and Accounting, Marketing, IT support, Quality Management, and Health and Safety. Each middle manager was given 100 questionnaires to have completed.

When reviewing the literature on culture, it became apparent that much of the empirical work previously undertaken had been located purely at the top of any organisational hierarchy. Martin (2002) asserts that “although the focus of these studies is often ‘organizational’ culture, most studies stop far short of studying the full range of organizational employees – usually stopping at the managerial and professional ranks” (p. 17). Parker (2000) confirms this, noting that his own research focussed on “high status groups” (p. 219).

In moving away from a single level focus the data collection strategy devised sought to access two distinct groups. The first group was that of middle to senior managers. These people constitute the staff grades discussed previously. The second group accessed was those people at the very bottom of the organisation. This group constitute the employee
grades and comprise those on a full employment contract and agency staff working on a zero hours contract. The group are employed on the ‘dirty’ side of the operation in the manufacturing process or in the loading of the trucks.

Once permission had been granted to survey and observe those located at the bottom of the organisation, it was planned that myself and three PhD colleagues would spend two days each in the company. The PhD students would spend time in each locale and work with the employees to help them complete the questionnaires as necessary. Crucial to the integrity of the research, was the segregation of the two sets of questionnaires, those completed by the staff group and those completed by the employee group. Questionnaires were coded on completion to ensure the two samples were discrete.

**Sequencing**

Following discussions with the Senior Manager, a two-stage process of questionnaire distribution was selected. The first stage of the research involved giving 100 questionnaires each to the nominated middle managers. These managers were to distribute their 100 questionnaires to and collect them from the staff grades working in the support functions. The completed questions would be collected by me when I visited the organisation to engage in the next stage of the empirical research.

The second stage of the research involved the three fellow PhD students working for two days each in the company. Each of my colleagues familiarised themselves with the questionnaire. Their role was to distribute and have completed as many questionnaires as possible and to offer assistance to the employee group in the canteen as necessary. In doing this they moved between the canteen and the restaurant at shift change times in order to gain access to different groups of potential respondents.

**Problems encountered**

The two middle managers failed to have the questionnaires they were given completed. One said that she had had all her questionnaires completed and had put them in the post to me. They did not arrive. The second said he had been on holiday and had only managed to get 10 questionnaires completed since his return. The contingency plan was

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100 It is worth noting that many of the agency staff have been there for years waiting to be considered for a permanent contract.
to divide the time that my PhD colleagues had between two eating establishments, the canteen where the employee group ate and the restaurant where the staff group ate.
3.2.8 Quantitative Analysis

The analysis of the OCAI questionnaires was structured and directed in accordance with the instructions in the text (Cameron and Quinn, 1999). This was a quantitative analysis in which responses were summed and aggregated to produce numeric values. These numeric values were then plotted on a 2 x 2 matrix to give a visual profile of culture.

To retain the integrity of the responses from the two distinct response groups\textsuperscript{101}, the completed questionnaires were batched and encoded on site. The questionnaires were then sorted into usable and not usable and the raw data from the usable questionnaires was input in to an excel spreadsheet. Excel was used to perform the basic numeric calculations.

In order that a good breadth and depth of comparisons could be undertaken, the data were used to construct a series of profiles, however, although the data had been collected and input, no such profiles were drawn until after the analysis of the interpretive data. I had anticipated that to do so could prejudice the inferences I would draw from the interpretive data gathered. The profiles were produced once the interpretive analysis was complete. In producing the profiles, the need for a robust breadth and depth of comparison was paramount. Rather than simply produce 4 aggregated profiles\textsuperscript{102} I undertook a second level of comparison by question. The aim here was to use the question level comparisons as the basis for an in-depth understanding of the similarities and differences as perceived by those within the company.

The selection of the OCAI instrument was driven by the need to detach personal values from the instrument being used. The selection process was rigorous because of the need to choose a method in concert with the philosophical traditions of the functionalist paradigm. In selecting the OCAI, I was able to trace the functionalist antecedents and to critique the weakness in the way the instrument was devised. Only by ensuring that the research method remains true to the meta-theoretical assumptions of functionalism could I successfully bracket the method in order to support the integrity of the bi-

\textsuperscript{101} Those working in the middle of the organizational hierarchy and those working at the bottom.
\textsuperscript{102} I.E. 1. Canteen (Actual culture) versus Canteen (Ideal culture) 2. Restaurant (Actual culture) versus Restaurant (Ideal culture) 3. Canteen (Actual culture) versus Restaurant (Actual culture) 4. Canteen (Ideal culture) versus Restaurant (Ideal culture).
paradigmatic research approach used. That same integrity was then required of the interpretive method.

3.3 Interpretive Methodology

In constructing the interpretive methodology, it was important to select methods respectful of the meta-theoretical assumptions founding the interpretive paradigm. The methods had to acknowledge “individual consciousness and subjectivity” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 28) but do so in a way that enabled an empirically derived commentary. This notion of subjectivity draws attention to disparity between the three levels of respondent groups within the organisation. The potential for each group to exist within its own unique frame of social construction highlighted the need to select methods in concert with both an interpretive ethos and the characteristics of the researched. A multi-method approach was selected for use within the paradigm.

The premise that “social reality is meaningfully constructed” (Ibid: 254) implied that a focus on language as the means of construction would be a useful point at which to locate the research methods. Again, the criticality of language emerges\(^\text{103}\) and the use of discourse becomes the fundamental focus for empirical research grounded in the interpretive tradition.

Designing the methodology

In designing the interpretive methodology initial attention was paid to sequencing. Because of the nature of interpretive research, it was decided that the collection and analysis of this data should be undertaken prior to the analysis of the functionalist data (Hassard, 1991). The aim here was to avoid contamination of the interpretive results. Essentially, any prior knowledge of the functionalist results could create a conscious or subconscious influence on the dialogues constructed as part of the research process and on the interpretive analysis of these. Here it is recognised that the outcomes of the functionalist analysis could evolve into cognitive templates, a notion not dissimilar to the psychological archetype antecedents of the OCAI. Such templates would structure any interpretive conventions and guide the process of social construction and the interpretation of the emergent discourses. Indeed, Fairclough (1995) notes that “When

\(^{103}\) See section 1.1 on how the use of language as definition feeds the structuring of culture. See section 2.4 on the use of language within the commensurability versus incommensurability debate.
people produce or interpret texts, they orient towards conventions as ideal types, by which I mean that texts are produced and interpreted by reference to them\textsuperscript{104} (p. 13).

For the interpretive research, the multi-method approach needed to respect the unique characteristics of each of the respondent groups whilst retaining sufficient methodological contiguity to facilitate comparison. The intention here was to use methodological triangulation, but to do so in a way that betrayed the intensely functionalist antecedents to the approach (cf. Jick, 1979; Massey, 1999 and Guion, 2002). Hassard and Cox (2005) note how, traditionally, the use of triangulation has been to try to propel the research towards a completeness or truth finding stance. From the perspective of this research, I intended to use triangulation purely as a frame of reference for the interpretive research. The objective was to add depth and density to the data rather than to try to use triangulation as a subversive means of manoeuvring interpretive data into functionalist conclusions\textsuperscript{105}.

The use of multiple methods within a paradigm is driven by the need to appreciate differences in the processes of social construction, especially where the characteristics and linguistic capabilities of the researched groups vary. As such, the motive was to use multiple methods as a pragmatic means of ensuring data richness. Remaining true to the philosophical antecedents of the interpretive paradigm, data gathered by multiple means and from multiple sources offers the potential for a greater insight into the nature of culture within the organisation, albeit one has to acknowledge that “our seeing and understanding of the world is always ‘seeing as’ rather than a ‘seeing as is’ ” (Morgan, 1986: 382).

\textsuperscript{104} What is apparent here is a cognitive process reminiscent of Deetz’s (1996) assertion that in proposing a taxonomy which positions all other paradigms against functionalism, Burrell and Morgan (1979) reinforce rather than refute the hegemony of functionalism.

\textsuperscript{105} For an example that typifies this approach see Guion, 2002.
Contiguity of Methods

The interpretive methodology entailed three distinctive research methods. See Table 4.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisational unit of analysis</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Manager</td>
<td>Individual interview</td>
<td>Allows access to information which might not be disclosed in an open forum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff level</td>
<td>Focus groups</td>
<td>Reflective of structure from individual interview and allows for the respondent groups to direct responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-linguistically based non-participant observation</td>
<td>Despite adequate language skills within this group, use of this method here provides a comparison with those at the employee level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee level</td>
<td>Non-linguistically based non-participant observation</td>
<td>Impoverished language skills thus a behavioural approach to interpretation allows alignment with behaviours from staff group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Access at the top of the organisation involved an interview with the Senior Manager, the most senior person in this organisation. An individual interview was selected for its potential to offer “rich insights into people’s biographies, experiences, opinions, values, aspirations, attitudes and feelings” (May, 1993/2001: 120). The format was deemed appropriate because of its affinity with “spontaneous speech data collection”.

106 The specifics of each method are considered later in this thesis.
107 These will be discussed in detail later in this thesis.
108 Implications for transcription acknowledged here.
(Kraikosol, 2003: 1), reflecting a valuing of the in vivo rather than of verifiable facts. An individual focus was adopted to allow the respondent freedom to express those views and opinions that may be moderated in the presence of lower ranking people.

Access to people in the middle of the organisation was at the ‘staff’ level. It is useful to note that the semantic distinction here between ‘staff’ who work in the middle of the hierarchy and ‘employees’ who work at the bottom of the hierarchy is the language in use within the organisation. The selection of research methods at the staff level was driven both by the need to select a method sympathetic to the characteristics of the respondent group and the need to select a method contiguous with methods in use at the top and the bottom of the organisational hierarchy. Two methods were selected. In retaining the language focus of the individual interview, focus groups were chosen. In retaining a commonality with the methods used for those at the bottom of the hierarchy, non-linguistically based non-participant observation was chosen.

For the group at the bottom of the organisational hierarchy, a focus on language was problematic. I was advised that the majority of the employees were from ethnic minority backgrounds and had a limited command of the English language. This compromised the use of language-based techniques. By confining any narrative to a limited language set pre-supposes a limited range of constructions from which and interpretation of the social reality could be inferred. This notion forced a wider consideration of research methods. A review of research methods emphasised the hegemonic dependence on language in research. In essence, regardless of paradigmatic ascription, research is almost entirely premised on the use of language, be that written or spoken. Yet language is simply one means of communication. As such, the idea of using non-linguistically based non-participant observation emerged. Here observations would be used to recognise the use of non-verbal communication, specifically considering facial expression, gesture, proximity, movement and posture.

3.3.1 Individual Interview

A semi-structured format was devised for the Individual Interview (see Appendix 2). Even though this allowed the researcher to be “freer to probe beyond the answers in a manner which would appear prejudicial to the aims of standardization and comparability” (Ibid: 123), it does not have the total openness associated with open-
ended interviews (See Fontana and Frey, 1998; May, 2001). Open-ended interviews were dismissed as the research necessitated a "hermeneutical understanding" (Kvale, 1996: 38), in which "the interpretation of meaning is a central theme, with a specification of the kinds of meanings sought and attention to the questions posed to a text"\(^{109}\) (Ibid). Within the context of this thesis there was a need to focus the respondents on organisational issues relating to culture, and to do so within the time frame allowed by the organisation. This "Field formal" (Frey and Fontana, 1998: 55) approach allowed for the inclusion of those aspects relevant to the research focus and the "consequent elimination of extraneous material" (Kahn and Cannell, 1957: 16). Accordingly, the semi-structured format retained the focus whilst allowing "latitude to ask further questions in response to what are seen as significant replies" (Bryman, 2001: 110).

Being cognisant of potential sensitivities, the questions were sequenced to create a safe initial engagement between the interviewer and the interviewee. The first question focussed on the pragmatics of structure, allowing the respondent to relax into the interview by being able to speak confidently about an issue with which he was familiar. From this structural base, the question focus widens to incorporate the broader issues of culture and management style.

By using the initial questions to engage a relationship with the interviewee, the themes of the questions became a little more contentious. Issues of control based around themes of communication, encouragement and decision-making sought to draw on the nature of the relationship between the organisation\(^{110}\) and the work groups within. At this stage the respondent would be encouraged to think more critically about the organisation, emphasising the areas of concern as well as the areas of success. The interview was concluded with a focus on the management of employees, an issue that the Senior Manager feels that is an organisational strength. This allowed the interview to finish on a positive note.

The question structure throughout the interview sought subjective opinion rather than verifiable statistical data. In retaining the affinity with the interpretive paradigm, it was important to emphasise the "human situation" rather than the "scientific value" (Kvale, 1996: 111). This notion of subjectivity allowed a greater depth of interrogation

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\(^{109}\) This latter issue is a specific inclusion in the analysis of the transcribed interview.

\(^{110}\) As exemplified by the actions of the management.
focussing on both content (the views of the individual) and context (the organisational circumstances which frame those views) (May, 2001).

A time frame of one and a half hours was set based on a rough walk through of the proposed questions.

3.3.2 Focus Group Interviews

Focus groups are much under-used in social research (Gibbs, 1997) and have the potential to explore much more deeply the social structures, values and opinions that collectively represent the culture of an organisation.

The context of the investigation was to elicit information which would allow an etic insight into the emic perspective of organisational culture (Martin, 2002). Bloor et al (2001) note the role played by focus groups in facilitating access to “group meanings, processes and norms” (p. 4). Their proposition is that the relatedness of focus groups illuminates normative understandings that proffer the potential for surfaced collective understandings. Unless these collective understandings are overtly challenged, they generally remain covert and taken for granted. The opportunity is thus to “yield data on the meanings that lie behind” (Ibid).

This process of construction makes focus groups distinct from group interviewing. A focus group is a collective exploration of specific issues based on the explicit use of group interaction (Barbour and Kitzinger, 1999). The advantage of this collective exploration is the potential to “draw upon respondents’ attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions in a way which would not be feasible using other methods” (Gibbs, 1997: 2). Yet this very advantage belies a problematic for control. Whilst the role of the “moderator” (Anon 2, 2002: 1) is to navigate the complexity of group dynamics, they should do so whilst relinquishing control to that dynamic. Kitzinger and Barbour (1999) note that “it is incorrect to assume that total anarchy will ensue unless the researcher handles the group situation with consummate poise” (p. 13), whilst Wilkinson (1999) recognises the disparity between the non-hierarchical status of the focus group moderator and traditional research in which “participants’ voices are typically silenced or severely circumscribed by the powerful voice of the researcher” (p.

111 See Bryman, 2001 for a systematic distinction between focus groups and group interviews.
112 For moderator read researcher
Morgan (1998) presents a simplistic but effective conclusion to this dichotomy of control with the notion that “it is your focus, but it is their group” \(^{113}\) (p. 10).

The alignment between focus groups and an interpretive approach to organisational culture is emphasised by an understanding that normative assumptions are slow to be revealed and only become apparent to “the ethnographer immersing her/himself in a collectivity, and even then (being alluded to, instead of articulated) they are largely inductively\(^{114}\) elaborated rather than directly recorded” (Bloor et al, 2001: 5).

Kitzinger and Barbour (1999) note the method as being extremely valuable in “allowing the participants to generate their own questions, frames and concepts and to pursue their own priorities on their own terms and in their own vocabularies” (p. 5). And this notion of vocabulary becomes critical where the language and culture of the group is the focus for research (Morgan and Kreuger, 1993; Wilkinson, 1999). In addition to the evident congruence with the interpretive paradigm, focus groups have logistical advantages. In comparison to participant and non-participant observation, focus groups can enable a significantly greater quantity of data to be gained in a shorter period of time (Gibbs, 1997; Madriz, 2002; Bloor et al, 2001), a key factor when the host company requires minimum intrusion by the researchers. Likewise, the quality of the data is improved in comparison to individual interviews as the notion of collectivity facilitates a less risk-averse strategy\(^{115}\).

Despite the logistical advantages, Bloor et al (2002) note that:

“focus groups are not just the time pressed researcher’s poor substitute for ethnographic fieldwork, they are a mainstream method to address those study topics in increasingly privatised societies which are less open to observational methods.”

(p. 17)

\(^{113}\) Emphasis in the original

\(^{114}\) The notion of induction here presents a methodological complexity in which a singular statement is broadened to a global implication (Blaikie, 1993) rather than the research motive in this thesis which is to produce description and discussion rather than explanation.

\(^{115}\) See Barbour (1999: 119) for an account of how focus group comments about another professional group were noticeably more critical than those expressed in individual interviews.
Further Comments

Focus group research is based on the use of language. At a fundamental level researchers expect people "to articulate those normally unarticulated normative assumptions" (Bloor et al, 2001: 5), that is, to engage in a process of "retrospective introspection" (Ibid: 6). Group members need to have the motivation to express their opinions and the linguistic skills to be able to articulate these. This dynamic is premised on the idea that as human beings we are schooled in giving what we assume to be the right answer, or as a minimum “the answer that is least likely to incriminate us, or offend others” (Anon 2, 2002: 1). Madriz (2002) explores this idea and notes that “It is difficult to discern how ‘authentic’ the social interaction in a focus group really is” (p. 863). However, her emphasis on authenticity implies a search for the truth. Within the context of this thesis, phenomenological focus groups align the meta-theoretical assumptions founding the interpretive paradigm. The research is aimed at the “uncovering of everyday knowledge for its own value, not for how it can be aggregated into higher-order theoretical constructs” (Fern, 2001: 8).

Despite the focus groups not being used in a search for the truth, there is still a political dimension to the role of the moderator. Pragmatically, the moderator needs to be aware of the relevance of the responses and the degree to which any subject can be probed whilst respecting the vulnerability of the respondent. Likewise, although focus groups are described as non-hierarchical (Wilkinson, 1999), this notion relates more specifically to the relationship between the researcher and the researched. Where people compete for influence there is the potential to surface implicit means of subordination. Time spent in the company, proximity to senior management (hierarchical and social) and the use of exclusionary language can all be used to promote personal status.

What emerges is the extent to which focus groups depend on language. Where there is such a dependency on language, there is the potential to obscure rather than reveal the reality being constructed. To extract meaning from the discourse, the researcher needs to understand the language of the researched (Kitzinger, 1994; Gibbs, 1997; Wilkinson, 1999). Where the group construct their reality “in the argot and everyday language of the group, {which is} not translated into the terminology of the researcher” (Bloor et al, 2001: 7) therein lies the potential for researcher exclusion. To be included, the researcher must access the “indigenous coding systems” (Ibid) in order to understand how the use of language portrays a specific view of reality.
*Practical arrangements*

Whilst the literature would advocate a systematic process (Morgan, 1998a; 1998b, Fern, 2001) for the selection of focus group members, selection here was undertaken by the organisation. Based on my instructions, they selected 8 members from middle management for each of the focus groups. The venue was in the company and a round table format was used to enable me to have eye contact with each person.

The structure of the interviews was premised on the need to create open discussions. As such, the discussions were themed by structuring the questions against the 6 categories in the OCAI (bracketed), namely

1. How would you describe the company? (Dominant characteristics)
2. How effective is communication within the company? (Management of employees)
3. What is the image of the company internally and externally? (Strategic emphases)
4. How would you describe the leadership in the company? (Organisational leadership)
5. How would you describe the culture of the company? (Organisation glue)
6. What do you think are the key values of the company? (Criteria for success)

In the last stage of the focus group I presented the group with information about a company scheme to lower their normal entry requirements to allow people from an area of high socio-economic deprivation into the company. All of the groups were unaware of this initiative which could be seen to challenge the stability of the culture. The objective was to observe the groups response and to see if this had implications for how they perceived leadership, values and communication.

A key advantage of using a limited semi-structured format was that this allowed for a free flow of dialogue. The groups directed the topics of conversation and had scope within the time frame (1½ hours) to do so. Limiting the questions to the 6 core areas of the OCAI meant that the focus of the discussions had an affinity with the functionalist research. The focus groups were tape recorded using two out –sequenced tape recorders. The recordings were transcribed by the researcher.
In summary, focus groups were selected for their affinity with the interpretive paradigm. Their use constitutes one of the multiple research methods selected to ensure a richness and breadth of interpretive data.

3.3.3 Non-linguistically based Non-participant Observation

The interpretive method employed to study those at the bottom of this organisation had to respect language difficulties. The workgroup here are predominantly people from ethnic minority backgrounds. For many English is a second or third language. In line with the ethos of the interpretive paradigm, the research here sought to “explore and reveal the essential types and structures of experience” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 233) but to do so by reading the manifestation of that experience through non-verbal cues. In constructing this method it was recognised that communication is a mixture of verbal and non-verbal modes of expression. Within a research context, language appears to be a convenient means of interpretation. As such, when faced with complexity or ambiguity, researchers can always seek solace in definitional precision. However, non-verbal cues also communicate. The ways in which people physically present themselves reflect the relationship between the person and the reality in which they see themselves as being located. Whilst there are culturally specific refinements to non-verbal cues, the core aspects of communication such as facial expression, gestures, proximity, movement and posture coalesce to present an image of the person within the context in which they are situated. The nature of the reality being constructed is inferred from the physical manifestations and the relationship these have with the externality. I chose to use these non verbal elements of communication as the basis for unstructured non-participant observation (Brown, 1998).

Here, the focus of my observations would be the person in toto. The ways in which people moved, the facial expressions they used, their proximity to others and the use of gestures and posture were all observed to create a composite image of the reality in which that person exists. This unstructured approach allowed for the appearance of unanticipated actions, although it was recognised that in such circumstances researchers can be distracted by their “own psyche, their likings, their prejudices, their ideas about desirable results and other such factors” (Anon, 2: 1). The lack of formal structure was a purposive attempt to encourage intuition and subjectivity, factors which despite having
an affinity with the interpretive paradigm are according to Kilduff and Mehra (1997) often “rigorously excluded” (p. 480).

In documenting the observations, shorthand field notes were taken using key words as a prompt. At the end of each day of observation the field notes were transcribed into long hand. It was important to do this within the shortest timeframe to facilitate the most accurate recollection of the events. Whilst this lack of formal structure could be seen to undermine any attempt to recognise causal relationships, here I sought to describe and discuss, rather than attribute paradigm affiliations.116

Brown (1998) notes that effective non-participant observation requires the observer to be as unobtrusive as possible, and make a purposeful attempt to distance him or her self from the group. Despite this, there is a need for some degree of acceptance (be that voluntaristically or deterministically) by the observed if the impact of the presence of the observers is not to seriously impact the nature of the activities. Within the context of this research, the researcher’s ability to control proximity would remain unclear up to the point of engagement.

Further Comments

Whilst non-linguistically based non-participant observation allows for a focussed and context-specific appreciation of activities, the potential for data inaccuracy is great.117 First, the presence of the observer may have a direct impact on the behaviours of the observed. Second, the political dynamic may be skewed as those with the will to perform do so to pursue their own personal agendas in the presence of the observers.

Despite these issues, non-linguistically based non-participant observation involved the observer in a direct and personal experience allowing a depth of information to be gathered. Where the motives for the research are illustrative rather than validative, this proves to be a rich seam of information. Last, non linguistically based non-participant observation is in concert with the meta-theoretical assumptions which found the interpretive paradigm. It offered an expansive basis for analysis, rather than the reductionist approach prevalent in many of the functionalist methodologies.

116 Aligning the notion of ‘applied’ versus ‘emergent’ paradigms.
117 There is an assumption in much of the literature, most specifically from the field of psychology, that data accuracy is what is being sought.
3.4 Interpretive Analyses

For the interpretive analyses, two distinct modes of analysis were used across the three modes of investigation. For the linguistically based investigations, i.e. the individual interview and the focus groups, a discourse analysis framework was used. For the non-linguistically based non-participant observation, an open interpretation of demonstrable behaviours was used. See Table 5

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Method</th>
<th>Analysis method</th>
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<td>Focus groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-participant observation</td>
<td>Free form interpretation of behaviours</td>
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3.4.1 Linguistically-based Analyses

The transcripts from the individual interview and the focus groups were used as the basis for the discourse analysis. The transcribed field notes from the non-linguistically based non-participant observation were used as the basis for the free form interpretation of behaviours.

In order to ensure a consistency of analysis across the individual interview and the focus groups, I decided to use a structured discourse analysis framework. By structuring the analysis I was able to select what I determined to be the significant elements of language in use\(^{118}\) and to use these dimensions for comparisons across and between the research methods. The initial process adopted was one of an expansive analysis in which the text from each of the transcripts was systematically subjected to a series of specific linguistic and pragmatic considerations.

**Discourse Analysis Framework**

Discourse analysis is not a single analysis framework. Rather, discourse analysis offers a menu from which the researcher constructs an appropriate means of analysis. Wodak and Meyer (2001) expand on this, noting that: “{C}DA must not be understood as a single method but rather as an approach, which reconstitutes itself at different levels” (p.14). The process of designing the analysis framework involved an engagement with

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\(^{118}\) To be discussed later in this Chapter.
the literature on discourse analysis, pragmatics and linguistics to determine the specific dimensions of analysis. The subjective nature of this process is in concert with the interpretive nature of the research. Boden (1994) concurs, noting that this “inevitably involves the researcher in decisions on ‘what counts’; that distinction always and everywhere is a local judgement call – no more, no less – and it is thoroughly interpretive” (p. 4-5). In acknowledging the subjective nature of selecting dimensions of analysis, it was useful to revert back to the research questions, namely:

- How does the use of paradigm specific research methods shape the view of culture?
- Can the use of bi-paradigmatic research challenge the traditional views of culture?

The dimensions of analysis had, therefore, to respect the integrity of the interpretive paradigm whilst reflecting the emphasis on values and sharedness prevalent in the literature on culture. The dimensions of analysis chosen sought to chart progression from an initial blanket interpretation of what I thought the speaker was trying to say, through the application of specific linguistic criteria and concluding with the implications of the discourse.

Stage 1 – Communicative Intentions
Stage 2 – Grice’s Co-operative Principles
Stage 3 – Face and Politeness
Stage 4 – Deictic Elements
Stage 5 – Conclusions

Stage 1 – Communicative Intentions

Consideration of communicative intentions was based on Wood and Kroger's (2000) thesis that:

"utterances can be considered in terms of three features: (a) their locutionary or referential meaning (what they are about), (B) their illocutionary force (what the speaker does with them), and (c) their perlocutionary force (their effects on the hearer)."

(p. 5)

Aligning locutionary and illocutionary facets, communicative intentions recognise the focus of the responses given and implicate the structuring of the reply by trying to
extrapolate the speaker’s motives. Slembrouk (2002) notes that such considerations are “based on the assumption that a speaker has wants, beliefs and intentions which are indexed in the performance of utterances” (p. 3). Communicative intentions form the basic unit of each utterance, within which the speaker encodes specific meanings, a “self-referential, or reflexive, intention” (Bach, 2003: 1). Comprehension of the utterance is implicated when the hearer recognises the intention (Stone, 2002: 1).

The affinity with the interpretive paradigm becomes apparent. The notion that the speaker encodes specific meanings in order that these convey specific meanings to the hearer implies an active rather than passive role in the social construction of reality. Indeed, Slembrouk (2002) expands on this theme in his description of the relationship between the world (context), the word (literal meaning), the psychological state expressed and the differences in point or purpose. What emerges is a picture of the ways in which narratives are manipulated to produce a specific relationship between the speaker and the listener, i.e. the ways in which narratives are purposefully used in the construction of reality.

Within the context of this thesis, the role of communicative intentions is to present the initial and intuitive (Kilduff and Mehra, 1997) interpretation of what has been said, prior to the sequential and more in-depth analyses all of which contribute to the final interpretation.

Stage 2 – Grice’s Cooperative Principles

The second level of the framework is the application of Grice’s Cooperative Principles (Grice, 1975). Here, Hancher (1978) asserts that “the meaning of a word (or non-natural sign) in general is a derivative function of what speakers mean by that word in individual instances of uttering it” (p. 1). Grice (1975) offers a framework for trying to understand that derivation with his “maxims of cooperation” (Schiffrin, 1998: 9). These maxims help clarify the derivation because they “provide inferential routes to a speaker’s communicative intention” (Ibid). A distinction is drawn here between what is said and what is meant. Speakers construct a speech act in accordance with what they want the recipient to understand. Whilst language in use is not taken literally

119 Jaszczolt (2002) reinforces this, positing that meaning is “not explained by truth-conditional semantics” (p. 207).

120 Speech act theory derives from Austin’s (1962) suggestion that the context of the utterance becomes critical to an understanding of the utterance itself.
(Levinson, 1983) the assumption of cooperation is. As such, the reciprocality of the exchange could almost be accused of complicity, indeed, Grice (1975) asserts that:

“Our talk exchanges do not normally consist of a succession of disconnected remarks, and would not be rational if they did. They are characteristically, to some degree at least, cooperative efforts; and each participant recognizes in them, to some extent, a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction”.

(p. 45)

Here, the speaker uses the maxims as a means of ensuring that “their addressees will reliably understand their intended meaning” (Davies, 2000: 2), and the addressees “should assume that the speaker is following the four maxims” (Nunan, 1993: 118).

Although the taxonomy of Cooperative Principles has attributes of functionalism,

Grice (1975) notes that conformance to the maxims is not rigid, rather that people “orient to those principles in a way that gives rise to implicature” (Wood and Kroger, 2000: 209). Cooperation is required. To facilitate this idea of cooperation Grice (1975) presents four maxims to provide cynosure (p. 45-46) namely:

- **Quantity**
  Make your contribution as informative as is required.
  Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

- **Quality**
  Do not say what you believe to be false.
  Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

- **Relation**
  Be relevant.

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It assumes a value free acceptance of the notion of cooperation.

Paradoxically, although conformance is assumptive rather than strictly adhered to, the term “flouting” (Ibid) is used to denote non-conformance. Noting the meaning of the word “to deliberately disobey” (Concise English Dictionary: 362), predicates a paradigmatic turmoil. Literal meanings (functionalist) are insufficient for understanding (Levinson, 1983; Kroger and Wood, 2000; Jaszczolt, 2002), necessitating inference (interpretive) (Schiffrin, 1998). Conformance to the taxonomy is constructed by a shared understanding (interpretive) between the speaker and the listener (Grice, 1975), yet there is a definitive notion of purposive non-conformance (functionalist) (Wood and Kroger, 2000). Whilst outside the remit of this thesis, the paradigmatic implications of lurching so dramatically between two extremes appears to be worthy of further research.
• **Manner**
  
  Avoid obscurity of expression.
  Avoid ambiguity.
  Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
  Be orderly.

Although he provides four potentially distinct\(^{123}\) maxims, Grice (1975) acknowledges that; “the scheme needs to be generalized to allow for such general purposes as influencing and directing the actions of others” (p. 47), an issue which Fairclough (1995) posits is “often overlooked” (p. 47). Accordingly, this research has extrapolated the contents of the maxims to better contextualise the nature of the responses and to encourage a greater depth of interpretation of the narratives produced. The maxims used as the basis for interpretation are thus\(^{124}\)

• **Quantity**

  Is there the potential for the respondent to contribute more?

• **Quality**

  Is the contribution honest?
  Is the contribution a simple affirmation of what has been said previously?
  Does the contribution add anything new to the discourse in terms of themes or perspectives?
  Is the depth of information similar to or different from the preceding contributions?

• **Manner**

  Is the contributor:
  Hesitant; Confident; Assertive; Aggressive; Conversational; Factual; Jovial; Questioning.

• **Relation**

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\(^{123}\) If the taxonomy is built on the premise that literal translations are insufficient to generate understanding, then this premise should likewise apply to the maxims themselves. As such distinctiveness becomes a variable.

\(^{124}\) The aspects nominated are in addition to those nominated in the original Gricean framework.
Is the contribution relevant to the previous contributions?

*Weaknesses of Grice's Cooperative Principles*

Fairclough (1995) notes that Grice's thesis of Cooperative Principles is based on an equity of contributions, and that, as this is founded on equity of status, an equity of control is implied. Despite noting that such circumstances could occur, he asserts that these "are by no means typical of interactions in general" (p. 47). Indeed, Kasher (2003) expands on this issue of equity, asserting that this is premised on the essential rationality of the taxonomy. He makes this assertion based on the assumption that Cooperative Principles are the consequences of a general rather than specific rationality, positing that subsequently "one may predict that analogous principles will be shown to hold outside the sphere of language" (p. 2). This thesis has used the taxonomy not from the verificationist position adopted by Kasher but as a means of interpretation and in accordance with the ethos of Grice's initial notion that the literal alone cannot give rise to understanding.

Lastly, Slembrouk (2002) assumes taxonomic naivety as Grice fails to acknowledge the need for "symmetry in the background knowledge between the talkers for it to explain the successful transmission of implicatures" (p. 6).

Although the Gricean taxonomy provides a useful initial framework, its inadequacy as a sole means of analysis are noted by many (Levinson, 1983; Brown and Levinson, 1978/1992). Indeed, Jaszczolt (2002) asserts the need to add "another dimension to the study of language use" (p. 312).

Within the context of this thesis, Face and Politeness principles and Deictic elements were included to add analytical depth.

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125 This could imply a greater affinity with the functionalist rather than the interpretive paradigm.
Stage 3 - Face and Politeness

Face and politeness principles were chosen here for four reasons. First, the principles of face and politeness are in-concert with the meta-theoretical assumptions founding the interpretive paradigm. Burrell and Morgan (1979) note that the assumption of social order which characterises the interpretive paradigm "is reflected in a pattern and structure which provides a context within which reality is created" (p. 277). Face and politeness principles represent two basic patterning devices through which reality is constructed. Second, there is a natural affinity with Grice's Cooperative Principles, i.e. the flouting of any of the Gricean maxims has a direct implication for the nature of face and politeness. Brown and Levinson (1992 {1978}) discuss this further in their recognition that the maxims "are an intuitive characterization of conversational principles that would constitute guidelines for achieving maximally efficient communication" (p. 94-95) and as such provide "the basic set of assumptions underlying every talk exchange" (Ibid: 95). This idea of a framework within which conformance can be judged presents a means of noting non-conformance, with an infringement of politeness being the "source of the deviation" (Ibid).

Third, face and politeness principles were selected because of the relationship the concepts have with culture (see Strecker, 1993; Morand, 1995; Reisco Bernier, 2001). Ardissono et al (2003) note that; "as it is widely recognized, politeness phenomena are culturally specific" (p.1). The nature of the focus groups would imply that politeness conventions contribute to the shared understandings. They reflect those understandings and the extent to which individuals conform. Bargiela et al (2003) note the reciprocity of the relationship here, with language negotiating politeness and politeness negotiating language.

Fourth, expanding on the principle of politeness allows me to view the nature of the articulated relationship between the respondents and the organisation. As such, rather than simply inferring culture from the narrative constructed between group members, politeness principles also informed a perspective on the nature of the relationship between the group and the organisation.

126 Face here is based on the Brown and Levinson's (1978/1992) definition "individuals' self-esteem" (p. 2).
127 Albeit the affinity social order has with the functionalist paradigm should also be appreciated.
128 An assertion which has a naturally affinity with Jones' (2002) note of the intensely cultural nature of writings on culture as cited previously.
The framework for analysis was aligned to the Brown and Levinson's (1978/1992) thesis of negative and positive face:

"Central to our model is a highly abstract notion of ‘face’ which consists of two specific kinds of desires (face-wants) attributed by interactants to one another: the desire to be unimpeded in ones actions (negative face) and the desire (in some respects) to be approved of (positive face)."

(p. 13)

Here, my analysis looked specifically for instance where respondents had their negative face threatened by interruptions, reminders or corrections to what they are saying. And for instances where respondents had their positive face threatened by disagreement, contradiction or where a subsequent speaker failed to acknowledge the contribution of the previous speaker.

Whilst this provided a pragmatic framework, the research sought not to be stifled by the rigid application of the model. Much of the criticism levelled at the Brown and Levinson framework relates to their inability to mediate the functionalist overtones of such a universal model with culturally specific phenomena (cf. Jaszczolt, 2002). For the purposes of this research, the concept was expanded to note either act or omission. As such, the interpretation sought to recognise Face Threatening Acts (Ibid) where negative and positive faces are challenged, but to also note where overt sentiments or inferences could be seen to elevate individual or collective self-esteem.

Stage 4 - Deictic Elements

Whilst the Cooperative Principles taxonomy notes the relationship between questions and responses, and Face and Politeness notes the relationship between groups members and between group members and the organisation, the research needed to consider the relationship between the language in use and the context of that usage. Levinson (1983) addresses this issue by noting that; “The single most obvious way in which the relationship between language and context is reflected in the structures of languages themselves is through the phenomenon of deixis” (p. 54).

The use of deictic elements is indicative of the context specific (Levinson, 1983; Brown, 2003) position adopted by people trying to ensure the integrity of their communication. Buhler (1934/1963) clarifies this by noting that; “What ‘here’ and
‘there’ is changes with the position of the speaker, just as the ‘I’ and ‘thou’ jumps from one interlocutor to the other” (p. 94). As such, deictic elements \(^{129}\) locate the dialogue against the relationships that exist within the context of the exchange and by using “the speaker’s setting of reference” (Jaszczolt, 2002: 1993). Feldman (1971) expands on this, noting how a failure to take account of the context between speaker and hearer can compromise any interpretation. Deixis is seen as being central to any interpretation (Tanz, 1980).

Within the context of this thesis, deictic elements are considered from two perspectives (see Loos et al, 1999 for a broader categorisation of deictic elements). First, empathetic deixis positions responses against the situation by noting “emotional or psychological ‘distance or proximity’” (Loos et al, 1999: 1). As such the analysis looks at the use of words such as ‘that’ (distal) or ‘this’ (proximal) (Levinson, 1983) to denote distance and empathy (Loos, 1999) respectively. This approach locates what is being said within a spatio-temporal framework (Slembrouk, 2002) from which the researcher can infer the nature of relationships, inclusions and exclusions. Second, person deixis notes the degree of ownership of what is being said and “encodes the role of participants in the speech event, such as speaker, addressee, other entities”(Jaszczolt, 2002: 1994). It forms the basis for the construction of the communicative intentions by encoding the “social identities of participants (or, properly, incumbents of participant roles), or the social relationship between them, or between one of them and persons and entities referred to” (Levinson, 1983: 89).

Moreover, the use of empathetic and person deixis is based on the affinity each has with the concept of culture. By analysing the nature and use of deictic elements, one can infer the value ascriptions which underpin the narrative, and the extent to which people are included or excluded from the acculturated group.

**Stage 5 - Conclusions**

The final stage in the analysis process was the drawing of conclusions from the preceding analysis. This was undertaken on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis and involved a consideration of the detailed analyses alongside the nature of the relationship between these analyses.

\(^{129}\) Also known as referents, indexicals or shifters (Jaszczolt, 2002; Slembrouk, 2002)
In summary, a robust framework for discourse analysis was devised following a review of the literature. The framework ensured a consistency of analysis across the transcripts. The analysis process comprised an initial consideration of communicative intentions. This allowed me to appreciate an immediate image of the reality being constructed. It was an intuitive engagement with the narrative which contextualised what people said, how they said this and what this meant to the listener. The application of Grice's cooperative principles highlighted the relationship between the questions asked and the responses given. Such analysis is reflects the culturally implicit guidelines for responding. Conformance to, or flouting of, the principles was seen to indicate cultural values. Face and politeness principles were important as they highlighted the nature of the relationship between group members and between group members and the organisation. This was seen as being indicative of both the culture of the organisation and of the extent to which the workgroup need to reflect a reality in which they are part of that culture. Lastly, the analysis of the use of deictic elements sought to recognise how people situate themselves and the work groups within the confines of the culture of the organisation.

In the final stage of the analysis, the results from all of the above were collated into a composite interpretation of each of the responses given. This final stage completed the expansive analysis phase of the linguistically based interpretive research method.

**Discourse Analysis Process**

The discourse analysis framework was used in the analysis of the interview and the focus group transcripts. The process involved applying each of the analysis categories\(^{130}\) to each of the responses given. This was done individually where the response was sufficiently robust to be analysed independently, or as small collections of text where the answers were insubstantial. Each analysis ended with my drawing conclusions outlining what I perceived as being the motives for the response and the meanings I inferred from this.

The process of in-depth discourse analysis formed the expansive analysis stage of the interpretive research method. The expansive analysis ensured that I had thoroughly interrogated the narrative before looking at how the use of language produces a

\(^{130}\) Communicative Intentions (see Wood and Kroger, 2000; Bach, 2003), Grice's Cooperative Principles (See Grice, 1975; Fairclough, 1995), Face and Politeness Principles (See Brown and Levinson, 1978, 1992; Strecker, 1993) and Deictic elements (See Loos et al, 1999; Jaszczolt, 2002).
particular view of reality, both as a precursor to interpreting the paradigmatic associations of the reality being constructed (to be discussed later in this thesis) and before considering how that narrative could be seen as illustrative of the organisation’s culture. An extract from the expansive analysis of the transcript of Focus Group 1 can be found at Appendix 3. Following on from the expansive analysis there was a need to focus the results back on to the research questions. The results of the expansive analysis needed to be abridged to enable me to look for connections between the narrative, the ways in which this implied any specific paradigmatic stance and the ways in which the two contributed to the views of culture seen.

The conclusions at the end of each analysis were used as the basis for the second phase of concentrating the data. These conclusions were collated into individual documents (1 per interview/focus group) and the contraction analysis involved reading and re-reading the text to establish the key inferences drawn\textsuperscript{131}. These meanings were inferred from the text and used to construct a progressive narrative\textsuperscript{132}. This notion of a progressive narrative invited the inclusion of previous text and previous interpretations within the contemporary interpretation. I used the idea of a progressive narrative to acknowledge the sequential nature of discourse.

At this stage the analysis needed to converge onto the key frameworks underpinning the bi-paradigmatic nature of this thesis, namely the Burrell and Morgan (1979) taxonomy and the OCAI. Here, an open interpretation structure was used in order that the analysis remained true to the ethos of the interpretive paradigm. Interpreting the paradigmatic associations of the text was done by bracketing (See Hassard, 1991 and Lewis and Kelemen, 2002) the meta-theoretical assumptions of each paradigm and interrogating the text to find where the use of language implicated a specific paradigmatic stance. Each paragraph of each of the contracted key words documents was read to see first, where the use of language implied an ascription to either the functionalist or the interpretive paradigm, second where the use of language implied an ascription to either the radical structuralist or radical humanist paradigm. Third, where the use of language implied an association with the culture types nominated in the OCAI.

\textsuperscript{131} The resultant documents were entitled the Contracted key words documents and an extract of text from the contracted key words document for Focus Group 1 can be found at Appendix 4.

\textsuperscript{132} As distinct from what I would term a static narrative which one would consider text in isolation from that which precedes it.
The results were written as a free-form narrative which was then used to connect with the literature reviews undertaken previously as the basis for the conclusions drawn.

3.4.2 Non-linguistically based Analyses - Framework

Within this section of the interpretive research methods, the data gathering involved a process of observing, describing and commenting on the physical manifestation of the work group at the bottom of this organisation. As a comparison, the staff group located in the middle of the organisation were also observed.

As an observer, it was important to position myself as far away from the research group as possible. By being physically distant from the observed, I hoped to reduce the extent to which my presence would influence the behaviours of these people. Field notes were taken using key words and phrases. These were later transcribed into a free-form narrative.

Observations included all non-linguistically based modes of communication. As such, facial expressions, posture, gestures, movement and proximity were considered. Additionally, I noted the ambience of the environment in which the observations took place. The organisation granted me permission to do the actual observations at the end of December 2003. This meant that the observed groups in both environments (Canteen and Restaurant) were at some stage during my observations having their Christmas lunch. Such a circumstance presented a useful dimension for comparison, in trying to reconcile the demonstrated behaviours with the idea of this being the festive season. The observations took place over two consecutive days and were scheduled around the shift system within the organisation and around the times at which the areas of observation were likely to be busiest. Day 1 ran from 07.00 – 18.30 and Day 2 from 05.00 – 15.00, cumulatively 21.5 hours.

Non-linguistically based non-participant observation – analysis process

At the end of each day the field notes were transcribed into a diary of observations. The observations throughout the day were chronicled noting the behaviours of individuals within the environment and the ways in which those behaviours were routinised across the observation period. The diary of observations related the behaviours of individuals with the behaviours of their peer group. It also noted similarity and disparity between
the behaviours of different workgroups within the same environment. This latter point was an opportunist strategy as it was not until I started with the observations that the nature of the relationship between the work group in the canteen and the canteen staff became apparent. Last, the diary noted a comparison across research venues (canteen versus restaurant).

Once completed, the diaries formed the basis from which I made the connections between my observations and the key foci of this thesis, namely the ways in which specific paradigm lenses produce a particular view of the world and how these views were indicative of the nature of the culture within the organisation. As discussed previously (see section 2.5) by bracketing (Hassard, 1991; Lewis and Kelemen, 2002) the meta-theoretical assumptions of the interpretive paradigm, affiliations to this could be sought without me needed to be immersed within the paradigm\footnote{Immersion in a paradigm would invoke the incommensurability debate and potentially stultify any approach to multi-paradigm research.}. The paradigmatic affiliations were considered against the Burrell and Morgan (1979) taxonomy and the culture within the organisation against the OCAI. The connections between these frameworks and the narrative constructed were extracted by reading and re-reading the diaries in order to produce a progressive narrative as discussed previously.

In summary, in this Chapter I have highlighted the importance of selecting research methods in concert with the paradigmatic stance being adopted and explained how a process of paradigm bracketing (Hassard, 1991; Lewis and Kelemen, 2002) is crucial to being able to do this. I then discussed each of the research methods devised in order to support my bi-paradigmatic investigation into organisational culture.

For each of the methods chosen, I have emphasised the affinity they have with either the functionalist paradigm or with the interpretive paradigm. I have described the framework for research and the process of research for each method. It is this description of the processes of analysis which sets the context for me to go on next to consider the results of my analysis.
Chapter 4: Results of the Functionalist Research - Quantitative Analysis

4.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I outlined the research methods and indicated the affinity these have with bi-paradigmatic nature of this research. In this chapter, I will present the results of the functionalist research undertaken. The presentation of the results is structured around the layout of the OCAI. In line with the ethos of the functionalist paradigm, the OCAI frames culture as an objective reality. As such, culture is a commodity which can be quantifiably measured and the results used to advise the managerial manipulation of the concept. Rigidly structured questionnaires are completed by the respondents and the quantitative data extracted from these is used to construct graphic profiles illustrative of the culture of the organisation. Of the initially intended sample size of 300 questionnaires, the final number of usable returns was 102 (34%). Of these, forty four (44) were completed by people in the canteen, i.e. those located at the bottom of the organisational hierarchy. Fifty eight (58) were completed by people in the restaurant, i.e. those located in the middle of the organisational hierarchy. In completing the questionnaires, each respondent was asked to rate the organisation’s culture from two perspectives. First, the culture that they felt existed at that time within the organisation (the ‘actual’ culture). Second, the culture that they would prefer existed within the organisation (the ‘ideal’ culture).

In this chapter, the results of the analysis of this data are presented as a sequence of comparisons. In the first part, the comparisons are between the ‘actual’ culture in the canteen and the ‘ideal’ culture in the canteen. Initially the ‘overall’ profiles constructed for actual and ideal cultures are compared. These are the profiles resulting from the aggregated marks across all responses. Next the comparisons are done between the ‘actual’ responses and the ‘ideal’ responses for each question. The objective here was to enable a more detailed commentary on the nature of culture within the organisation. The graphic profiles produced have been included in here to give a more vivid visual impression of the similarities and differences between the results. The numeric data is included for reference and then a narrative is presented to outline the key issues raised.
In the second part, the results from the 'actual' culture in the restaurant and the 'ideal' culture in the restaurant are compared. The comparison is structured as per the results from the canteen discussed previously. In the third part of the quantitative analysis, the results from the 'actual' culture in the canteen are compared with the results of the 'actual' culture in the restaurant. The overall comparison is made initially followed by a breakdown by question. In the fourth part, and using the same format as above, the results of the 'ideal' culture in the canteen are compared with the 'ideal' culture results from the restaurant. See Table 6

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Canteen actual culture versus Canteen ideal culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Restaurant actual culture versus Restaurant ideal culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Canteen actual culture versus Restaurant actual culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Canteen ideal culture versus Restaurant actual culture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This section concludes with a discussion in which I present the view of the culture in Food Co, as seen through the functionalist lens.

4.1 OCAI Results - Canteen

Profile of the Actual Culture (Canteen) versus the Ideal Culture (Canteen)

Key: Actual culture =  Ideal culture =
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Actual Culture</th>
<th>Ideal Culture</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>+3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>-3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>-8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The profile of the actual culture constructed from the canteen questionnaires is clearly dominated by an emphasis on the market. From the OCAI literature this implies that the company is driven by success in the external environment, they are competitive and this notion of competition is applicable inside the organisation between the members of the workforce and outside the organisation within the markets in which they operate. Cameron and Quinn (1999) note that within a market culture "the long term focus is on competitive actions and achievement of measurable goals and targets" (p. 58). The magnitude of the dominance of the market culture within the profile is significant. Cameron and Quinn (Ibid) note that where there is a numeric difference of more than ten marks between rankings, then that difference is deemed significant. In the case of the canteen the market culture rates as being 10.9 marks higher than the next highest scoring classification, at 25.2. Although the clan culture is the next highest score, there is actually very little between the scores for this and the scores for the hierarchy culture and the adhocracy culture, the difference across all three being 0.6 marks. The implications here are that the culture which exists within this company is focussed predominantly on the market. The remaining three cultures, whilst having some manifestations are insignificant in comparison to the strength of the market culture.

Interestingly, when comparing this profile to the industry norm (Cameron and Quinn, 1999) profiles, it has a greater affinity with the profile of the retail/wholesale sector than it does with the manufacturing sector. One could hypothesise, however, that this is largely due to the nature of the product. Rather than dealing with what may be perceived as a traditional manufacturing company, this is a company which manufactures a fast moving consumer good. As such the ethos of the business may well be more in line with that of the retail/wholesale sector.

The 'ideal' culture profile constructed from the canteen questionnaires shows an interesting shift. The domination of the market culture is overtaken by the domination of the clan culture. Whilst the domination of the clan culture is not significant, i.e. the difference is less than 10 marks; the movement that would have to take place in order to
achieve the ‘ideal’ culture profile is worthy of attention. The emphasis that the ‘actual’ culture has on the market would need to reduce by 8.8 marks whilst simultaneously the emphasis on the clan culture would have to increase by 3.5 marks. Positionally, these two are diametrically opposed on the profile. The emphasis on competition would need to be exchanged for an emphasis on people. According to Cameron and Quinn (1999), the clan culture imbues the organisation with a ‘family’ ethos. Leaders are seen as parents and the emphasis is on “loyalty and tradition” (p. 58). The ‘ideal’ profile constructed presents a more equitable balance between the different culture types. In the ‘actual’ profile there is a clear domination of the market culture, whereas, when the group were allowed to select their ‘ideal’ profile, they chose a culture with a more eclectic profile. The balance is clearly skewed towards equating the relationship between the market culture and the clan culture. For the respondents in the canteen, the adhocracy culture and the hierarchy culture are of lesser importance. In order to explore the generic profiles in more depth, the actual culture and the ideal culture have been considered on a question-by-question basis.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (canteen) and ‘ideal’ responses (canteen) to Question 1

Question 1 within the OCAI framework focuses on the dominant characteristics of the organisation, those attributes that are seen to best describe the way the organisation is.

Key:  Actual culture =  

Ideal culture =  

126
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Actual Culture</th>
<th>Ideal Culture</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1A</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>+9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1B</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>+3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1C</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>-6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1D</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>-6.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What becomes apparent from the shifting profile between the actual and the ideal cultures is the way in which movement from the former to the latter proposes a greater cultural emphasis on flexibility and discretion, replacing the existing emphasis on stability and control. Of particular note is the need to increase the cultural focus on the person centred aspects of the organisation, namely the clan culture (+9.4), whilst concomitantly reducing the control by the external drivers of the market culture (-6.1) and control by the internal drivers of hierarchy culture (-6.1). The group have decided that whilst the culture needs to retain elements of the market culture and the hierarchy culture, the current emphasis on them is seen as excessive.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (canteen) and ‘ideal’ responses (canteen) to Question 2

Question 2 within the OCAI framework considers the influence of organisational leadership. Within this the questions seek to elicit what characterises the style of leadership prevalent within the organisation.

Key: Actual culture = ———— Ideal culture = ————
What becomes apparent from the profiles here is that the respondents would like to see the culture once again migrate towards the flexibility and discretion end of the matrix. There is, however, a much greater movement towards the clan culture than towards that of the adhocracy culture. The move away from the external controls of the market is significant, and the shift from the actual culture to the ideal culture would require a reduction in emphasis of 10.8 marks. Clearly these people feel that the present emphasis on the market is inappropriate.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (canteen) and ‘ideal’ responses (canteen) to Question 3

Question 3 within the OCAI framework considers the corporate approach to managing its employees. Within this, it draws on the relationship between those within the organisation and those directing and leading the organisation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 2</th>
<th>Actual Culture</th>
<th>Ideal Culture</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2A</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>+8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2B</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>+0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2C</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>-10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2D</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>+0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: Actual culture = ———— Ideal culture = ————
Again the results remain consistent. The emphasis that this company places on stability and control is, here, deemed excessive. In order to create an environment more in concert with their ideal type of culture there would need to be a substantial move away from the market culture. This reduction in emphasis on the market is mirrored by demand for an increased emphasis on the clan culture. There is also a need for a marginal increase in the emphasis on the adhocracy culture. This indicates that the human aspects of the organisation are seen as being of greater importance to the respondent group than they are to the company.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (canteen) and ‘ideal’ responses (canteen) to Question 4

Question 4 within the OCAI considers the “organizational glue” (Cameron and Quinn, 1999: 21). Here the questionnaires try to elicit (albeit against a predetermined set of criteria) those factors that are deemed important in creating a sense of cohesion that holds the organisation together.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 4</th>
<th>Actual Culture</th>
<th>Ideal Culture</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4A</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>+8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4B</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>+0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4C</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>-9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4D</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again a consistency of responses. People here require a movement from control to flexibility in order to achieve their ideal organisational culture. Although there are only minor changes required to the adhocracy culture (+0.9 points) and hierarchy culture (-0.2 points) to bring these in line with the ideal culture, these changes are consistent with the need for a shift in which the company concedes some aspects of control to the acculturated group. Indeed, one can almost equate the required increase in the emphasis on a clan culture (+8.9) with the required decrease in the emphasis on the market culture (-9.1)

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (canteen) and ‘ideal’ responses (canteen) to Question 5

Question 5 within the OCAI framework considers the strategic emphases of the organisation. To do this, the question seeks to elicit how the priorities of the organisation influence the organisational culture.

![Diagram of OCAI framework with key: Actual culture = --- Ideal culture = ----]
Achieving the ideal culture for these people requires a shift in strategic emphases away from the current dominance of the market culture. Indeed, from the actual profile constructed by this group the significance of the domination is noted by the way in which the market rates 13.4 points higher than the hierarchy culture, the next highest scoring culture type. Achieving the ideal culture would require a reduction of 10.4 marks in the market culture and a parallel increase of 8.5 marks in the clan culture.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (canteen) and ‘ideal’ responses (canteen) to Question 6

Question 6 in the OCAI framework considers the drivers of the organisation, those factors that constitute the key criteria of success.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 5</th>
<th>Actual Culture</th>
<th>Ideal Culture</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5A</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>+8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5B</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>+2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5C</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>-10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5D</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Achieving the ideal culture for these people requires a shift in strategic emphases away from the current dominance of the market culture. Indeed, from the actual profile constructed by this group the significance of the domination is noted by the way in which the market rates 13.4 points higher than the hierarchy culture, the next highest scoring culture type. Achieving the ideal culture would require a reduction of 10.4 marks in the market culture and a parallel increase of 8.5 marks in the clan culture.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (canteen) and ‘ideal’ responses (canteen) to Question 6

Question 6 in the OCAI framework considers the drivers of the organisation, those factors that constitute the key criteria of success.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 6</th>
<th>Actual Culture</th>
<th>Ideal Culture</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6A</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>+10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6B</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>+0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6C</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>-8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6D</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

134 Cameron and Quinn (1999) note that the difference is significant at +/- 10.
From the actual profile constructed, the key criterion for success driving this organisation is the market. Again, the domination is significant. The market culture rates 12.6 marks higher than the next highest ranking (which was again the hierarchy culture). The group perceives the culture as being one in which control is motivated by the external drivers of the market and implemented via the internal constraints of the hierarchy. Their view of the ideal culture addresses this domination but does so whilst still recognising the need to be driven by the market. Accordingly, although the clan culture increases by a significant 10.4 points and the market culture reduces by 8.6 points, the resulting profile still holds the market culture as the second most important type, with only 1.5 points less than that of the clan culture.

4.1.1 Further Discussion

In consideration of the actual and ideal cultures profiles constructed from the canteen questionnaires a number of issues emerge. The first is the domination of the market culture, which is significant for all but one of the questions. Where this is not significant (question 4) the domination is still by 9.6 points (+/- 10.00 points is deemed by Cameron and Quinn, 1999 to be significant). Indeed for question 5 the level of domination of the market culture rises to 13.4 points.

The second issue relates to the migration patterns seen in making the transition between the actual culture and the ideal culture. The former are dominated by an emphasis at the stability and control end of the matrix. Against all 6 questions the market culture rated most highly, followed by the hierarchy culture. The emphasis within Food Co is clearly perceived by this group to be on control. Control is exerted by the ways in which the company accedes to the demands of the market. The company then uses hierarchy and structure to manipulate the human resource in order to meet the demands of the market. When the groups construct the ideal culture, the emphasis switches. The group demand a much more human focus to the culture. Across all the questions, the transition between the actual culture and the ideal culture requires a reduction in emphasis on the market and a concomitant increase in the emphases on the clan culture and the adhocracy culture. A decreased emphasis on the hierarchy is also demanded in 5 out of the six questions. However, question 2 appears to be the exception here, instead, requiring an increase in hierarchy of +0.1 points.
The third issue relates to the differences between the actual and the ideal profiles. The actual profiles all demonstrate a clear domination of the market culture, which skews the outline to one in which the culture is seen to have dominant and recessive features. The mean difference between the lowest and the highest rating culture types across the actual profile is 17.4 points. In contrast, for the ideal culture, the mean difference between the highest and the lowest culture types is 8.1 points. This would indicate that what the groups are looking for within their ideal culture is not a way of reversing the culture which exists at present, but rather a way in which a better balance can be achieved between control by the corporate, self-control and autonomy.

4.2 OCAI Results - Restaurant

Profile of the ‘Actual’ Culture (Restaurant) versus the ‘Ideal’ Culture (Restaurant).

![Diagram showing the OCAI results for restaurant culture](image)

**Key:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Actual Culture</th>
<th>Ideal Culture</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>+8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>+2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>-10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>+0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ‘actual’ culture profile constructed for the restaurant is markedly similar to that of the employees surveyed in the canteen. The emphasis is clearly on the transactional nature of the relationship between the company and those who work within. The group are cognisant of the fact that the market culture dominates, their ratings acknowledge
this. Indeed the level of the domination of the market culture on the ‘actual’ profile of culture is 12.7 points, significant domination being achieved at +/- 10.00 points. The remaining types, whilst all being evidenced, rate fairly equitably with a discrepancy between all three culture types of 3.5 points.

The magnitude of the dominance of the market culture reflects, according the Cameron and Quinn (1999) an “organization that functions as a market itself” (p. 35). The emphasis within the company is on control by exchange. Ascription to a market culture requires that the leaders drive people towards the achievement of the corporate goals. Here, the means of converting external control into internal control appear to be by the establishment of a hierarchy. The hierarchy culture rated as the second strongest, with the emphasis on the human elements of the clan culture being third. The need for innovation and spontaneity is not relevant to this company, rather control by transaction and control by structure dominate. The norm comparison of such a profile spans those of both manufacturing sector industries, and retail and wholesale industries.

Consideration of the profiles constructed from the restaurant results show that the desired migration from mechanistic to humanistic control is marked. To achieve the ideal culture the profile would need to reduce the emphasis on the market by 10.9 points, which of itself is a significant drop. Concomitantly there would need to be an increase of 8.2 points in the clan culture rating. The reconstructed profile thus indicates a desire that the clan culture takes precedence over the market culture. Interestingly, the clan culture is diametrically opposed to the market culture, it focuses inwards rather than outwards and is based on the notion that “instead of the rules and procedures of hierarchies or the competitive profit centres of markets, typical characteristics of clan type firms were teamwork, employee involvement programmes and corporate commitment to employees” (Cameron and Quinn, 1999: 36).

Alongside this shift away from the market culture and towards the clan culture the group suggests minor changes to the levels of emphasis on the adhocracy culture in particular. Here they would like to see a little more scope for “individuality and risk-taking” (Ibid: 39), albeit the increased emphasis is small. The scope for change against the hierarchy culture is negligible with a 0.2 point increase in control by structure implied.
What emerges here is that when looking to align the ideal profile with that of the industry norms, there would appear to be nothing which matches this profile. All the norms presented by Cameron and Quinn have either a clear domination by the hierarchy or the market cultures or an equity between the market and clan culture. The profile this group presents notes a domination by the clan culture which is noticeably absent from the OCAI literature.

In considering the comparison between the actual culture and the ideal culture in more detail, it is useful to deconstruct the profile to consider a question-by-question comparison.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (restaurant) and ‘ideal’ responses (restaurant) to Question 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Actual Culture</th>
<th>Ideal Culture</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1A</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>+6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1B</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>+9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1C</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>-14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1D</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within this profile, the ‘actual’ rating of the market culture was the highest across all rankings. The level of domination here rates at 20.7 points, over twice the level at which the difference in points is deemed significant. This emphasis reflects the importance that
the company place on being market leaders and the extent to which this message has been absorbed by the workgroups, and forms the frame of reference through which they perceive the culture. Yet the group do not contradict the need for this market culture. Although in making the transition between the actual and the ideals profile they propose a massive 14.4 point drop against the market culture they still, in the ideal profile, rank market domination as being the most important. What has reduced is the extent of that domination, a drop from being 20.7 points higher than the next highest, to being 0.5 points higher than its nearest rival.

The accent here is on moving away from one dominant form of culture to a culture with a more eclectic spread of emphasis. What is apparent is the workgroups would like the company to move away from the domination of control by the market and control by hierarchy. Instead, they would like to see more emphasis on personal achievement and initiative. Both the clan culture and the adhocracy culture require a greater emphasis if a balance between culture types is to emerge.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (restaurant) and ‘ideal’ responses (restaurant) to Question 2

![Graph comparing actual and ideal cultures]

**Key:** Actual culture = ———— Ideal culture = ————-
The profile constructed with regards to organisational leadership again demonstrates the significant dominance of the market culture. The role of the leadership within this company is to push for corporate success. Within this they are “hard driving producers” (Cameron and Quinn, 1999: 36) who pursue “an aggressive strategy (to) lead to productivity and production” (Ibid). People become the means of achieving productivity and the role of the hierarchy (which rates as the second highest) is to instil internal control. The clan culture within the actual profile rates third, yet within the ideal culture rates as being the most important. Progression between the actual and the ideal shows a significant reduction in the emphasis on the market (-13.1 points) but replaces this with an increasing emphasis across all the remaining culture types. Even the utility of the hierarchy is promoted by an increase of 2.7 points, resulting in a more equitably balanced profile.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (restaurant) and ‘ideal’ responses (restaurant) to Question 3

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Difference</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>23.2</td>
<td>+4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2C</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>-13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2D</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>+2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: Actual culture = ___________ Ideal culture = ___________
The actual profile for question 3 notes the heavy emphasis on the market culture, with this rating 13.9 points higher than that of the hierarchy culture. Again the culture is dominated by the market drivers and structural controls. There is, however, only a minor discrepancy between the actual and ideal ratings for the adhocracy culture. In both profiles this culture type is deemed the least prevalent, supporting the idea that, for this group, there is no great demand for innovation and spontaneity. The hierarchy is important to this group, even though it scored the second highest in the actual culture profile, in the ideal culture profile a further increase is suggested. Migration between the actual and the ideal is once more dominated by a simultaneous reduction in emphasis on the market and increase in the emphasis on the clan culture.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (restaurant) and ‘ideal’ responses (restaurant) to Question 4

<table>
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</thead>
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<td>-0.1</td>
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<td>3C</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3D</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: Actual culture = ———— Ideal culture = ————
The actual profile constructed with regards to the notion of organisational glue presents a relatively equitable distribution of focus. The difference between the lowest and the highest ratings in the profile is maximally 12.3 points as opposed to that for question 1 which rates at maximally 24.6 points. Yet despite the more evenly distributed ratings, the market culture continues to dominate significantly, and is the culture type requiring the greatest reduction in emphasis to achieve the ideal culture type (-9.1). Likewise, the concomitant increase in the emphasis on the clan culture is apparent. The profile of the ideal culture requires only low level changes required to the adhocracy culture and the hierarchy culture to be achieved. The relationship between the market culture and the clan culture appears again to dominate.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (restaurant) and ‘ideal’ responses (restaurant) to Question 5

<table>
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<th>Ideal Culture</th>
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<td>4B</td>
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<td>+1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4C</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>-9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4D</td>
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<td>23.1</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Key: Actual culture = ———— Ideal culture = ————
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Ideal Culture</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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</thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5B</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>+2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5C</td>
<td>36.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5D</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>+1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within the actual culture the significance of the domination of the market indicates that the strategic emphasis of the organisation is on the “economic market mechanisms” (Cameron and Quinn, 1999: 35). Here two issues emerge. First, the drive to be successful is sited within an external environment described as “not benign but hostile” (Ibid: 36). Second, the emphasis on hierarchy indicates the ways in which the corporate controls in order to meet the demands of the market. The clan culture scores the lowest within the actual profile, implying that human and interpersonal aspects of the culture are of less importance. Rather, the actual culture uses transaction and structure to direct performance towards achieving a “clear purpose and aggressive strategy” (Ibid).

Where the group suggest an ideal culture the emphasis switches. The market culture reduces significantly (10.4 points) whilst the clan culture increases by 9.3 points. Movement across the hierarchy and the adhocracy culture is also of relevance in the achievement of the ideal culture.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (restaurant) and ‘ideal’ responses (restaurant) to Question 6

Key: Actual culture = Ideal culture =
<table>
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<tr>
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<td>6B</td>
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<td>22.6</td>
<td>+2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6C</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>-3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6D</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>-1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 6 has a reasonably equitable distribution of scores, and marks the only point at which, throughout the profiles constructed by the restaurant group, the domination of the market is not deemed significant. Rather the market culture scores only 7.8 points higher than that of the hierarchy culture. The hierarchy culture is deemed important in achieving success, with this rating more highly for question 6 than it has done in any of the previous responses. Additionally, the market culture has rated lower in the actual profile here than it has done in any of the previously constructed profiles, yet higher than in any of the ideal profiles. Despite this, the changes needed to migrate across requires a reduction of only 3.9 points.

4.2.1 Further Discussion

Comparing the results from the two respondent groups, one recognises a number of similarities. There is a blanket domination of the market culture. Simply, within the actual profile from all groups and across all questions the market culture was the dominant theme. Although that level of domination varied from the insignificant (7.8 points in question 6 for the restaurant) to the highly significant (20.7 points for question 1 for the restaurant), the domination is marked. It is this emphasis on the market culture that has resulted in the skewed profile of the actual culture. The domination of one culture type results in an unbalanced profile in which, invariably, the stability and control aspects at the bottom end of the matrix score highest and the flexibility and discretion aspects at the top of the matrix score lowest. Again the consistency is apparent as every question responded to by each group has, for the actual profiles, resulted in a profile with the emphasis on stability.

This notion of consistency also has a resonance for the relationship between the adhocracy culture and the clan culture. Within the 'actual' culture profiles the notion of a clan culture is placed third in 58% of the response (adhocracy in 42% of the responses). However, in some instances the discrepancy in the marks between the two is down to 0.1 points.
The transition between the actual culture and the ideal culture, with some exceptions, necessitates a series of changes:

1. A reduction in emphasis in the market culture. All of the responses to every question clearly indicated that the emphasis on the market culture was excessive and that progression towards an ideal culture required a reduction in that emphasis. In one instance, the reduction in points required to make the transition between the actual and the ideal was 14.4. (Restaurant: question 1)

2. An increase in emphasis on the clan culture. As with the above, all of the responses to all of the questions noted that the transition to the ideal profile of culture required an increased emphasis on the clan culture. The greatest increase in emphasis was required by the restaurant group in response to Question 3. The increase required here was by 11.3 points.

3. The ideal profiles of culture present a more eclectic profile of the concept; one in which the spread of emphasis across all four culture types is more equitable.

4.3 Comparison of Actual Culture (Canteen) versus Actual Culture (Restaurant).

![Diagram showing the comparison of Actual Culture (Canteen) versus Actual Culture (Restaurant).](image)

**Key:** Actual canteen = ___________  Actual restaurant = ___________
The comparison between the actual results for the canteen and the actual results for the restaurant indicates that there is a marked degree of similarity in the profiles. The emphasis on clan, adhocracy and hierarchy cultures is marginally higher in the responses from the canteen, the greatest difference being between the ratings for the adhocracy culture. Here the canteen rates the emphasis on innovation and spontaneity as being 5.7 points higher than it is rated in the restaurant.

For both profiles, the emphasis on the domination of the market is significant. Indeed, there is only a minor (0.1 point) discrepancy between the ratings given to the market culture by each group.

In order to compare these results in more depth these will be broken down by question.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (canteen) and the ‘actual’ responses (restaurant) to Question 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Canteen Actual</th>
<th>Restaurant Actual</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>-4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>-5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In comparing the actual profile of each group across question one, the similarity in the
generic profile becomes apparent. Although there are evident discrepancies in the
ratings, with the largest difference being the perceptions of the magnitude of the
emphasis on the market culture, the rank order remains the same. As such the dominant
characteristic of the company is clearly that of the market. This is then underpinned
sequentially by the characteristic of the hierarchy, the clan and lastly the adhocracy.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (canteen) and ‘actual’ responses (restaurant) to
Question 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 2</th>
<th>Canteen Actual</th>
<th>Restaurant Actual</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>21.4</td>
<td>+2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>-2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The comparison between the profiles of the canteen and restaurant in question 2 again illustrate a sameness in the overall profile. Rank order between the groups is also the same, the emphasis being placed on the domination of the market. Interestingly both groups show a significant domination of the market emphasis here, with the discrepancy between the ratings for the market culture, in both cases, being more that 10 points higher than any of the other cultures. The focus of question 2 is on the leadership within the organisation. What becomes apparent from the results of two potentially disparate groups here is the extent to which both groups perceive the leadership of the company to be focussed predominantly on the market. It is also interesting to note that this is again supported by a secondary emphasis on hierarchy.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (canteen) and ‘actual’ responses (restaurant) to Question 3

![Graph showing four quadrants for 'The Clan', 'The Adhocracy', 'The Hierarchy', and 'The Market' with axes for 'Internal Focus and Integration' and 'External Focus and Differentiation'.]

**Key:** Actual canteen = ———— Actual restaurant = ————

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 3</th>
<th>Canteen Actual</th>
<th>Restaurant Actual</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>A</td>
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<td>+0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>+2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>+0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>+0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The two profiles constructed for question 3, where the focus is on how the company manages its employees, are almost identical. The greatest numeric discrepancy is a mere +2.1 points against the adhocracy culture. Accordingly, the profiles are not only consistent between the groups of people in the canteen and the restaurant, but they reaffirm the rank order shared with the two preceding profiles. Thus, for the first three profiles of the OCAI, both groups have identified an identical rank ordering of the attributes of the market, the adhocracy the clan and the hierarchy. The relationship between each of these attributes is perceived as linear, with the market attributes consistently scoring highest and the adhocracy attributes the lowest.

Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (canteen) and ‘actual’ responses (restaurant) to Question 4

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Restaurant Actual</th>
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<td>+1.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>+1.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>-1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>-2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 4 marks the first point of departure from the consistent rank ordering seen previously. Although there is a change in the relative position of the clan culture and the
adhocracy culture, the change has been consistent across both groups. Again the differences between the group profiles are minimal, with a maximum discrepancy of -2.3 marks. The domination of the market is the key factor in the ways in which these people perceive the organisational glue, again supported by the hierarchy.

Comparison between 'actual' responses (canteen) and 'actual' responses (restaurant) to Question 5

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>+1.1</td>
</tr>
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</table>

The profiles constructed for question 5, the strategic emphases of the company, show that for both groups there is a significant level of domination by the market culture. It also worth noting that the reconfigured rank order first encountered in the responses to question 4 is replicated in the responses to question 5. As such, both groups perceive the company as having a predominantly externally focussed sense of strategic direction. The internal emphasis on people is perceived as having least in importance to the company.
Comparison between ‘actual’ responses (canteen) and ‘actual’ responses (restaurant) to Question 6

<table>
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</table>

Question 6 marks a point of departure between the actual profiles produced for each of the surveyed groups. Although the domination of the market culture as the most highly ranked and the hierarchy culture as the second highest ranked persists, those in the canteen rated the adhocracy culture as being of greater importance as an organisational driver than is the clan culture. In contrast, the staff group using the restaurant prioritise the clan over the adhocracy.

The similarities in terms of the actual culture as rated between what are essentially two disparate groups of employees are striking. In five out of the six profiles constructed, the profiles for each group were exactly the same. Although the numeric ratings varied between the two groups, the variance was minor and at no stage did the discrepancy between the two become anywhere near significant.
4.3.1 Further Discussion

The profiles of organisational culture produced facilitate a range of conclusions about the ways in which the culture of this organisation is perceived by those who are acculturated. The pragmatic and all consuming influence of the market is demonstrated by the way in which this becomes the dominant characteristic of the culture of this company. Across every profile, the summary profiles and the question-by-question breakdown, the domination of the market is clear.

Moreover, this market domination is supported by a consistent emphasis on hierarchy. The perception of both of these groups is that the company is driven by a focus on the market, and that this drives the achievement of corporate success. In order to support this, necessary internal efficiencies mean that hierarchy is used as a means of control.

For the people here, the emphasis of the company is clearly on stability and control. External drivers determine the sense of direction and the operational activities of the company. Internally, people are positioned and repositioned within the organisation in order to achieve market success. This is not necessarily problematic. Where the relationship between the company and the market is transactional and those acculturated buy in to that same notion of an economic transaction, then realistically the relationships within the organisation will be contextualised within that wider transactional framework.

Accordingly, the emphasis on integration for both of these groups is premised on structure rather than collegiality or community. The emphasis on the clan and on adhocracy is consistently at the bottom end of the rating scale.

What becomes apparent here is a serious limitation of research methods in the tradition of the functionalist paradigm. Having recognised that there is a significant emphasis on the market as a driver for the organisational culture, one is not able to determine whether or not this is problematic. Instead, one has to resort to a parallel consideration of the respondent groups' notions of the ideal culture in order to try to infer whether this market domination is pejorative.
4.4. Comparison of the Ideal Culture (Canteen) versus Ideal Culture (Restaurant).

By comparing the ideal culture profiles for the canteen with the ideal culture profiles for the restaurant I have identified areas of similarity and difference between the two groups.

![Diagram showing the comparison of ideal culture profiles between the Canteen and Restaurant.](image)

**Key:**  
Ideal canteen = ————  Ideal restaurant = ————

<table>
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<th>Responses</th>
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<th>Restaurant Ideal</th>
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</thead>
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<td>-2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>+0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The comparison between the ideal culture profiles constructed in the canteen and the restaurant reveals a marked similarity. It is important to remember here that these groups are at different levels within the organisational hierarchy and work on either the clean side or the dirty side of the operation. Despite these differences, rank order of the culture types was identical between the groups. Indeed, even the numeric values showed a marked degree of consistency.
Comparison between ‘ideal’ responses (canteen) and ‘ideal’ responses (restaurant) to Question 1

<table>
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<td>28.1</td>
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<td>-2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>+6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>-3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>+0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For question 1, the profiles constructed by the canteen and the restaurant groups, show some interesting differences. The similarities that were seen in the comparison between their perceptions of the actual culture (question 1) appear to be missing from their perceptions of the ideal culture (question 1). Although both groups here advocate the domination of the market, the workgroup in the canteen place a greater emphasis on this. What we see for both groups is a more equitable distribution of emphasis across the four dimensions in the OCAI. As such the culture profiles produced indicate a desire for a better balance between the internal aspects of clan and hierarchy and the external aspects of adhocracy and market. Interestingly, the notion of equalising emphasis across all dimensions is best illustrated by the restaurant staff who had a between-variable difference of 24.6 points for question 1 actual culture and a between variable difference of 7 points for question 1 ideal culture.
Again, what we see here is a difference in the relationship between the clan and the adhocracy culture between the groups. For the restaurant group the notion of adhocracy is of more importance in an ideal culture than is the notion of a clan. For those in the canteen the reverse is true.

Comparison between ‘ideal’ responses (canteen) and ‘ideal’ responses (restaurant) to Question 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 2</th>
<th>Canteen Ideal</th>
<th>Restaurant Ideal</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>-3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>+3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>-4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 2 shows an interesting consistency between the groups. Here, both groups have suggested that the clan culture should take precedence. By comparing their responses to question 2 with those to question 1, it isnotes that, whilst the groups are happy for the ‘business’ aspect of the organisation to remain firmly rooted in a focus on the market, both feel that this focus is inappropriate for leadership. It is useful to note that both groups again produce the same rank order, though there are differences between the numeric ratings. Whilst not dismissing the market culture as unimportant, it is demoted to a rank position of third.
Comparison between ‘ideal’ responses (canteen) and ‘ideal’ responses (restaurant) to Question 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 3</th>
<th>Canteen Ideal</th>
<th>Restaurant Ideal</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>+3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>+0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses to question 3, the management of employees, again show that there is consistency across the groups. The profiles show the same rank order of features necessary to constitute the ideal organisational culture. For both groups, the emphasis should be on the clan and the sense of collegiality that comes from an internal focus on the welfare of the people within the organisation. Neither group dismisses the importance of the market as being a driver, this is ranked as second by both groups. For both groups the notion of the adhocracy is of least importance.
Comparison between ‘ideal’ responses (canteen) and ‘ideal’ responses (restaurant) to Question 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 4</th>
<th>Canteen Ideal</th>
<th>Restaurant Ideal</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>+2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>+2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>-2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 4 again demonstrates the way in which both groups want to see a greater level of emphasis placed on the people within the company. The clan culture dominates the notion of organisational glue. The internal focus on people is deemed important to creating that sense of cohesion within the company. The groups, however, disagree on the rank order here with the canteen respondents suggesting that the adhocracy is of least importance and the restaurant respondents downplaying the role of hierarchy. Again, both profiles outline a more equitable corporate emphasis across the dimensions considered.
Comparison between ‘ideal’ responses (canteen) and ‘ideal’ responses (restaurant) to Question 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 5</th>
<th>Canteen Ideal</th>
<th>Restaurant Ideal</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>+3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For both groups the strategic emphasis of the culture should be on people. Indeed, each of the groups achieved the same score in rating this most highly. Again, the importance of the emphasis on the market remains as this ranks as second. The groups, however, differ again on the rank importance of the issues of adhocracy and of hierarchy. For the canteen respondents, the hierarchy is of least importance in terms of the strategic emphases, whilst for the restaurant group, adhocracy rates as the lowest.
Comparison between ‘ideal’ responses (canteen) and ‘ideal’ responses (restaurant) to Question 6

Key: Ideal canteen = -------------- Ideal restaurant = --------------

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 6</th>
<th>Canteen Ideal</th>
<th>Restaurant Ideal</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>-1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>+0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>+1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>+0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In consideration of the drivers of the organisation the groups disagree. For the work group in the canteen, this company should be driven by an organisational culture built on the notion of a clan. In contrast, the restaurant group indicate that the market, as driver, should take precedence. It is interesting to consider that these two dimensions are indeed diametrically opposed. The clan is premised on a focus internal to the organisation and on using this emphasis to create an integrated culture. The market is an external focus which is premised on differentiation, on stability and on control. Despite this difference, both groups then rate the opposing feature as the second most important, as such, for the canteen, the clan is first and the market second, and for the restaurant, the converse. Again, both work groups propose a more evenly balanced manifestation of organisational culture, one is which there is no significant domination by one culture type.
4.4.1 Further Discussion

Although all configurations of the ideal culture move away from the blanket domination by the emphasis on the market, they do not reject this focus completely. Indeed, in most instances what we see is an exchange of influence across the central diagonal axis. Here the work groups are moving away from the ‘actual’ emphasis on stability and control and external focus, to one in which the ‘ideal’ culture presents a dominant emphasis on internal focus and flexibility.

This exchange of emphasis is the dominant feature in the construction of the ideal profiles. Again, between the two groups there are very few areas of disagreement. Each profile is more or less similar to that of the other respondent group, despite the different conditions in which they work.

4.5 Conclusions

Within the analysis of the OCAI results, a series of comparisons has been made. In comparing the actual culture (canteen) with the ideal culture (canteen) we see the first evidence of domination by the market culture. Within the actual culture, the market dominates every profile. This domination is then overturned in the ideal profile constructed, where all responses (except question 1) indicated a desire for the clan culture to take precedence. This shift implies a move across a central diagonal axis, a shift in emphasis from the stability and control end of the matrix to the flexibility and discretion end.

The comparison between the actual culture (restaurant) and the ideal culture (restaurant) revealed a similar set of results. The domination of the market culture in the actual profiles is reversed to an emphasis on the clan culture in the ideal culture profiles. (Responses to questions 1 and 6 are the only exceptions here) As with the canteen comparisons, the changing profiles require a move away from the marked domination of a single culture type to a more eclectic profile.

The comparisons between the actual profile (canteen) and the actual profile (restaurant) highlighted the ways in which the emphasis on the market is consistently supported by a
secondary (rated second) emphasis on hierarchy. The domination of the stability end of
the matrix is apparent. For every rating of the actual culture, the domination of the
market is underpinned by an emphasis on hierarchy as a means of cultural control.

The last comparison between the ideal culture (canteen) and the ideal culture
(restaurant) replicates the similarities produced in previous profiles. In the overall
profiles (constructed from the aggregated marks) both groups note their desire to see a
culture dominated by an emphasis on the clan. However, they do not dismiss the need
for a market emphasis, rather this rates as the second most important culture type. This
theme of clan culture underpinned by an emphasis on the market emerges from the
responses to questions 3, 4, and 5. Similarities are noted in responses to question 1
where both groups assert the need for the domination of the market and question 2
where both groups note the need for hierarchy to support a dominant emphasis on the
clan type.

Throughout the comparisons a number of consistent themes emerge. For the actual
culture the market domination is supported by the internal existence of hierarchy. For
the ideal culture the desire is to promote a more person focussed culture with the
emphasis being on the clan, alongside a more equitable distribution of emphases
between the remaining culture types. This notion of consistent themes is extremely
important given the disparities between the two respondent groups. The canteen group
work on the dirty side of the operation. The restaurant group work on the clean side of
the operation. Yet even though the difference in the work context between these two
groups could not be greater, in rating the culture of the organisation, both in terms of the
actual culture and the ideal culture, the similarities are marked. This would imply one of
three things. First, the functionalist perspective in which the culture of the organisation
is actually as both groups have indicated. The lack of ambiguity in the ratings reflects a
homogenous and unitary culture (see section 1. 4). Second, that the instrument
presupposes a specific set of responses. As such, the consistency seen would reflect
Burns’ (2000) previously cited quote which notes that whilst the results may be
consistent they may not be related to anything of value. What is recognised here is the
ways in which, by calculating an aggregated mean for the overall ratings, any marked
variation in the responses to individual questions is calculated out. Third, that the results
from the OCAI do not indicate the verifiable and objective culture of the organisation,
but rather indicate of the ways in which people perceive the organisation. The
managerial rhetoric of the organisation presents an image which has a resonance in the language used in the OCAI. The work groups here respond to words which are indicative of the company, rather than to words which are indicative of the culture.
Chapter 5: Results of the Interpretive Analysis.

5.0 Introduction

In this section, the results of the interpretive analysis will be discussed. The section will begin with the results of the discourse analysis undertaken on the transcript of the individual interview. The section will then go on to review the results of the discourse analysis undertaken on the transcripts of focus groups 1, 2 and 3. Finally, the section will discuss the results of the non-linguistically based non-participant observation.

The key themes from the results section will then be used as the basis for two discussions. One discussion on the nature of culture within the researched organisation and the second on how the adoption of paradigm-specific lenses impacts on the research outcome. These discussions will then frame the conclusions to this thesis.

In eliciting the results here, discourse analysis was used as a means of recognising ascription to a specific view of culture within the organisation. The taxonomies nominated in the OCAI were used to frame the views of culture. Discourse analysis was also used to recognise affiliation with a particular paradigmatic stance. By bracketing (Hassard, 1991; Lewis and Kelemen, 2002) the paradigms in the Burrell and Morgan (1979) taxonomy, the use of language was seen as the medium through which meta-theoretical ascriptions were communicated.

5.1 Individual Interview

The fundamental cultural value inferred from the individual interview was that of power. As the managing director of this site, this person presented in a unique way compared to all the other people interviewed. The locus of control was clearly with him. His status was flagged up initially as he immediately assumed control of the interview, interrupting the introduction to request information on the researcher’s background. This notion of control remained a crucial consideration throughout the narrative. His sense of his own importance is such that he sees himself as greater than the company. It is his role to control, direct and manipulate the company to achieve the specific objectives which led to this company’s success. Indeed R4 notes that “it is really my
choice as to which ones (events) I will volunteer Food Co to participate in” (p. 2). There is, however, an omission which may serve to undermine his kudos if acknowledged. In essence, the objectives to be met are determined by the company. Although he is the most senior person on this site, there are, nationally and internationally, tiers of people above him. The implications are that, despite seeing himself as being in control of the company, he is in fact being manipulated by the company in the same way that all the people lower down the hierarchy are.

The pragmatism of his narrative implies some degree of sympathy with the metatheoretical assumptions of the functionalist paradigm. The organisation is driven by business, it is “founded on real results” (R5: 3), and the achievement of these results means that the company needs to be directed and manipulated. The personal status that he claims would indicate that it is he who directs and controls the incessant change to which all people at all levels are subjected. Indeed, this notion of the purposive manipulation of the workforce at the behest of the company, with no compunction for the distress or trauma that this causes, is seen to reflect the value-free nature of his pragmatic consideration of the external reality. There are frequent allusions to the quantifiable. Performance targets, market share metrics and the calculated manipulation of structure and hierarchy are used to control. Quite simply, the “culture is about results” (R19: 10) and all that happens within the company is premised on the achievement of these.

Consideration from an interpretive perspective here reveals an interesting dynamic. Social construction implies that a shared reality is the output of a reciprocal relationship between those involved in the discourse, though this does not imply equity of contribution. Within the context of the individual interview the idea of any reciprocal relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee was at best superficial. Rather than the notion of a collective pooling of perspectives contributing to the construction of a shared reality, the political domination of the interviewee determined the reality constructed. In concert with much that this organisation appears to do, the interviewee presented the interviewer with a fait accompli, a pre-prepared image of

135 Albeit the notion of being value free is the ascription of the manipulator rather than the emotion of the manipulated.
137 The magnitude of that domination is evidenced by the notion that from the start of the interview to the concluding comment, circa 92.2% of the narrative is from the interviewee. Premised on an intuitive ratio of 80:20, control of this proportion of the narrative seems high.
organisation. The image presents the organisation as simultaneously caring and ruthless, as such the softer side of the company likes to give people "some personal recognition" (R6: 4), has "lots of reasons why we should do what we can to help" (R7: 4) and wants to "help local schools" (R7: 4). In contrast, ruthlessness is framed by being "the fastest growing part of MegaFood Co" (R5: 3); as such it is legitimate for the corporate to "define what we think is success" (R19: 10) and then "muscle suppliers" (R24: 13) to help them achieve that success. Within this organisation, the ends justify the means.

The same applies in ensuring that the interviewer has accepted the 'correct' view of the organisation. Throughout the interview, the interviewer is presented with an image of the organisation; One in which the company is all things to all men. Active engagement in any process of social construction is not appropriate here. The interviewer has only a transient membership of this organisation thus there is a need to expedite the correct perception of the company. By assuming control of the interview, the interviewee is able to deliver an image that it is impossible to challenge because the locus of control is vested in the interviewee. In this way interaction is used and abused as a means of ensuring the correct messages are received. Language becomes an instrumental and unilaterally driven means of presenting reality.

In essence, what emerges here is reality on two levels. There is a reality which is sold to the researcher, one in which the interviewee engages with the narrative primarily to skew this to a predetermined image of the organisation. Second, there is the reality in which the interviewee needs to locate himself, the image of power and control, a reality in which the organisation is at the behest of him rather than vice-versa, e.g. in R8 he notes that "I have worked in many of our factories and over the years have done loads of things" (p. 2). It is this second notion of reality premised on self-importance, that draws attention from the narrative per se, to the motives behind the narrative.

In the construction of reality there is a need to ensure that the output is in concert with this individual’s notions of self-worth. As such, the reality needs to portray an image within which self-esteem is maintained. Reality, thus positioned, becomes less random than any spontaneous process of social construction would imply. It is driven by the need to see an intended reality. As a researcher, one becomes aware of how the bracketing of the interpretive paradigm as a lens for analysis is now restricting that analysis. Where the reality constructed is no longer an emergent and spontaneous
reality, rather it is a pre-determined image which is motive driven, then the notion of purposive change is implied. Bracketing the radical humanist paradigm here not only emphasises the ways in which the researcher becomes complicit in the construction of the reality that you are intended to see\textsuperscript{138}, but also allows a deeper engagement with the narrative regarding the motives for wanting to change a view of reality.

In exploring the notion of radical humanism one can perhaps see an ego protective relevance here. By perceiving himself as beyond the organisation (R4: 2 notes “So she asked me if I\textsuperscript{139} would help the teams form the agenda for that particular sector, whether or not Food Co chose to get involved”) he can persuade himself that the world needs him and needs him to direct and control. He constructs for himself a reality in which corporate dependence creates a moral obligation for him to stay here. The ‘reality’ with which it would be difficult to cope would be the view that he is simply one of the corporate henchmen. The company demands and he exerts control over people, processes and systems at the behest of the company.

In real terms, he simply decides how things will be done, not what things will be done. He translates corporate direction into the means and modes of commoditisation. In order to do this he reinforces the notion of hierarchy and status, a factor evident from the discourse. Thus, in order that each employee is able to do his or her job properly, it is the responsibility of “the site leader” (R9: 6) to control and direct in order to “make it important enough to be their (the staff) objective” (Ibid). In doing this, the idea that the end justifies the means emerges again. He sets rigid targets for his senior management team. These targets create a tremendous pressure and he is aware of this (“they have to manage their time accordingly and manage community causes as well as undertake their own daily jobs” R17: 9), yet he appears oblivious to the potential stress created. Instead, this is compounded by his making sure that the achievement of these targets is “obviously discussed in their appraisals” (R9: 5). His attitude exemplifies the comprehensive control he exerts in the ways in which he manages the company, the ways in which he manages the people within and the ways in which throughout the interview he skews the discourse to the subject areas he wishes to talk about.

\textsuperscript{138} By not challenging the interviewee one becomes a party to the deception.  
\textsuperscript{139} Emphasis added.
Control is specific and the prevalence of hierarchy and the systematic support of this with rigid structures and processes determines a network of control aimed at ensuring organisation-wide compliance. Managers are charged with ensuring corporate success, they have to determine “how to make things cheaper, inspect(ing) for higher quality and many other jobs” (R17: 9). They are judged as successes or failures depending on the achievement of targets.

This appears not to be a problem. The culture of the company is aggressive and the manager’s assertion that they are setting “very sensible goals and going after them aggressively” (R5: 3) not only illustrates that this aggression exists, but is compounded by the idea that this is being done “impressively in many parts of the world” (Ibid). Alongside this image of an aggressive company is the inference that the company has a sense of pride in this aggression. The machismo feel of his level of power (he leads this company), and his sense of his own importance serve as a reminder to the interviewer that this is a very important person.

The culture is built on various manifestations of aggression. Overt aggression reigns in terms of market strategies, covert aggression reigns in the ways in which people are controlled at the behest of the company. Within the discourse there is a notion of trying to appear less controlling. Indeed the practice of wearing ‘informal’ uniforms is proposed as demonstrating the level of cultural informality within the organisation. In R5: 3 the interviewee notes that “Food Co is definitely not the type of company where you have to wear a suit, a white shirt and a certain kind of tie. It tends to be quite a down to earth company, we are interested in people saying things as they are”. However, this ambience of informality is somewhat undermined when one considers that, in real terms, there is no need for many of those who wear informal uniforms to wear uniforms at all. These are people who work in the clean side of the operation, in the offices, in HR etc. There is no reason whatsoever why they should be wearing uniforms.

The inferred meaning is that it is the style of the uniforms which indicates informality, rather than the notion of wearing a uniform. However, the fact that people are wearing a uniform unnecessarily indicates the ways in which the company intrudes into all aspects of the person and the ways in which this person is responsible for meting out that control. He uses objectives to control behaviours, for example, at R5: 3 he asserts “so
that's me expecting them to devote their time and to provide leadership in the program, but it doesn't say how much time needs to be spent but such issues are obviously discussed in their appraisals". He uses structure to control social relationships and even boasts about the wearing of uniforms, a behaviour which dispels individuality and determines a cloned physicality emblazoned with the corporate logo. People are physically 'behind' the logo.

The way in which the hierarchy fragments is perhaps best illustrated by the failure, throughout this interview, to acknowledge the people at the very bottom of the organisation. In the discussions about the informality of uniforms, no consideration was given to those at the very bottom for whom it is mandatory to wear an all-encompassing head to toe (literally) uniform. The very nature of the work group at the bottom is such that the company needs to exert robust control by imposing rigid structures. It is for this group that the espoused values of "pragmatic commonsense, instilling self-belief, simplicity and immediacy, exploiting know-how and potential in diversity" (R5: 3) would appear to be an anathema. Pragmatic commonsense is legislated for in process, self-belief would appear to be a belief in subordination to the company. Simplicity and immediacy imply initiative which would go against procedural constraint, and the notion of sharedness either in terms of knowledge or in the potential benefits of diversity is undermined by the ways in which the manager seems almost oblivious to the group at the bottom.

The interviewee adopts a pragmatic stance. He skews the topics of conversation towards process and systems, from which he constructs an interesting image. By placing an emphasis on the need for aggression and associating this with his own role in the directing of all things corporate, the inference is that he sees himself as the hero, for example, at R6: 3 he notes "it is very easy to fall into a load of jargon here and waffle away and say 'I am very impressive', which I am not going to do". The inference is that he is very impressive, he is just not going to say it, he is the battling general fighting for corporate survival. This reinforces the notion that it is he who is in control and not the company.

Culturally, the managing director sees a market culture operationalised through hierarchy. Whatever happens within this company is premised on the market drivers and

\[140\] See results of the Non participant observations in the canteen.

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the need to use widespread internal controls to drive down costs and improve effectiveness. There is a superficial allusion to the notion of a clan culture in the values espoused. It is interesting to note the omissions here. There is no mention of the corporate family, or of people feeling like they belong here. The company is simply a machine for the generation of revenue, and people are cogs within that machine. People have a utility as a means of production. By bracketing a functionalist lens here one can see the objective metric that is corporate success. Values are not read into the behaviours of the organisation, the only focus of attention is that of quantifiable outputs.

Corporate speak is used to promote the espoused values of the company, but yet again there appear to be discrepancies. The fundamental inference from the values is one in which the emphasis is on a balance between efficiency and effectiveness. The ‘potential’ from diversity and the exploitation of knowledge portend little benefit to anyone other than the company. The notion of self-belief has little in common with the hard driving notion of a market culture. Indeed, the idea that collective and individual achievements are important appears to be premised on the contributions that these make to the success of the company.

There is a feeling of contradiction here. The organisation is seen as being caring because it supports people. However, that support is helping them to achieve the goals set by the company. Moreover, one sees how people are objectified into means of production. They are encouraged to fulfil their own needs but the implication is that this is only if these are in concert with the needs of the company. Despite implying that the organisation is caring, it becomes apparent that he has little understanding of the nature of the work role at the bottom of the organisation. What he says is what he surmises, contact with those at the bottom is delegated to those lower down. Using an interpretive lens here, one can infer why the political dynamic of the interview is skewed so far in his favour. For this person, social construction is a process through which he delivers, rather than discusses, a view of reality.

5.1.1 Conclusions

From the results of the discourse analysis of the individual interview, the culture of the organisation is premised on aggression. Driven by the market, the organisation uses people as a means of achieving corporate success. Paradigm-specific lenses have
proffered views of a functionalist stance in which the company does not exude values, only figures. Social construction becomes a means of delivering a predetermined image of the organisation, and the radical humanist emphasis on change is seen as the impetus behind that image. This image is, however, created at the top of the organisation. To establish a broader view of reality this needs to be considered alongside the views of those in the middle of the organisation’s hierarchy, i.e. the members of the focus groups.

5.2 Focus Group 1

In this section, I will present the results of the discourse analysis of the transcript of focus group 1. The nature of the culture inferred from the text will be discussed. By using a paradigm bracketing approach, the meta-theoretical assumptions implied by the narrative will also be discussed.

Fundamental to the discourse of focus group 1 is the reified concept of the brand. The brand is omnipotent and is of key importance to the group. As a verifiable externally existing construct it asserts power and control accordingly. People are happy to have others make judgements about them as individuals by their affiliation with the brand. To illustrate, R36 notes how wearing the corporate logo inspires a positive response, “Oh, you’re from Food Co, they know where we are, they know what we do, we’re not just some anonymous people going in off the streets” (p. 8).

Control by the corporate is all consuming here. R1 asserts that “It’s a very fast pace, things change all the time and you’ve got to go along with the flow, you’ve got to teach yourself to” (p. 2). Acceptance of being controlled is infused into the fabric of the group and is reflected in its willingness to both acknowledge the need for people to conform and to take responsibility for their own conformance.

The organisation controls by structure. The structure provides the frames of reference within which social relationships are defined, in particular by the establishment of a robust and rigid hierarchy. R82 illustrates the divisions here by speaking of “managers”, “front line employees” and the “middle rank” (p. 15-16).

141 R2 notes that the reason that the company is good to work for is “Because they’ve got a good product brand” (p. 2).
Regulation guides operational efficiencies. Organisationally devised structures control and success is judged by output measures. The company set objectives and people take responsibility for their own conformance (R 10: "You know you have a review every year and you can see where you fit in" p. 3). It is interesting to note that although the company sets these objectives, the responsibility for failure rests with the individual.

In some instances the organisationally determined objectives create a paradox. In one aspect of their job role Managers' performance is measured by the number of people they can persuade to volunteer. Yet, as R82 notes, managers themselves do not volunteer. R103 recognises the reason for this as being that: "Our managers are very, very busy though and they don't take breaks and they ought to take breaks anyway". Managers are thus in a position whereby they are trying to persuade people to do something that they themselves are simply too busy to do, yet are held responsible for their own failure to achieve the set target. The organisation is not implicated here, rather it would appear beholden on the people to construct for themselves a view of reality in which this inequity is acceptable.

The group is fatalistic in nature and there is an implicit understanding that it is being controlled for the sake of corporate gain. Indeed, there is a willingness to re-configure the physical, psycho-social and affective self at the behest of the company\textsuperscript{142}. Yet there is a transactional premise. The payback for the subordinated nature of the relationship it has with the company is that the company provides benefits. R 139 notes "visions of your mortgage being paid off" (p. 24), whilst R 140 has "a vision of actually getting a pension" (Ibid). The market culture crosses the internal/external divide. Such a transactional relationship proffers relative stability in the present and in the future, paid for by the sub-ordination of the self. Yet beyond that it appears also to create a sense of inclusion and belonging, a sub-text of belonging to a clan\textsuperscript{143}. The sharedness of self-sacrifice provides a collective security premised on a feudal lord modus operandi.

The company is imbued with human qualities. It acts and behaves. Internally, it leads and controls. Externally, it wages war against competitors. Success has to be measurable; as such, the reward from battling in the market and the use of rigid internal controls is an increase in market share. It is market share that drives this company,

\textsuperscript{142} See previously cited comments from R5 "You've got to teach yourself" (p. 2) and R10 "you can see where you fit in" (p. 3).

\textsuperscript{143} See comments in Chapter 1 regarding Czarnaswka's (1985) notion of anti-sagas.
people are a means of achieving numeric success. The group is aware of this, R117
comments that "It's always going for more and more market share, that's always the
goal, just getting better and better all the time" (p. 21), whilst R118 notes their role in
this success by adding, "But it does so through its people" (p. 21).

The idea that this company is driven by a market culture which is operationalised by the
imposition of structure is inferred throughout this discourse. Yet here one has to
question whether the notion of a market culture is truly a culture or whether this is
simply the articulation of managerial strategic motives. The functionalist attributes
inferred from the narrative indicate that management sets a corporate direction and
operational structures which are reified into reality. Objectives structure internal and
external relationships. There is no point in implying a value ascription here, people
relate transactionally with the corporate and simply concur with the corporate world. It
is difficult to determine here whether the group holds fast to the values of a market
culture or whether this is simply a transactional means of survival.

From this incessant drive for market success comes a feeling that people are battle
weary. Sequentially, people talk about "a very young management team and a very lot
of enthusiasm," (R4: 2) "a very fast pace, things change all the time" (R5: Ibid) and
about this incessant change being "one of the things that keeps you at the leading edge"
(R6: 3). Perhaps most indicative is the notion that, for those within the company,
"Change is a battle" (R7: Ibid). There is not a sense of the group being driven by the
values of a market culture, rather a sense of being driven by the values of the market as
translated by the organisation.

Here one brackets the meta-theoretical assumptions of the radical structuralist paradigm.
The organisation drives change in a practical sense. Systems, processes and targets
move and people are responsible for making sure they move with them. The people
continuously absorb this pressure, yet rather than move towards revolution, they tolerate
this. Rather than voluntaristically fighting back they become deterministically
complicit.

Hierarchy as a means of control is central to this company and the group presents a
deterministic acceptance of this. R10 describes the ways in which control exudes from
the top, "We've got an excellent system of people management as well, whereby they
have the company aims and they devolve them individually to everybody’s objectives, so that everyone is trying to keep pushing in the same direction” (p. 3). The drivers are an anonymised “they”. It is “they” who mete out the objectives which require people to “push” (Ibid) in order to achieve them. The notion of a hierarchy and stratification goes beyond the functioning of operations. It is deemed by this group to reflect personal value. This idea of status equating to personal worth makes it imperative for each member of the group to demonstrate their own inclusion within the group and within the company. Two key themes emerge; first, how the use of language implicates inclusion or exclusion, and second, how those at the top of the company are seen as heroes.

Language becomes a means of demonstrating integration and a means of purposive fragmentation. Inferred from the language used by this group is a range of perceptions about the company. There is an overwhelmingly positive impression of the company and the understanding that success is based on a frenetic pace of work. As such, the organisation is good (R1 “good company,” R2 “good brand product”) the organisation is busy (R5: “fast pace,” R11: “enthusiasm and momentum,” R61: “you make a decision, next day you’re doing it”) and the organisation is competitive (R135: “aim at the end of the day, to be the best,” R137: “to beat what they’ve done,”; R123: “going for world class”). The group members articulate these themes as a means of demonstrating membership. Corporate speak is then promoted still further by the manager who uses a higher level of corporate speak to demonstrate membership at an even higher level. In essence, language is a means of demonstrating inclusion and social solidarity (Burrell and Morgan: 1979). Language thus positioned, is seen to be acquired hierarchically such that specific vocabularies reflect specific memberships. From a functionalist perspective, the utility of such hierarchically-acquired vocabularies can be seen in what I term ‘talking across’ and ‘talking down’.

‘Talking across’ uses language as a means of overt exclusion. Within this focus group, the most senior person uses an exclusionary vocabulary when talking to the lower ranking group members. This language allows the manager to speak without communicating. In this case the manager uses ‘talking across’ as a means of silencing the group, who are feeling threatened by the disclosure that the company are thinking of

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144 See the comments in chapter 1 of Bate, (1995) and Parker, (2000) regarding the fragmenting role of language in culture.
145 ‘Talking up’ is the use of a vocabulary belonging to a higher rank, and is not possible as acquisition of the vocabulary is only possible by immersion into the relevant sub-culture or stratum.
lowering the entry requirements to allow people from a highly socially deprived area into the company to take up employment. The group firstly express concerns at not knowing about this (R154: "I don’t know anything about this," R155: "I’ve never heard of this") and secondly warn of the dangers of reducing standards (R160: 28 “on a cautionary note, safety wise most of our problems are with agency people,” R161: “you can’t flood them into the company” {Ibid}). The manager’s response is exclusionary, “it’s all through CAPAC the point being getting them into a progressive working environment” (R167: 29). The group is silenced and rather than appearing not to understand the language used (which would be indicative of their lower status), proffers a reply which is neither supportive nor challenging of the manager’s statement. Instead, R168 opts for the neutral assertion that “I think getting anybody a job that’s not got one has to be a good thing” (p. 29). The manager’s status remains unchallenged as ‘talking across’ is a means of delivering words rather than of delivering meaning. To challenge the manager would imply, first, that the person making that challenge understood what was being said and, second, that they were willing to be openly disrespectful of the authority of management. Neither is possible.

‘Talking down’ is a means by which the more senior people within the company eschew their right to speak using their own ‘higher’ vocabulary and adopt that of a lower ranking group. In this instance, it is used to placate the group: Having silenced the criticism with ‘talking across’ the manager returns to the benevolent autocrat mode by explaining nicely that “even if you get the odd bad apple it’s a very high quality barrel” (R170: 29).

From the narrative I sense that these group members perceive those at the top of the company to be heroes. The idea that people at the top of the company are prepared to speak to people at the bottom founds the basis for the group construing a clan culture. For this group the company is a big happy family, albeit this notion of caring can at times feel somewhat paradoxical, e.g. R3 notes that; “It means that you are fairly secure, unless you are really stupid” (p. 2). The idea that the lowly, but not the ‘really stupid’ are cared for by the benevolent autocrat makes the corporate worthy of devotion. Loyalty becomes paramount.

Loyalty, however, is acted out in different ways and at different levels. At a primary level, loyalty means conformance without judgement. Here loyalty becomes the
founding premise for value judgements. As illustrated by the example of talking across considered previously, where the corporate determines yes or no, good or bad, right or wrong, it is incumbent on the membership to concur. Social construction then facilitates retrospective rationalisation to justify concurrence.

This loyalty often means being uncritical. As such, respect is of greater import than honesty. The group conspires to give an answer but not the answer. It is nice and good to offer poor people jobs, even if you fear that they will have a detrimental impact on the safety standards of the company. Indeed, this notion of collective perjury results in the image of a company which demands the unquestioning loyalty of all within, as the basis for achieving market success. R114 notes the company values are driven by the need to “maintain its top position,” R115 elaborates noting that the company “wants to do more than maintain it” and R119 notes how the company are “trying to achieve so much, and move so much out the gate, and get so much through the factory”. The values of the company again appear as the values of the market.

In maintaining their relationship with the company, the group becomes complicit in its own subordination. Members recognise the transactional nature of the relationship and the rules are clear. Membership of this clan culture depends on performance. The group concur with the use of behaviour modification as a means of leverage and reifies the altruism of the company in both tolerating the stupid (only the “really stupid are not tolerated” R3: 2) and speaking the language of the lowly.

The loyalty of the group is unquestioned until the issue of double standards arises. The idea that managers make people volunteer but refuse to do so themselves creates a fracture between those who wish to be critical and those who don’t. Here one brackets the interpretive paradigm. The reality being constructed is an emergent reality in search of stability. The denouement is that managers do not volunteer. In trying to make sense of this, the discourse shifts to blame attribution and language is used to create a fascinating dynamic in which critique (“they have enough problems getting to meetings” R96: 17), excuses (“our managers are very, very busy” R82: 16) and rationalisation (“if they were sort of, not made to should we say, but had to go and do it, they may enjoy it” R94: 17). Apparent within this debate is the fracture between the notions of managers and the organisation. Throughout the discussion the company is not

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146 This is discussed in more depth shortly alongside the radical humanist paradigm.
implicated until the very end, when R103 notes that by volunteering managers “might see things in a different light because life isn’t always Food Co, there is life outside Food Co” (p. 17). The idea that subordination of the self is also expected of the managers now becomes apparent.

It is the magnitude of this subordination alongside the notion of incessant organisational change that presents the opportunity to bracket the radical structuralist and radical humanist paradigms. The organisation considered within this thesis could be seen to personify attributes of the radical structuralist paradigm. At a fundamental level the devotion to hierarchy and centralised control (as evidenced by the widespread use of objectives) is at the heart of the drive for corporate success. And although the organisation likes to be seen as a benefactor externally, (“I mean they do a lot in the community” R14: 4, “people doing good for whatever” R70: 13), internally they create an incessant change dynamic which destabilises. The company manipulates people to achieve targets and expects managers to live, eat and breathe the company.

The notion of totality is evidenced by the metaphor of “one big flowing river” (R135: 23). Everything is swept along regardless of whether or not it wishes to move in that direction. The acceptance of an incessant dynamic (it’s a way of life in this company, change” R7(i): 3) is crucial where management leverages the idea of chronic economic crises as a means of control. In portraying this view of reality, external threats are translated into the rallying battle cries of more market share. Accordingly, those subject to the traumas of constant change recognise the need to remain within: the company has a future, if they comply, they too will have a future. (R142: 25 “you’ve got a future and you’d be pretty stupid to lose it”) There is little choice but to comply.

However, perceiving the researched group as being comprehensible in terms of the radical structuralist paradigm is not possible here. Despite the notion of holistic subordination, the need for inclusion undermines any consideration of revolution. The group remain ‘content’ with the reality in which they exist. Although they are aware of control and manipulation, inclusion is preferable to the threat of exclusion. There may be three explanations for this. First, the organisation presents an image of an external battlefield on which this company is fighting for market share. People can either stay and win, or exit and lose. The concept of being at war justifies the company exerting control with military precision. Company generals direct the battles and the overarching
drive for victory justifies self-sacrifice at all levels. Although coerced, constrained and controlled, the collective are no longer in a position to revolt. To do so would be to cut off the hand that feeds them. Second, control here is so pervasive that there is no recognition of the need for revolution. Within this, one notes an enduring normal science (Kuhn, 1962) so all-encompassing that nobody can see outside that frame of reference. There are no challenges to the order as nobody knows what questions to ask. In contrast, the group has immersed itself in the image of Utopia sold by the company. The narrative, and the lack of contradiction of this implies that members of this groups will do nothing to undermine this image. Third, people constantly under pressure to achieve numeric targets focus totally on the achievement of those targets. Failure to achieve set targets threatens membership of this clan. Accordingly, consideration of the political, social and ethical implications of the ways in which the corporate controls is simply a distraction. Indeed, control by nomothetic process infers a scientific management modus operandi whereby people are actually discouraged from thinking.

This notion of constant pressure and control by the organisation raises the question of how people deal with their own sense of value as inferred from the ways in which they are treated by the organisation. Bracketing the radical humanist paradigm one recognises how the group uses social construction to demote the negative aspects of the ways in which the organisation treats them. By demoting negative values, the differences between these and the sense of value necessary to support ego strength and self worth are reduced. Accordingly, people are more readily able to reflect back on themselves an image of reality more in-concert with their personal needs.

The radical humanist paradigm is typified by the relationship between the individual, the collective and the corporate. The premise for this typification rests with Burrell and Morgan’s consideration of Fichte’s notion that people create their own form of reality. Reality is then externalised and reflected back on them to become the means through which they view themselves (Burrell and Morgan: 1979).

To illustrate: within the context of this thesis people work within a ruthless profit-driven business. Individuality is simply the nature of the specific objectives devolved to you. People equate to production. Such commoditisation creates a psychosocial tension undermining individual and collective self-worth. This tension, requiring resolution, is ameliorated by the social construction of alternative means of being valued. There are a
number of ways of doing this. First, the construction of an idealised reality (the company is “good” (R1: 2), “growing” (R3: 2), “leading edge” (R6: 3)) imbues the company with a superiority and omnipotence worthy of any self-sacrifice. Once the group is able to ‘recognise’ the need for externally imposed control then it can rationalise its location within the system. At this point subordination becomes altruism and the notion of sacrifice, heroic.

Second, the collective accords importance to shared beliefs as precursors to inclusion. The notion of inclusion, at a basic transactional level, implies a utility and thus reinforces self-worth and ego strength. As such, it is incumbent on the group to socially construct the shared perception of a caring corporate. Interestingly, this would presuppose the idea that social constructions are motive driven, that there is not a naïve blankness from which people enter into a dialogue but a series of more or less shared motives to achieve a specific type of outcome. It could be asserted, within this context, that the comparative importance of each of the motives determines the vehemence with which people fight their corner. So, although within the context of any social construction process, it may be useful to be seen as articulate and credible, it is more important that the process is used to obscure any view of yourself which reflects the extent to which you have prostituted yourself to the corporate.

The group skews the pejorative inference of repressive control into altruistically derived mechanisms that allow it to perform. Once constructed, these beliefs are externalised and reflected back on the group to allow it to iteratively infer (possibly erroneously) that it is the organisation which values the group. Yet the notion of shared values is absent. Throughout the interview, any allusion to culture or to values has been met with pragmatic business responses: the culture is “competitive” (R105: 19) or “dynamic” (R109: 20) and the values of the corporate all hinge on market share. Culture here is not about sharing values but about people creating ways in which they can feel they belong to an organisation driven by the market. And it is their responsibility to do that.

The notion of “ideological hegemony” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 289) is framed by the need to protect the individual and the collective self. It forms a premise that necessitates the construction of world-views that are least disadvantageous. But there is a mutuality of benefit here. The transactional foundations of behavioural control are converted to values to ‘rationalise’ sacrifice. Essentially, people wish to stay within this
organisation (R142: 25 "you'd be pretty stupid to lose it"). Accordingly they do not mind losing their personal identity and being perceived as 'the brand', as long as the brand is seen as good. They do not object to the managers imposing the corporate rules which so constrain them as long as this is reconciled by perceiving managers as being caught in the same web of subordination.

5.2.1 Conclusions

Retaining the integrity of a bracketed functionalist paradigm has been problematic here. First, it has been difficult to divorce the notion of a viable externally existing reality as distinct from any form of social construction. To elaborate: the group perceives the company as a distinct entity, yet infused in that perception are a series of beliefs, for example the company is good, the company is omnipotent, the company is caring. These beliefs provide the conduit through which the company is experienced. As such, whatever exists as a pragmatic reality is tainted by the person seeing that reality. The question becomes not so much does an external reality exist, but how is that external reality experienced? In particular where reality is deemed to be a shared rather than an individualistic concept. Without some means of moderation, the external reality purported to exist becomes singularly relevant rather than singularly real.

Elaborating on the above, the second difficulty in retaining the integrity of the functionalist paradigm with focus group 1 is the relationship between shared beliefs, determinism and rationality. In remaining true to the meta-theoretical assumptions of the paradigm, reality comprises a fait accompli, some facticity over which people have no control. The assumption here must be that cognition, affect and emotion are shared and consistent over time. Failure to achieve that consistency may not influence the external reality per se but would imply the emergence of different if not disparate views of that reality. The third difficulty encountered was trying to divorce regulation from change. Within the context of this company, change itself is seen as the mode of regulation. Where change is constant, radical and imposed, there is no other reality.

Retaining the integrity of the interpretive paradigm for focus group 1 was also problematic. In a positive vein, the discourse produced allowed the group to articulate a number of issues e.g. the extent to which it was acceptable to be critical of the company, the nature of the relationships between the corporate and the external world and a shared
understanding of the goodness of the corporate. However, was this truly the social construction of reality? From a researcher's perspective, it was difficult to isolate the notion of social construction from a number of issues. The group premised all their constructions on the acceptance of a predetermined view of the corporate. There was an a priori acceptance that the organisation exists, acts and behaves. It is evidenced by the buildings, by the brand and by quantifiable market share. Much of what these people do on a daily basis relates to the tangible aspects of the business. As such the discourse may have been used by the group not necessarily as a mode of constructing a reality but possibly as a means of reading meaning into the implications of that reality. The process of construction here is seen as a means of reconciling the facticity with the meanings inferred from the nature of that facticity.

It was, however, this notion of reconciling the meanings inferred which created a new avenue for thought, i.e. in interpreting a process of social construction, do we try to attach motive and if so how? People share in a construction process premised on partial information. How they read meaning into that information and the process engaged provides the mechanism for ensuring that the desired or required outcome is achieved. This implies that there is a desired or required outcome. People do not enter into a discourse with a blanket neutrality and, in this instance, there were a number of 'givens' which formed the background to all of the conversations, e.g. the need to see the company in a positive light, the need to respect the management and the need to be seen to be integral to the company.

Bracketing the radical structuralist paradigm revealed some useful insights. Whilst the deterministic acceptance of control by structure within a chronic change dynamic has a great affinity with this company, there is a total omission of revolution. Indeed there is a total omission of anything that would imply that this holistic control was anything other than good. The issue emerging is that of incommensurability. Where we see such en masse commoditisation, what is it that prevents revolution? Again one moves towards a consideration of motive and thus tends towards the radical humanist paradigm.

It was perhaps the radical humanist paradigm that had the greatest affinity with the discourse produced. However, there were areas of incongruity. As with the interpretive paradigm the constructions used were premised on a functionalist view of an externally existing reality. Likewise, the conversations presented a means by which the group
could reconcile its own needs with those of the company. The advantage of the radical humanist paradigm, however, was the opportunity it presented to explore motive and in particular to posit suggestions as to the process of cognition which allows people to reconcile their commoditisation and then be able to defend that.

5.3 Focus Group 2

In this section, I will discuss the results of the discourse analysis from the transcript of focus group 2. Allegiance to the culture types in the OCAI will be considered and the meta-theoretical assumptions underpinning the use of language will be surfaced by using a paradigm bracketing approach (Hassard, 1991: Lewis and Kelemen, 2002).

The importance of belonging to a clan culture is paramount to this group. R1 is almost apologetic about being a relative newcomer to the company, “I come from a different background, to be honest I’ve only been on the shop floor for eighteen months and I’ve been in role for eighteen months as staff” (p. 3). Despite this, he understands what the culture requires for inclusion. First, he flags his status by the use of the word “staff” (Ibid). Second, he goes on to praise the company, noting that he has “no complaints at all” (Ibid). This need for inclusion is based on a shared belief in the omnipotence of the company. The business is “very successful” (R28: 12), it is a “benchmark company” (R37: 16) and R102 notes, “I never heard a bad word about Food Co outside” (p. 38). For this group the positive view of the organisation is sufficient motive for them to want to belong, however, in order to belong here people need to behave in accordance with the formal and informal rules and regulations. Processes and systems form the functional aspects of control (“we’ve got very strict control through HR processes” (R80: 31) and these are supported by the notion of “ongoing training and development” (R60: 23). People are schooled in the ways of the company. By bracketing the interpretive paradigm it appears that social construction is used as a way of validating and reinforcing the beliefs in the company. Reality, thus, is an intentional reality, a view of the company that the group needs to see. The limitations of bracketing the interpretive paradigm are exposed.

By bracketing the radical humanist paradigm here I propose that the group is complicit in its own subordination, although an alternative perspective is that, at a higher level of abstraction, it is the persona of the company which has sold them this need to be complicit. The company sells the image of a successful business (“what puts us above
others” R59: 23), it is investing in the future, cares for the poor unfortunates outside the organisation and, most importantly, “very much values its people” (Ibid). The view of a utopian inside, thus presented, can be seen to predispose people towards wanting to be included.

In flagging their inclusion, the group exude a collegiality akin to the notion of a clan culture. Membership determines behaviour. To belong here people need to demonstrate an allegiance to the company. They talk of humour and fun as being crucial (“we’ve always had a laugh” R62: 24), but in doing so highlight an interesting comparison between the nature of the pressures and stresses bought to bear on the workforce and the production of what is essentially “Novelty fun food for kids” (R63: 24).

At a cognitive level, there is an implicit ascription to a set of shared meanings used as the basis of all social constructions. This is made manifest in two ways. First, the group need to construct a reality in concert with their own sense of self-worth. This reality, one could argue, needs to be the result of deconstructing and reconstructing what they actually experience, in line with some collective sense of the need to feel valued. The inadequacies of bracketing the functionalist paradigm emerge. Where reality is a verifiable facticity, then deconstruction and reconstruction are not possible. Rather, the bracketing of the radical structuralist paradigm is implicated. The emphasis is clearly on the omnipresence of change, e.g. R86 notes that “we have done a lot of people change” (p. 33) whilst R88 notes the points of change as being “people, plant or product” (p. 34).

There is, however, no acknowledgement of the personal impact of this. To recognise the negative impact of the changes that are “done” (R86: 33) to people implies that one is commoditised. A positive view of the relationship between the company and the collective must be upheld here, and in doing this the idea of organisationally created stress was denied before it has actually been asserted. When R24 asserts that employee volunteering “Gives you that change of atmosphere as well, a break between work and …” (p. 11), R25 interrupts, interjecting “Not that this is a stressful place to work, it isn’t” (p. 12). The interpretation here is that constant change is stressful, and the radical structuralist consequences of that would be revolution. However, by refusing to acknowledge stress, revolution is avoided and the group can retain its belief that the company cares for it.
At a psycho-social level, the output of any social construction process needs to be reflected back on to the group as a means of positive reinforcement. This is the point at which the group’s conforming behaviours are reinforced and its membership of the clan culture confirmed. I argue that it is not sufficient for the group to simply construct a static view of reality, no matter how well aligned this is with the need for self-esteem. The relentlessness of organisational change implies a situational dynamic in which the nature of the relationship between the organisation and those within is constantly under pressure. New targets, new goals and changing objectives all compound the pressure on people to produce more for less. In transactional terms the costs of remaining within the company are constantly rising. By bracketing the interpretive paradigm one notes that any reality constructed needs to be constantly realigned and reaffirmed to ensure that the beliefs against which the group reconciles itself with the organisation, continue unchallenged. One has to consider, therefore, where reality is socially constructed, at what point does an extant reality become an extant reality and at what point does that extant reality concede to an emergent reality? The basis on which the group construct this shared reality appears to depend on individual and collective ascription to a number of beliefs about the company.

First, there is the image of the organisation as being excellent. The verifiable aspects of the company become apparent. R99 notes that “It’s still about results, it’s all about getting some results in all areas, that’s what Food Co is about, so it’s all about getting results whether it’s in productivity, quality, community, you see we can do any of them” (p. 37). The group uses social construction to position a positive image of the company. Where the company is the most successful and people attribute part of that success to their own efforts, then commoditisation is far less painful, indeed, inversely such commoditisation purports that the individual has a value.

Second, the company is honest. Although they are “very successful” (R28: 12), they are still willing to recognise previous mistakes. Yet, within this, there is only a distant notion of failure. Admitting to error is acceptable as long as this error is historic: nowadays, the company does not make mistakes. The image of the company must remain pristine. To prostrate oneself in front of anything other than the most successful of organisations would undermine one’s sense of self-worth.
Third, the clan culture is promoted by believing the company to be a big happy family. The company cares for people (“we value every person” R59: 23) and where control is exerted over people, this is out of necessity and for the sake of those who need to be controlled. As such the ‘cruel to be kind’ motif underlies all potentially disparaging accusations of commoditisation.

Fourth, the combination of the company being both perfect and caring logically premises people’s desire for inclusion. The tenor of the discourse is determined. These are the fortunate ones who would never compromise their position by inferring anything other than the company as excellent. Interestingly, even though everyone agreed that the company was a good place to work, very few could explain why that was. Likewise, even though everyone agreed that there was a sense of pride (“a lot of people are very proud of where they work” R5: 4), the group were only able to cite the “quality product” (R6: 4-5) and the fact that “even the most senior people within the organisation talk to, can talk well to people at the front line employee level” (R7: 5) as being the reasons for such pride. The group offers a positive response to any questions about the company, without having really considered their reasoning behind that response. Contradiction is ignored. For example, the group is proud of the people at the top of the organisation, yet also note how rare it is for these people to get involved. R53: 21 notes “everybody just seems to muck in together” (R53: 21), whereas R41 notes that there was actually one project in which the leadership did get involved “not just organizing it, getting involved with it as well, and getting their hands dirty, which is unusual” (p. 18). The potential criticism is covered by collective laughter. Humour means that if pejorative overtones are inferred, one can always retract things by asserting that it was just a joke. Despite this notion of humour being used, where the group recognises that it is veering towards a critique, they move the discourse, via collective oblivion, back towards adulation. Amnesia becomes a collective blinker which allows the group to systematically fail to see the blatant contradictions in what it is saying.

Once these beliefs are established they form the basis for a number of rationalisations. The group are accepting of all things corporate. People are manipulated at the behest of the company and it is incumbent on the individual and the collective to reconcile this. The trauma of constant change (“business will always change because change happens

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147 Emphasis added.
every single year" (R87: 34}) and the stress which requires people to engage with employee volunteering just so that they can get a break from work are unproblematic for this group. Subordinating oneself is simply the price one has to pay for inclusion.

Manifestations of the hierarchy are evident in the mechanisms of control and in the explicit ways in which metrics are crucial to how this company operates. Despite this, it is difficult to determine whether people believe in the value ascriptions of the hierarchy culture or whether this is simply a modus operandi. The functionalist aspects of the organisation emerge. R14 notes that one aspect of his performance “is measured on how many volunteers I get” (p. 8). The quality of those volunteers appears immaterial. R28 notes that “all of us have really got a lot of objectives this year to achieve” (p. 12), yet neither comment on the pejorative nature of imposing additional job tasks on people who are purported to be very busy already. The pressure on the people within the organisation is explicit. R3: 3 notes that this is “a very demanding company”, whilst R11: 7 recognises that “people have got full agendas and this is on top of their normal roles”. Despite this, the contradiction between the perception of a caring company and the pressure that this company puts on people to achieve its goals is never addressed. One questions why this situation doesn’t degenerate into revolution? Structural controls confine people to highly pressured roles within the organisation. However, revolution would imply exit. Exit is not an option. It is incumbent on the group, therefore, to construct a view of reality which salvages some sense of the self from a relationship founded on economic transaction. As such, all criticism is rebuked. Where R9 notes that they are “informal in the way we dress” (R9: 6) they are keen to counter any connection between this and the ways in which they do business. The narrative is quickly repositioned to note how

“we’re not informal in the way we approach business because I think we’re in that way, in terms of driving costs down, improving quality we’re very aggressive, but that’s the type of culture and proud environment that I think Food Co is all about.”

(p. 6)

The market culture dominates. The language of aggression is deemed complimentary. As such, people are proud to be “a very demanding company” which “demands a lot from its employees, staff and managers” (R3: 3). Being “a very aggressive business” (R28: 12) is unproblematic, and the group describes how everything the company does

148 Getting people to volunteer.
is attempting to "build an image, build a better brand image for us" (R37: 16). In line with a market culture, aggression and "hard-nosed competitiveness" (Cameron and Quinn, 1999: 122) are positive attributes.

What does amount to criticism is any inference that the company is either sloppy or is uncaring of those within. Where such inferences could have been drawn, they are retracted immediately either by the speaker, or where it appears that the speaker is unaware of the potential slight, by another group member. The speed with which potential critiques are responded to illustrates the need to defend the company.

A market culture is manifest in the ways in which the company operates and in the words used to describe the company. R37 asserts that the driver for success is "brand equity. I think that's what it's all about" (p. 16). The company is described as "aggressive" (R9: 6), as "driven" (R3: 3) and as pressing people to "deliver our results" (28: 12). Yet within the context of this group the overwhelming sense of the market is one which is imposed on them rather than being a set of values. For these people, the market is less of a value ascription and more a means by which the corporate structures the frames of reference within which both practical activities and social interaction are located. The nature of the market implies a particular set of strategic objectives. Achieving these strategic objectives requires compliance from people within. To remain within this company people need to deliver whatever the company demands. The success of the individual is premised on the success of the company. As such, it is beholden on the company to manipulate and manoeuvre people accordingly. The market drives, the hierarchy controls, and the clan culture becomes a means of reconciling people with the excesses of each.

Paradox is endemic. The group articulates the incongruity between the market drivers (R99: 37 "It's still about results"), the ways in which these are translated to the sub-ordination of the workforce (R38: 17 "I've got to give 100%") and the futility of the product (R63: 24 "at the end of the day all we are making is novelty foods"). Yet in doing this there is a need to continue to ascribe to the positive view of the corporate. The interpretive paradigm is bracketed here. Social construction becomes the means through which the group determines its positive view of the corporate. This continuous positive impression becomes a source of stability.
Aggression and efficiency drive this company and are the justifications for the magnitude of hierarchical control. Yet within this there is a need to retain a façade of niceness.

In recognising the magnitude of control, one has to consider the relationship between the bracketed functionalist paradigm and the bracketed interpretive paradigm. At a fundamental level, social relationships are framed by the nomothetic structures. Targets are set, and the targets become the concrete facticities by which all are judged. The expectations are that “performance is of the highest standards, and that’s what we expect and it’s driven as part of our culture” (R3: 3). However, for this group, the functional existence of verifiable structures and systems of control forms the backdrop to any social constructions taking place. It is through the use of social construction that constraint is acknowledged: however, this is not problematic. The group sees constraint as enabling rather than constraining, a perception which allows it to justify that constraint. This collective approval of the ways in which the company controls, is of itself reflective of the magnitude of control. People are so constrained that they need to cognitively and affectively normalise that constraint. The group needs to concede to the masculine qualities of aggression and being market driven in order that it can sense a future for itself as part of this company. It needs to accept, uncritically, the need for its own commoditisation as this is necessary to the continued success of the company.

Such prolific corporate control requires reconciliation at a higher level of abstraction. Behavioural and cognitive conformity is not sufficient, rather these need to be rationalised under the guise of the absolute necessity for inclusion. When constraint is thus framed, it becomes apparent that language is a means of leveraging inclusion. There is a utility in directing a set of shared values and beliefs and that direction is determined by prescribed social construction.

The idea of prescribed social construction allows for an emergent reality framed by the “intersubjectively shared meanings” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 31) of the group. Throughout the interview there is a sense of what the emergent reality should look like. Accordingly, the social construction taking place does so within the frame of an ‘intentional reality’. This intentional reality is a shared social construction in concert with the implicit beliefs that the group ascribe to. People can only salvage a sense of
self worth if they can exist in an intentional reality, thus it is incumbent on them to conspire to remain there.

The emergence of any ‘unintentional’ reality could not be tolerated. This would risk surfacing the level to which they are commoditised and the extent to which they collectively obliterate individual and collective insight into their own complicity. The role of the intentional reality is to provide a location for the individual and collective self that is both cognitively and affectively acceptable regardless of whether one needs to deceive oneself. An unintentional reality emerges when the social construction deviates to areas that are potentially discrepant with the view of reality that the group need to share. As such, should the tenor of the discourse imply a pejorative view of the company, then the futility of subordination would become apparent. The group ultimately stands the potential to recognise a reality in which it is commoditised for the sake of producing a novelty snack food, a circumstance akin to ‘The Emperor’s New Clothes’. Any unintentional reality which emerges immediately threatens ego strength and, as such, any future relationship with the company is untenable.

In order to remain within the comfort zone of intentional reality, the group needs to control the use of language. First, discourse must be manipulated and subverted, and these diversionary tactics intensify immediately the group perceives the potential for an ‘unintentional’ reality to threaten its view of the world. Thus, the revoking of criticisms and the collective obliviousness to paradox and contradiction become defence strategies: in the case of the former by a purposive act in which the ‘claims’ are denied; in the case of the latter by purposive omission to acknowledge that there is any problem at all. Second, if all else fails the default position is the idea that outside the company is worse. Whilst not ideal, remaining inside is preferable to being outside. Once this has been recognised it becomes imperative for the group to ameliorate the incongruity between what it does see and what it needs to see.

It is the notion of intentional and unintentional realities which forms the frames of reference within which the emergent reality is constructed. These frames allow the group to reconcile the blatant contradictions between the values the company accords to it and its own sense of self-worth. Here we bracket the radical humanist paradigm in order to gain an insight into how the contradiction can be reconciled.
Reconciliation is dependent on the collective skewing of the discourse back to one respectful of the company. Once here, the group can bat the dialogue back and forth safely as this allows it to:

1. Reaffirm its own self-worth
2. Reaffirm its collective self-worth
3. Reaffirm its own inclusion
4. Reaffirm the collegiality of its collective inclusion
5. Reaffirm the appropriateness of the values that underpin the dialogue
6. Fill the time gap with the safe, a diversionary tactic.

Within the context of this, group the concept of intentional and unintentional realities challenges the integrity of the radical structuralist and the radical humanist paradigms. The key factor is that of motive. From the viewpoint of a bracketed radical structuralist paradigm, this group acknowledges the chronic and enduring nature of change. R86 asserts that, “we have done a lot of people change with the Cenchester site, that’s from kind of moving managers around, promoting managers etc, so we get that but then we get a lot of changes in terms of operations and our operations” (p. 33). Change translates into verifiable externally existing structures that control and direct at the behest of the corporate. However, this notion of all-consuming control, rather than engender an angst which feeds revolution, generates an internally directed angst which implies radical humanist affiliations.

5.3.1 Conclusions

Analysis of the transcript for focus group 2 indicated that, for this group, control is all-encompassing. It then engages in a process of rationalising why such control is good. Subordination, fragmentation and commoditisation are the norm and the implications of these for individuals and for the collective are two-fold. At a primary level, one can see an unchallenged notion of utility. People are necessary for the production process but are of little wider value to the company. Even the role people play in employee volunteering is motivated by the prospect of building “an image, a better corporate image for us” (R37: 16). However, at a secondary level the notion of utility equates to dehumanisation. It is not the person that is required but the use of their physical being as a means of achieving a corporate output. The person is an unnecessary appendage.
Recognition that the company only requires the functional elements of people has implications for self-worth. Accordingly, people have three choices: They could leave, but this does not seem to be an option. Images of the success of a sharing and caring company would militate against that. They could fight, invoking elements of the radical structuralist paradigm, however the outcome (in a company which has a waiting list of people who wish to work here) is again exit. Lastly, they could accommodate the notion of oppression by using individual and collective rationalisations. Here, the meta-theoretical assumptions which found the radical humanist paradigm become apparent. We recognise the emergence of a socially constructed reality which is subsequently reflected back to form the means of their own alienation. The notion of intentionality here becomes a sub-conscious need to reconcile perceptions of personal value.

Indeed, this idea that people are complicit in the construction of their own modes of constraint is exemplified by the notion of persuaded voluntarism. Corporate control holistically penetrates individuals proffering psychological as well as behavioural modes of confinement. People constrained by such all-consuming control need to justify the subordination of the self so as not to see themselves as victims. As such, the collective constructs a retrospective rationale as to why they always wanted to do what the company has told them to do. The implications of persuaded voluntarism become apparent. People now feel that they have reconciled their relationship with the company, yet they have done this because the company demands this of them. Psychologically, the perception is that they have now regained the control that in real terms belongs to the company.

What is evident is the extent to which the company exerts an influence over this group. For example, the way in which this group reaffirms the company values links with the ways in which humans form attitudes. Initially, there is an emotive response - yes, no, good, bad - and then people cognitively seek to justify their initial reaction. The difference here is that the initial reaction is externalised: they are told yes, no good or bad. The ways in which those decisions are rationalised is left to the individual, it becomes an internalised task. Whilst this may be seen as a demonstration of the power of the company, again there is a degree of complicity. The idea that people are not prepared to challenge the decision must relate to some local level cost versus benefit process. The cost being unconditional acceptance of all things corporate, the benefit being inclusion. The notion of the psychic prison has resonance here. Indeed, the
vehemence with which unintended realities are avoided is reflective of the group’s impotence to rebel. Where one cannot escape from the cell the best you can do is decorate it.

5.4 Focus Group 3

Initial considerations here draw on themes previously alluded to149. The market dominates, but not in a cultural sense. This is not a set of values into which this group has bought, rather a strategic orientation espoused by management. The market is simply the battlefield which exists outside this organisation, and throughout the discourse it becomes apparent that the ways in which this battle is portrayed have become crucial in the ways in which those acculturated frame their perceptions of the organisation. The company needs to be “very, very ruthless” (R10: 3), it assumes a “hard exterior that’s driving the business” (R11: 3) and is motivated by “profit” (R73: 10).

The image of the company frames the group’s perception of its relationship with the company. The idea that the company is “absolutely goal focussed” (R72: 16) emphasises the ways in which the market drives. At a fundamental level, people are simply a tool used in achieving success, indeed, R12 recognises that the company is “not using people necessarily, but getting the most out of people” (p. 3). It is worth noting that the respondent chose to use the expression ‘most out of people’ rather than the expression ‘best out of people’. The implication is one of utility rather than of mutuality; and it is this idea of utility which provokes the bracketing of the radical humanist paradigm. Where people are used at the behest of the company, and have no option but to stay within that company, their ego strength needs to be protected by the construction of a social reality in which the commoditisation of the group is not only tolerable but also desirable. To opt for mere tolerance of the situation could invoke aspects of the radical structuralist paradigm and steer the group towards revolution. Revolution is not possible as this implies exclusion.

Social construction then is the means of creating a reality in concert with the reality that the collective needs to see. Thus, the group is of value because “we don’t sit on our laurels at all, like we’re there now but don’t want to be there, we want to keep striving”

149 See results sections for Focus Group 1 and Focus Group 2.
(R13: 3). This shared view of reality appears to be inverted. Rather than the company driving them, the group implies that it is driving the company. Its value to the organisation is clear. The company depends on the group for success in the market.

Control within the organisation is robust. The normative structures and processes that guide operational behaviours also determine social relationships. Control over people is compounded by the imposition of a hierarchical structure. People thus located exist within a network of systemic\textsuperscript{150} constraints. There is, however, a transactional premise. By meticulous compliance to the demands of the company you can escape the lower ranks depending on “How much you are prepared to give and what you can achieve” (R67: 15). The motives for such rigid organisational control are clear. The organisation, driven by market success, needs to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

Accordingly, a scientific management style fragmentation of tasks reduces the costs of productivity. People are “all under pressure to meet targets.....I got to make my numbers over here” (R82: 19). This is not conditional, rather a simple and definite response. What is interesting, however, is the ways in which the corporate deals with the human costs of such commoditisation. The organisation has managed to construct the widespread belief in a synergistic relationship between the company and the commoditised. The meta-theoretical assumptions founding the radical humanist paradigm would imply that there is complicity within the idea of utility. Thus it is the “We” (R13: 3) who want to keep striving, it is the “We” that value individuals (R10: 3) and it is the “We” that puts the effort into achieving corporate goals (R78: 18).

People are brought into this company via a slow and robust process. The company is careful to recruit the right people and with regards to whom they employ has “always had very exacting standards” (R93: 22). People are allowed, in the first instance, to tolerate the indignity of an agency managed zero hours contract whereby they arrive every morning to be told whether they have got any work or not. As an external agent, they are bombarded by messages of the caring sharing company and how good it is to be a part of this family.

\textsuperscript{150} The term systemic is used rather than systematic as the former infers the less tangible psycho-social modes of constraint to be discussed later.
The use of language across the organisation emphasises the ‘four legs good; two legs bad’ mentality inspiring a negative perception of all things external. Indeed, we are told that competitors hold this company in disdain, e.g. “the standard of Food Co is a lot lower than United Biscuits and you are taking one hell of a drop down” (R80: 18). Despite this, the superiority of this organisation is propounded in messages of being the under dog who is winning, but this assertion comes with a caveat. In order to remain inside, what is “a great company” (R79: 18), one which is going through “an extremely successful stage in the business” (R105: 25), there is a price to be paid. The ultimate sanction for not paying that price is expulsion.

Expulsion from the corporate must be avoided at all costs. In addition to the infallible and altruistic nature of the company, the external environment is dire. Other companies do not communicate as effectively as Food Co (R20: 4) and don’t manage to balance their commitment to health and safety, communication and people as effectively as Food Co (R79: 18). Not only does expulsion imply moving from the efficient to the inefficient but also, within the competitive environment, there is an explicit disrespect for this company. Expulsion means you end up on a losing side that despises where you have come from.

The image of the external environment is now positioning to create buy-in to all things corporate. The idea of battling for success is reinforced by discourse and by the use of visual imagery. People recount tales of how, when they were ‘outsiders’, the companies they worked for loathed this company. The notice boards around the building show images of fighting for victory. In essence, the pragmatic figures of market share, share price and profitability form the ever-present backdrop against which all realities are constructed.

The idea of a real and verifiable threat from the outside translates into a culture of cohesion inside. The clan, protective of each other, is reinforced by an established hierarchy which is protective of the group. Internally, the hierarchy sell the need for control, for efficiency, and for constant change in order that they can continue to be successful in the battles being fought. The costs versus benefits are now apparent. To stay within this company, to enjoy the sense of belonging as exuded by the clan culture and the sense of being protected by the hierarchy, one has to agree to be manoeuvred and manipulated at the behest of the company.
Interestingly, the idea of a clan culture appears to be more important to this group than to any of the others. R98 describes a culture of commitment rather than compliance, one in which “the culture of the workforce is that you want to come to work, you want to do a good job, and they’re always trying to produce good quality” (p. 24). There are two potential interpretations. First, that this group perceives the culture within the organisation from a unitarist, happy family perspective. Here the pressures brought to bear on people in meeting stringent efficiency and quality targets are unproblematic. People simply do what is expected of them. Second, that the group need to stay within this company and are willing therefore to demonstrate whatever behaviours the company feels appropriate. By bracketing the radical humanist paradigm, two distinct dynamics become apparent. In the first, there is a need to construct an image of the organisation so idealised that it is worthy of devotion. The company has an “ideal model of communication” (R18: 4), is “successful” (R26: 6), is “energetic” (R7: 2) and is “forward thinking” (R8: 3). In the second, the group needs to ensure that this positive perspective of the organisation remains. The sacrifices made by people to the company are premised on their always being beholden to the company.

What can be inferred here is that the transactional nature of the relationship between the company and those people acculturated is so crucial to the group that the company need to present nothing more than an honest image of commoditisation. It is the responsibility of the group to either desensitise itself or rationalise its relationship. However, the constancy of change within the organisation requires these processes to be fluid. What I infer here is that the “intersubjectively shared meanings” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) form the frame of reference through which people construct, deconstruct and reconstruct an image of their relationship with the company.

Presenting a frame of reference through which people are responsible for reconciling their own relationship with the company has two advantages. It is economic. The company do not have to spend time and energy persuading people that they are of value. Second, organisational change is unproblematic. The organisation has decided that the group should believe in the symbiotic nature of organisation and individual, regardless of sensory evidence to the contrary\(^{151}\). Accordingly, the image of reality that the group

\(^{151}\) The company is described as “a great company to work for” (R79: 18), yet does so in a physical environment in which “you don’t actually see much daylight when you’re at work” (R39: 9).
construct is one in which there is a mutuality. In ensuring this outcome, the use of language implies that the end justifies the means. The company require conformance, and to achieve this they set a frame of reference through which people make sense of their relationship with the company. For the company there is no sense of investing in the process, rather, it reflects the ways in which they do business, conformance is the target. You hit this- you are in, you miss this you are out. The meta-theoretical assumptions which found the radical humanist paradigm are implied. Once people feel that they contribute to the value to the company (R70 “It’s generally go and prove, go and prove yourself, you can do it as long as you make money from doing it” (p. 16) and that the company appreciates this (R74) “If people perform well than we’ve got the ability to issue rewards to people” (p. 17), then accepting the pressures of being used for the benefit of a driven, ruthless, ambitious and competitive company is not an issue: the company needs you. The collective are now obliged to construct a view of reality which will then serve to constrain them within the organisation.

The market culture dominates and this group deals with the drive for corporate success by aligning this to personal success. Accordingly, story telling becomes more apparent (R96 notes that “the stories are always there to tell” (p.23). R67, R94, R95 and R96 all know stories of people who came in at the bottom of this company and have scaled to great heights. There is no acknowledgement as to whether any of this group intends to do this, however, the implications are that they are the keepers of their own keys. It is no longer the company that constrains people to the lower echelons, rather the people themselves who do not make the effort to rise to the top. Again the group is respectful of the company.

Expanding on this, subordination to the corporate means that people see their own successes only through corporate success. Individual success has, therefore, to be transmuted into something that reflects as a corporate achievement. Paradigmatically this presents an interesting consideration. The pressure is put on people to achieve, and the pressure is relentless; however, the group sees this again in a positive light. First, the notion of hierarchical progression. The company sets difficult-to-achieve targets as part of a testing procedure. The negative inferences which could be drawn from this imply that the company creates stress. The positive slant put on this by the group is that this is necessary to sort the wheat from the chaff such that only those who succeed in coping with such pressure are worthy of promotion. Second, the ways in which the company
uses positive reinforcement to push people is also seen in a positive light. Here, positive reinforcement appears to be indicative of having the scope to push people further. R74 notes "For improved performance there's always another goal to better yourself or to work harder or to work smarter" (p. 17). The understanding that improved performance indicates a willingness to be pushed further is not problematic. Indeed, this may indicate ascription to the meta-theoretical assumptions founding the radical humanist paradigm. I.e. the ways in which the company behaves are perceived to be indicative of a (pseudo) dependence on people. The company needs them and thus there is a moral obligation for them to do what the company requires. They construct a reality to meet these demands.

There are potentially two emotive facets to this manifestation of the radical humanist paradigm. First, the threat to personal self-worth presented by an insight in to the extent of corporate commoditisation. This requires a psycho-social reconciliation if the ego strengths of both individuals and the collective are not to be damaged. Second, the newly created moral obligation in which the company depends on the people within requires an heroic notion of sacrifice and the construction of a reality in which one is obligated to help the company.

For this group, the image of the external reality has to remain positive. To imply any slight towards the company would undermine their rationale for subordination. Language is used to maintain the tenor and the stability of that reality and, as such the group makes itself oblivious to basic contradictions. To illustrate: the idea that the company has an open and accessible communication system in which senior managers "interact with people at their own level" (R26: 6) is deemed positive, despite the assertion that the Chief Executive will chastise you if you do something wrong (R30: 6).

Likewise, where an attempt to show corporate effectiveness in the achievement of business goals implies a pejorative manipulation of people, the group skew the discourse to note the almost therapeutic aspect of such self-sacrifice.

The company is never perceived as the villain who coerces and controls. Critique at any level is avoided by this group. So, where the discourse could be seen to move towards criticism the speaker re-directs the narrative. In not wishing to be critical of the company, R76 notes "And with regard to communication in the way we talk to, treat people, there aren't a lot of other things I could think of, well I mean there are a couple,
but generally we are moving, we’re getting into a position where we’ve got the ideal model” (p. 17). The notion of not already having the ideal model (which was asserted previously) is not overtly contradicted; the contradiction is implicit, even between the group members. Likewise, the improvements that could be suggested are not articulated. To do so would imply specific and focussed criticisms. Any inference of disagreement between the group members would undermine the image of a clan culture which the group go to great lengths to create. Moreover, the recognition of an ‘untruth’ at one level may implicate the collective concealment of ‘untruths’ at a range of levels.

The group is keen to promote a positive image of the company at every available opportunity, even where that promotion is seen as bordering on the fictitious. In asserting that this company is better that the competition R43 asserts that:

“A lot of the people, which is again different to other businesses, a lot of people I speak to out on the factory floor have a different perspective about their child’s education. They all seem to hold it in quite high regard that their child gets the best education possible, you know, they take opportunities in life and that, it is important that they don’t just go to school and they play no part.”

(p. 9)

However, the language skills of the factory floor group of employees are impoverished. This group are predominantly of low levels of literacy and with English only as a second or third language. The respondent is a middle aged, white male. The idea that he has spoken at any length to the group of people he is saying he has spoken to is doubted by the researcher. What emerges is the idea that, as long as you are promoting a positive image of the company, then it is perfectly acceptable to create a work of fiction and for this to remain unchallenged by the group.

The indications from focus group 3, are that the company is controlled and directed by management via the normative structures in situ. The ways in which they impose structure contribute to the ways in which the culture has evolved. This evolution is controlled in purposive ways as managers try to “build a business with the right culture” (R76: 17). For this group, the image of the company is premised on a set of basic understandings. These cumulatively form the frame of reference within which people, individually and collectively make sense of their relationships with the company. The
ultimate belief is that the company is successful, and it is on this fundamental premise that all other beliefs are founded.

The pursuit of success creates the transaction that is employment, although a simple compliance with what the company requires is insufficient. In being successful, the company creates an environment which is “energetic” (R7: 2) and “always changing” (R9: 3). It is “driving” (R10: 3) and “ruthless” (Ibid) and needs to be so if it is to enjoy continued success. This focus on success drives the structure, thus in order to direct the human resource appropriately, the company creates an image of being both caring and controlling. The caring dimension is formed from the ways in which the lowly are spoken to in words they understand, in there being a “relaxed atmosphere with people at a senior level” (R30: 6) and in there being “no barriers” (R66: 15). Yet this notion of caring appears to be espoused rather than actual. The “relaxed atmosphere” (R30: 6) is based on people achieving the targets set for them. The priority is the target. “No barriers” (R66: 15) is exemplified by a hierarchical organisation built on rigid nomothetic structure. Contradiction within the narrative is again discerned. The controlling dimension is underpinned by the need for operational efficiency and effectiveness. Accordingly, working within this company is “quite tough but that’s the way we succeed” (R78: 18), people are target driven and “all under pressure” (R82: 19). The corporate manipulates people to achieve the business outcomes and needs a way of ensuring that people are complicit within this. What emerges is the idea that people have been given an image of the organisation. The image is one of a market driven business which, by manipulating the human resource can achieve success. People can either accept the transactional nature of this commoditisation or can construct an image of their relationship with the company which is least disadvantageous. To do the latter they must suspend all recognition of the pejorative aspects of manipulation and commoditisation and view the company through rose tinted glasses.

In enabling this deception, shared meanings flaunt the success of the business. The price of belonging is that people are obliged to behave as directed by the company. R10 notes that success is premised on “getting results from people” (p. 3), whilst R12 notes the need to get “the most out of people” (p. 3). People pull together to create a reality which allows them to draw strength from being needed, whilst rationalising the need for and the impact of commoditisation. Demands are made of people which require them to be content with their relationship with the company. Discontent is avoided as the group
characterises the company in a way which is mutually beneficial. In doing this it cannot pretend that it is not manipulated, that would be dishonest. Rather it rationalises that manipulation.

Indeed, the need for this perception of the organisation to be shared, indicates collective uncertainty. Social construction has a dual purpose. First, it positively reinforces people's view of the company. Second, it indicates that people are not solitary victims of commoditisation. The group needs a sense of cohesion, not simply as a façade for the benefit of the researcher, but as a means recognising that commoditisation is not personal.

The group is proud of the macho nature of the domineering corporate that controls and constrains; this for them invokes a sense of worshipful reverence. The idea of dominance in any pejorative sense cannot be acknowledged. To infer such negativity to the organisation would undermine the idolised image that rationalises the need for subordination. Indeed, anything less than a perception of perfection stands the potential to highlight to people the extent to which they have been commoditised, and their own powerless complicity\textsuperscript{152} in this process. For focus group 3, the need to retain this view of a synergistic relationship is, therefore, most seriously challenged by two issues. First, the bringing in of 'new blood' at managerial levels within the company and second, when the researcher introduces the idea of allowing people from a socially deprived area of the city access to jobs in the company by circumventing the usual application requirements. In the first instance, the group are keen to point out that there were problems encountered by bringing in "a whole load of brand new high fliers" (R68: 15). Interestingly, the group don't elaborate on what these problems were, suffice it to say they have now been resolved. There is no blame attribution here and no notion that perhaps the management should have realised the potential for problems before doing this. The management are held in high esteem, they are "hands-on", "very much involved" and "have a lot of experience" (R66: 15). Throughout the interview management are never overtly criticised, despite the recurring theme of mistakes having been made. In the second instance, the threat is from the bottom of the organisation. People are being brought in who could potentially undermine the standards within the company. The group make two brief assertions regarding the need to maintain

\textsuperscript{152} The notion of powerless complicity is seen by the author as being the outcome of pseudo-voluntarism as discussed previously. Here the group is complicit in their own subordination because they really have no option.
standards. R 92 comments, “I hope this doesn’t mean that we are going to lower the standards” (p. 22) following which R93 elaborates that “if we try to change those standards then we start to take away some of the success we’ve had” (Ibid). These concerns are not elaborated, rather the discussion develops the theme of potential and elaborates on the previous stories in which such ne’er-do-wells end up at the top of the organisation. Faith is placed in the management decision to implement the programme, with no acknowledgement that management have, according to this group, been wrong before.

Imposed organisational change is the norm here. Indeed, the group is happy, even relishing the constant imposed organisational change that destroys and recreates the normative structures and operational systems. The group re-configures this idea of commoditisation into an illusion of being valued. It is, however, resentful of change that implies a threat to the family. Where the ‘young Turks’ (essentially “brand new high fliers and university graduates” R68: 15) were brought in it saw a circumventing of the process that was created to ensure complete and absolute immersion in to the values of the organisation. What is more, these people were brought in at the top of the organisation meaning that, in accordance with the unarticulated protocol which underpins the hierarchy culture, they automatically commanded respect. What emerged was the seriousness with which this threat to the symbiotic relationship between the company and the work group, was perceived. The shared understanding that everybody needs to be ‘time-served’ is challenged by the intrusion of these people. Although few in numbers (they are only at the top of the organisation) they are seen to pose a threat to the status quo. An interesting conclusion which can be drawn from this is that change has two distinct, possibly disparate manifestations, physical change and ethos change.

Physical change is change in which the evolution of operational procedures has implications for behavioural and psycho-social conformance. At a basic level, there is a simple physical conformance, which subsequently has implications for the restructuring of social relationships. At a higher level, the change can be seen as undermining the psychological contract and, as such, could have implications for anomie. Ethos change is change in which the actions of the company are seen to propose a threat to the value set of those acculturated. This differs from physical change on the grounds that it does not implicate behaviours, rather it focuses on a direct

\[153\] As discussed previously.
challenge to the frame of reference which those acculturated use to reconcile their relationship with the company. This is a critical threat. The value set is derived from the frame of reference presented by the organisation. It is the baseline from which people reconfigure their perceived relationship with the company. Where there is ethos change, there is an incongruity between the reality experienced and the reality that the group need to experience if their sense of self worth is to be preserved. Such incongruity needs to be resolved.

Where the group perceives the potential for their value set to be undermined, there is a disenchantment and dissatisfaction. However, disenchantment with this situation cannot be directed towards anyone. To do so would imply error and error would challenge the integrity of management and undermine the omnipotence of the company. Likewise, disenchantment and dissatisfaction cannot last. The threat that these corporately directed negative emotions present to the individual and collective egos is such that immediate resolution is required. To illustrate: one considers the way in which the group responds to the idea that people even lower than the very lowly will be given preferential access to the company. Here, there is a flagrant flouting of the ethos rules that reveals the precarious nature of the symbiotic relationship between the company and the collective.

R92 and R93 note how bringing people in against lower entry requirements compromises the standards of the company. This threat should strike a chord at the heart of all as, for this company, standards are everything. Yet within minutes of this, the discourse has been skewed to note the altruistic nature of the company in offering “opportunity to people who don’t work within Food Co” (R94: 22). Disenchantment and dissatisfaction are averted even though the issue causing these remains unresolved.

A different discourse dynamic ensues, one in which the hierarchy takes control. Engaging in the programme has been a managerial decision and whilst the manager wishes to be associated with this, he is also keen to silence those who doubt the scheme. In taking control of the narrative, R97 notes that “Most people will reserve judgement until we’ve seen the first people through” (p. 23). The interpretation here is that “most” (Ibid) includes this group. The manager silences the group, frustrating any further expressions of concern. Again, the managerial ability to control people becomes apparent. Having used status to quieten any ‘expressions’ of concern he then adopts a
paternalistic stance\textsuperscript{154} to rationalise why their fears are unfounded. There are the stories and fables charting the career progression of people\textsuperscript{155} who entered this company at the very bottom and, through their own diligence, progressed to the top. The moral of which is that even the lowest of the low may make it to the top.

What also becomes apparent is the complicity between the manipulated and the manipulator. The organisation needs to control to gain the operational efficiencies needed for success. People need to work. It is from that fundamentally transactional premise that the need for reconciling the relationship between the two becomes apparent. People have a need to work within this company. The price one pays for being allowed in here is one of commoditisation. Commoditisation saps ego strength and undermines self-worth, such that there is a need to create a reality in which the negative corporate behaviours are construed as positive.

The organisation needs to assert holistic control if it is to get people to buy into a specific image of organisation. “Getting results from people” (R11: 3) requires a mechanism for getting them to buy-in to all things corporate, especially where those results are achieved through making people “prove yourself” (R70: 16) and by putting people “under pressure to achieve targets” (R82: 19). Communication becomes the medium through which beliefs in the corporate are promulgated. Stories and myth are rife, and the group’s acceptance of paradox, contradiction and sporadic amnesia become part of the ways in which language chronically reinforces the message of corporacy. Compounding this, the idea of having created the image of a dire exterior, a utopian interior and having been sold a message of personal value implies that people become even more entrenched in their need to belong to the company.

Yet this need to belong to the company may be seen from two perspectives, those who configure a favourable image of the relationship to opt in, and those who configure a positive image because they are unable to opt out. To elaborate: within this company change is used to lever control. A company that is “always changing” (R9: 3) creates a collective need to constantly acquire and consolidate new skills, establish new social relationships and to accommodate these changes at the behest of the company. Adaptation may not simply be a purposive move to opt in, but rather an accidental move

\textsuperscript{154} Associated with the clan culture.

\textsuperscript{155} “this person who is now a director was an FLM, this person was, you know, came in on an agency book and is now, you know, a quality manager” (R96: 23).
where people are unable to opt out. Constant change destabilises people such that the only choice that they have is to go with the flow. Choice is removed from people by creating a dynamic that doesn't allow them to stand back and take stock. People are driven by a company that is both “very, very ruthless” (R10: 3) and driven. It is “energetic” (R7: 2), but this results in people getting caught up in a “got to get that done, got to get that done, got to get that done” (R81: 19) mentality. Behaviours are controlled by normative structures that are constantly changing. This incessant dynamic would mean that people are never in a position to stop and take stock. The chronicity of change is problematic. Constant movement and pressure to acquire new behaviours without inflicting short-term inefficiencies on the organisation leaves people so focussed on coping with today that they have not got the time to ponder the inequities likely to undermine their sense of self worth.

Consideration needs to be given to the nature of the group involved here. This is a staff group, people who have aspirations, people who see themselves progressing through the company based on their worth. In order to project their worth towards the company, it could be argued that they need, in the first instance to be able to justify that worth to themselves. What the group members here need to reconcile, is the way in which the company manipulates them and the ways in which they are complicit in that manipulation. In order to do this one needs to consider the motives for this voluntary subordination. An affinity with the radical humanist paradigm is seen here as protective, rather than destructive. In order to justify subordination the group needs to construct an image of organisation worthy of being subordinated to. As such perceptions are skewed to the positive, a process helped by the corporate use of language and imagery to reinforce the perception of omnipotence. The company is all things to all men, it is successful but still “in touch with everybody” (R75: 17), it is “ruthless” (R10: 3) but still “value(s) the individuals that work for us” (Ibid).

The hierarchy is not seen as being command and control, rather as a means of protecting the clan from the enemy outside. Chronic change is seen as being a necessary evil if the company is to continue winning the battle. Structure is seen as a means of allowing people to achieve, and all actions by the company are premised on caring for those within whilst winning the market war.
5.4.1 Conclusions

The discourse analysis for the transcripts of focus groups 1, 2 and 3 gave rise to a number of consistent themes. Key to each analysis was the sense of loyalty to the organisation.

We have seen how the market culture dominates. Outside the organisation transactions with the marketplace drive success. Inside the organisation transactions with the workforce enable that success. The aggression that underpins the market culture is apparent in the ways in which this company behaves. The clan culture is mentioned by all three groups; yet, it is in seeking an affiliation with the attributes of the clan culture that one finds widespread contradiction. However, in line with Cameron and Quinn's (1999) notion that leaders are seen as "parent figures" (p. 122), their style is autocratic and their demands uncompromising. The driver is the market and concern for people is only an issue after the goals have been met. The group here uses language to construct an image of a clan. There are two reasons. First, this sense of sharedness means that commoditisation is not personal. Second, the clan provides a medium through which illusional views of personal and collective relationships with the company are validated.

Allusion to the hierarchy is rife throughout the analyses. The hierarchy forms the spine of the groups relationship with the company. It is, indeed, the corporate dependence on normative structures which undermines any elements of the adhocracy culture. There is no need for spontaneity or innovation, people are there to meet targets and perform to task.

Paradigmatically, a number of key themes emerge. Although the company objectify performance, the values imputed by this are problematic. The pressure and stress created in trying to cope with change and achieve targets sends a message of commoditisation. People are of economic rather than personal worth. Retaining the integrity of the functionalist paradigm in this empirical context is difficult as values are inferred from the externally verifiable context. From an interpretive perspective the social construction of reality is crucial to these focus groups retaining any sense of self worth. The process of social construction is premised on an understanding of a set of shared meanings. These are the messages exuded by the company. The messages are simple. The company needs maximum efficiency and maximum effectiveness otherwise it will not be successful. People contribute to the success by being of economic value.
Those within the company have three choices, they can exit the company, which is not possible because of the transactional nature of the relationship. They can stay and accept that they are of no personal value to the company, likewise, not possible; this would undermine ego strength and self worth. Or they can reconcile their relationship with the company by constructing an image in which they are of personal value. They opt for the latter. It is at this point that I bracket the radical humanist paradigm. Social construction is the mechanism through which people create an image of reality is which they are least disadvantaged. By reinforcing positive views of the company, placing an emphasis on how bad the outside world is and by using language to demonstrate how controlling equates to caring, a positive view is created. Not only is each group of personal value to the company, but they are necessary for continued success. People are now obliged to stay here for the benefit of the company. Bracketing the radical structuralist paradigm is of limited value. The constraints of imposed normative structure are clear, however, exit is not possible. Rather people seek to rationalise subjectively the messages relayed objectively.\textsuperscript{156}

The key themes from these analyses will be drawn together with the literature in a discussion later in this thesis. The last stage of the analysis was the open structure analysis of the non-linguistically based non-participant observation. Here the observations gleaned from the canteen and the restaurant are consolidated into a narrative.

5.5 Non-linguistically based Non-participant Observation

In this section, I will discuss the results of the non-linguistically based non-participant observation. The observations in the canteen and in the restaurant were documented using field notes. These field notes were translated into a diary of observations immediately after each period of observation. The analysis here uses a narrative format to identify where the observations imply an affiliation with the culture types in the OCAI and where the observations are reflective of ascription to the paradigm typologies in the Burrell and Morgan (1979) taxonomy.

Entering the canteen I was struck by the image of a physical environment which exuded an ambience of despondency. The room was huge but poorly lit. The pale décor created

\footnote{156 An assertion which clearly undermines the notion of paradigm incommensurability.}
a visual sense of greyness. There was an acrid smell of stale grease and a tangible feeling that the grease was coating my skin. The grease made the floor very, very slippery and the walls were spattered with notices warning people of the dangers. Despite this being the day of the Christmas dinner, the only decoration in this entire room was one piece of tinsel across the serving counter. This all-consuming greyness was reflected in the workforce.

In bracketing the functionalist paradigm, it was very difficult to see how the physical reality here could be value-free. The physical context forms the frame of reference within which these people locate themselves. The characteristics of the environment present a real and verifiable context which reflects the level of investment the company is prepared to make in these people. In response to this frame of reference, the most striking physical impression of the workforce was that of a collective flat affect. Emotions were stultified and the image was one of determinism bordering on fatalism. Control by structure was reflected in the geographic layout (See Figure 6).

The geographic layout created physical divides. The regimented formation of the static tables was compounded by the use of partitions. The physical environment fractured in the same way as hierarchy. The positions\textsuperscript{1,5,7} were set by the organisation, people move into and out of them and the locus of stability is in the positions. Moreover, the influence of hierarchy was manifest here by the behaviours of the canteen staff.

The shop floor workers were readily identified by their all concealing uniform. Each person was dressed identically from the hairnet to their protective footwear. There was no sense of the individual here. Canteen staff was likewise identifiable by uniform. Theirs however was less all concealing. However, for the canteen staff the notion of a ‘clan’ extended further than the wearing of a particular uniform. Their behaviours and mannerisms implied status and rank. In their contact with the workforce they were consistently and chronically dismissive. To illustrate: in preparing to serve the Christmas meal, two canteen staff were given the task of laying festive table cloths. They patrolled the floor, each wielding a bread knife and a large roll of paper tablecloth. Every time they reached a table, they dropped the roll on the table then slashed the cloth to size with the bread knife. The cloths were then left skewed on top of the table. No eye

\textsuperscript{157} The term ‘positions’ is used to represent both the physical position of the furniture in the canteen and the hierarchical positions of job roles within the organisational structure.
contact was made with people sitting at the table and, when language was sporadically used, the tenor was abrupt and associated with issuing of instructions. The canteen staff exuded an air of superiority, their expressions were sullen and they made their displeasure at having to do this job apparent to the workforce.
Figure 6: Canteen Layout

Key

Crisp bins  Tables with chairs  Door

Partitioned area

Smoking Room

Serving Area
The workforce within the canteen accepted this treatment. They did not respond. They did not try to engage eye contact with the canteen staff, they did not try to engage a dialogue. Deterministically, they knew their place and stayed in their place. Indeed they did not react, even when the verbal instructions from the canteen staff were bordering on the rude. In bracketing the interpretive paradigm it was very difficult to see any evidence of voluntarism here. Both the workforce and the canteen staff appeared to be resigned to their situation; the former exuding an air of lethargy, the latter, an air of frustration. The nature of the reality constructed here was simply that the canteen staff wished to point out that they were of greater worth. Culturally, this clearly implies a hierarchy, though from an informal position rather than a formal ‘reporting structure’ position.

The structural dislocation presented by the layout was compounded still further by the spontaneous and exclusive physical groupings observed within this setting. The visual impact of such segregation was stark. Black males sat with black males, white males sat with white males, and black females sat with black females. The only white females were the canteen staff who physically prowled the gaps between the tables, stopping only to throw the table cloths across. People stayed within their groups, all groups were gender-specific and ethnicity-specific. Across the canteen, communication was confined to within the groups, the use of touch was minimal\textsuperscript{158} and facial expressions were generally neutral. Although there was no contact between the groups, across them there was a marked consistency of behaviour. Clan type traditions were seen, but located strictly within the confines of each group. Close physical proximity was demonstrated by the ways in which people huddled together. People leaned towards each other to speak and people entered and left the room together. Eye contact between people within the group was noted although eye contact with anyone outside the immediate group was rare. Although I had tried to be as unobtrusive as possible, the group noticed me. Yet, having attracted their attention, when I turned to find a person or a group of people looking at me, they would immediately avert their eyes. Moreover, conversations within the sub-groups were whispered. The ambient noise level was far lower than one would expect in a social space and there was little, if any, laughter.

\textsuperscript{158} It is accepted that the cultural significance of touch and the high proportion of people from a diverse range of ethnic groups may have contributed to the behaviours here.
For the workforce in the canteen the nature of the clans here was small and localised. Membership of the clans was consistent; the same people arrived together, sat together and left together. They sat in the same places and with the same people. The market culture which so dominated the focus groups could not be inferred from the behaviours demonstrated. The group appeared focussed on survival rather than competition.

In contrast, the restaurant presents a different view. Although the use of language here was accessible, the observations were focussed on the non-linguistic aspects of communication. The differences between the restaurant and the canteen were made manifest across a range of issues. Within the restaurant, the physical environment was clean, well-lit and bright. The smells were of fresh food and the room was festooned with Christmas decorations. The furniture was not fixed, the layout was more spacious and less regimented. The architecture was more conducive to across-group interaction. The difference between the physical setting in the canteen and the physical setting in the restaurant are noted. In the latter, the company has clearly invested in facilities for the staff. The impression here is that the company perceives the staff group to be of greater value that the workforce in the canteen.

The staff group were confident in their environment and this confidence was reflected in the loudness of the ambient noise levels. This is a place where people come to socialise and relax.

\[159\] See Figure 7
Figure 7: Restaurant Layout

Key

- Crisps display
- Christmas tree
- Water cooler
- 4 seater table/chair unit
- TV
- Vending machines

Serving Area
The idea that the physical environment forms the frame of reference within which the people locate themselves was borne out by the consistency of behaviours across individuals and groups. People coming in to the restaurant were either engaged in conversation as they came in or they initiated conversation with people once inside. Conversations were not confined to specific groups. Rather, they involved the staff groups speaking with the people who worked in the restaurant. The tenor of the conversations was polite and mutually respectful. Likewise, conversations were not confined to small subgroups but ran between groups. The groups here were more diverse and the notion of ethnic and gender segregation so apparent in the canteen was not an issue. However, on the second day of observation there was an element of segregation. The second day of observations started with the dawn shift to enable access to the drivers who deliver the product across the northern region of the UK. Although not strictly ‘staff’ this group are not ‘employees’ either. They are an intermediary group within the corporate hierarchy and are sited in a different building complex from the rest of the people. In this circumstance, a group of black male drivers sat together. Even though people from other groups spoke to them and vice versa, they remained physically segregated. Indeed, the divide between the drivers and the office staff was manufactured by the drivers who physically moved the tables together in order that a large group of them could sit together. Although the physical divide that this created was compounded somewhat by the differences in uniform, the divide appeared to be a pragmatic one. Communication was open and the groups lacked the closed insularity seen in the ethnic and gender-specific groups in the canteen. The idea of a clan culture was apparent here. The friendliness of each of the groups (restaurant staff, drivers and the staff group) was apparent. Status did not appear to be an issue.

It was useful to note that each of the groups observed showed a consistency of behaviours specific to each of the physical settings. In the canteen, the environment is dark and dismal and the behaviours of the workgroup in there reflected that. In the restaurant, the environment was light and bright. Again the behavioural attributes of the staff reflected that.

This idea of consistency of behaviour raises the question as to whether the groups are actually responding to a shared frame of reference\textsuperscript{160} or whether the consistency of

\textsuperscript{160} A notion which has implications for retaining the integrity of both the functionalist and the interpretive paradigms.
behaviours can be classified as the normal behaviours of the groups, i.e. the behaviours are independent of the frame of reference. From the perspective of the canteen, it is difficult to imagine that the behaviours demonstrated were the 'normal' behaviours from such a large group of people. Rather, it appeared that disparaging value ascriptions were relayed in the physical evidence. People entering the canteen were met with a barrage of negative sensations. Visually, the thick brown rubber doors through which they had to pass portend an inauspicious entrance. Having entered into the canteen there was a smell of stale grease mixed with the cigarette smoke issuing from the smoking room immediately on the right of the entrance. The floor was very slippery, to the extent that personal safety was compromised. It was this physical context and the values that this environment communicated to the workforce that framed any interaction taking place. It is plausible that social constructions, so framed, would have confirmed to those people that they had no more than a basic utility to the organisation. The company did not need them, but needed the work they did. The environment was evidence that the company did not invest much in this group of people.

Bracketing the functionalist paradigm within the context of the canteen group is useful here. The external facticity here was seen as the verifiable reality in which the group were situated. A deterministic stance was accepted without question by the group and the physical presentation of the group reflects oppression. They were controlled and constrained by structure. Physical divides delineate social relationships. Hierarchical divides position this group at the bottom of the organisation. However, the suggestion (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) that this reality is value-free, invites an analogy with the Skinnerian notion of manipulating stimuli to direct behaviours. Skinner makes the connection from a psychological rather than a sociological perspective, asserting that value ascriptions are read by the psyche, from the sensory perceptions of the context within which one is located.

Within the canteen in particular, a range of sensory experiences were involved. The visual notion of greyness, the smell and the feel of grease and the dullness of the droning conversation conspired to create a frame of reference which implied that the company had no respect for this group. Here, the physical context was oppressive and the behaviours demonstrated were consistent with those of the oppressed. Where there was a bland conformity across the physical environment (even the Christmas
decorations were so insignificant that they failed to stand out) this was reflected in the bland conformity of behaviours.

Reinforcing this notion of the physical context presenting a shared and value significant frame of reference, the results from the restaurant demonstrated that same level of consistency of behaviours. The manifestations here, however, were totally different. The restaurant was loud both metaphorically and literally. Visually there were vivid and flashing Christmas decorations, the T.V. broadcast from the middle of the room, people were laughing and voices were raised. The inference drawn from the sensory impact here was that this was primarily a social space, the functional nature of this being a place to eat and drink appeared secondary. In contrast, within the canteen, the functionality takes precedence, as evidenced by people coming in, eating and or drinking alone, and then leaving. Where there was any social interaction, this was minimal and confined to mutually exclusive groups.

Within the context of the non-linguistically based non-participant observation, two inferences were drawn. First, that the physical environment within which these people were located had an impact on the demonstrated behaviours. Across the two groups observed, the consistency of behaviours within each group and the inconsistency of behaviours across the two groups implied that their behaviours were framed by the physical environment. Second, that the nature of those behaviours implied that people read personal value from the nature of the physical setting.

In both environments, social constructions took place and were reaffirmed by the collective engaging in a range of demonstrable non-verbal behaviours. Visually the greyness of the canteen was reflected in the metaphorical greyness in the behaviours of the workgroup located there. As such, it was appropriate to huddle in small groups, to avoid eye contact with strangers, to look unhappy, to adopt an insular posture, to sit in the same place and with the same people and to abide by the ethnic and gender divides. These informally accepted rules of the game were rigidly adhered to and provided for the group an existing reality in which they were immersed. The value premise here was one of shared oppression in which everybody was embroiled. Looking down the rows of people in the canteen was reminiscence of looking down a row of statues. Person after person sat slumped over a cardboard coffee cup with the same posture and the same expression, table, after table, after table. In contrast, the brightness of the restaurant was
reflected in the metaphorical brightness of the groups located in there. This would seem to reiterate the difficulty in upholding the integrity of the functionalist paradigm in this empirical context. Here the physical context within which people are located imbues value ascriptions.

Alternatively, one could propose the notion of social construction by omission. Here, the meanings of the social constructions are inferred from the behaviours that one does not see. For the purposes of this research, such comparison is made relatively easy because of the ‘ego’ versus ‘alter-ego’ nature of the relationship between the canteen and the restaurant. What was not seen in the canteen was liveliness or spontaneity, mutual respect between all grades of staff or the mixing of gender groups. Rather, there was a two-tier fragmentation between the workers and the canteen staff. The workers were engulfed in navy blue uniforms which covered them from head to toe. Any individuality was hidden behind the sameness. The canteen staff wore white and pale blue, and the visual contrast with the dark clothing of the workforce set them apart from the masses and fused them into a uniquely recognisable group.

In either circumstance the key tenet was that of sharedness. The workers shared being oppressed and the canteen staff shared a dual identity of being both the oppressor and the oppressed. Yet this collectivity is safe. When the organisation exudes a blanket ascription of commoditisation of the masses, it is no longer personal. The company is no longer picking on just you.

The ambience exuding from each setting had an impact on the demonstrable behaviours which contributed to the reality being constructed. Moreover, the nature of those behaviours was dependent on the values imputed by the physical context. Social construction here was not simply a process by which the collective constructed a reality in isolation, rather the social construction of reality is a process through which the collective construct a reality whilst being cognisant of the values imbued by the physical environment. The process of social construction here is premised on the idea that people are presented with a fait accompli. The transactional nature of the relationship between the company and the people within the company means that the people need the company more than the company needs the people. It is for them to construct a reality which is least disadvantageous.
I am compelled here to bracket the radical humanist paradigm. The notion of determinism in the face of such extreme commoditisation may imply that determinism is a choice. Here, the group became complicit in their determinism. Such consistency of collective behaviours implied that the group recognised the values imbued by the frame of reference within which they were located. However, by having a minimum engagement with anything other than the local level subgroups, they could remain oblivious of the extent to which they have been commoditised. In voluntaristic terms, they were faced with the choice of whether to look or not. If they had looked, they may have seen that grass on the other side was greener. If they don’t look then the grass on the other side will not be greener. This group collectively doesn’t look. Here a radical humanist view would imply an intentionality of behaviour. The social reality constructed needs to protect the collective from recognising the pejorative aspects of being commoditised. Accordingly, they avoid comparison which would indicate a rank order of oppression. Any sense of the magnitude of oppression would undermine the collective sense of self-worth. Rather, the group construct a reality in which they adopt a fatalistic persona. The narrative implies that the group are accepting of their relationship with the organisation but, in order to ameliorate the potential tensions, refuses to look at the extent of that commoditisation. By accepting this without comparison, the group constructs an image of equitable commoditisation. The whole organisation is commoditised, they are just part of the wider group. They are no more disenfranchised than anybody else.

This notion of comparison with other groups and the role of hierarchy was emphasised within the canteen when the canteen manager arrived. Instead of the corporate polo shirt as worn by the rest of the managers in this organisation, he wore a garish pink shirt and a tie. Nobody else in the entire organisation, (with the exception of the security guard on reception) had worn a tie. The vividness of his shirt contrasted starkly against the backdrop of navy blue overalls and his patrolling between the tables without speaking to anyone made sure that he stood out as being senior to everyone else.

Indeed, within the restaurant, this notion of uniform again came to the fore. The groups using the restaurant were divided by three types of uniform. The staff group who work in administration had navy blue trousers and a badged polo shirt or sweat shirt. The canteen staff wore whites in line with Health and Safety legislation, and the drivers wore corporate trousers and shirts but covered by a fluorescent jacket, and with or
without a baseball cap. Despite the inference of informality that this flexibility portends, the notion of a uniform still imputes control. For the drivers the idea of branding a person who is then going face-to-face with the customer group reflects some brand image logic. However, the administration staff do not come face to face with the customer group. Neither do this group work in an environment which would make uniforms sensible. Rather, their uniforms can be nothing more than a badge of membership, of inclusion, and worn at the behest of the company. This idea of the informality of uniforms is somewhat undermined by the use of picture boards. Perchance anyone should forget who is senior to whom within the restaurant, there was on the wall a picture board with photographs of the managers and their names. Thus, whilst the company likes to see informal uniforms as being the mark of an informal atmosphere, these are ultimately symbols of control.

Being able to observe these environments on the days of the Christmas dinners allowed a unique access to circumstances of disparity and of contradiction that might otherwise not have been apparent. The disparity relates to the approaches to the Christmas dinner in each of the settings. Within the restaurant, the staff had arranged to close the facility for an hour and a half before they were due to serve the dinners to allow them to prepare. In this time, they added additional Christmas decorations and the restaurant staff took to wearing flashing Santa hats. They had moved the vending machines out and moved the furniture around. Tables were decorated and, although they didn’t have tablecloths, each place was set with cutlery and a Christmas cracker.

Within the canteen there were no such preparations. The begrudging nature and abrupt means of communicating demonstrated by the catering staff was indicative of anything but goodwill. Christmas dinner was an unnecessary evil that needed to be done with as soon as possible. Canteen staff wandered around throwing cheap paper tablecloths on to the tables. Even though they were interrupting the break time of the people in the canteen that staff had no qualms about doing this. Such distain for their fellow workers continued throughout the festivities. People stood in a long queue waiting until the food was ready to be served. The wait culminated in their Christmas dinner being slopped unceremoniously onto their plates.

Throughout the process the ambience never changed. There were no additional decorations, no music or Christmas crackers. The feeling was that this was just another
mealtime. Yet, whilst the notion of the holistic subordination of a large group of people could be seen to inspire resentment and conflict, the ambience here was one of fatalism. Being coerced and controlled was, for this group, the normal science, the status quo. The degree of control exerted by the corporate was such that this group either couldn’t or wouldn’t recognise their level of subordination, a process that in turn militates against the need for revolution. Perhaps the greatest contradiction of all is that all this was motivated by the need to produce a novelty snack food.

The relationships seen within the canteen implied that the physical and the psychosocial modes of constraint were used to create a hierarchy culture and to meet the organisational need to exert widespread control. The magnitude and potentially surreptitious nature of that control inadvertently became apparent in two brief but significant dialogues. Within the canteen, and despite having been told about the research previously, I was approached by two of the canteen staff towards the end of the second day. They simply asked me if I was doing a time and motion study. Whilst in the process of explaining the research to them again, they chose not to listen, but rather to lean around me to try and read my field notes.

In the second instance, whilst in the restaurant, I was approached by one of the junior managers (whom I later identified from the picture board) who wanted to know who the research was for. Having assured him that it was for me and not for the company, he then wanted to know how I had got access to this company, and who had permitted that access. Lastly, he then insisted that I send him his own personal copy of the results. Control by the hierarchy was apparent. In the canteen, the hierarchy sends people in to measure efficiency. People are wary of being monitored. In the restaurant, information is power, and possession of information becomes reflective of ones own importance.

The notion of a market culture underpins the rationale for hierarchy. Recognition by the focus groups that the company is aggressive and goal-focussed underpins the perception of the company. However, the market culture was possibly best illustrated (literally) by the ways in which the organisation used image and symbolism to reflect values. In particular the notice boards which lined the foyer to the canteen. Here Food Co was seen to be in competition. One large notice board is considered in detail. The images

161 There are implications within this for the functionalist paradigm notion that pragmatic views of reality do not convey value ascriptions.
were located in an athletics stadium. A race between different branded foods was underway on the running track; although Food Co were winning, the race was not won. The medal rostrum was the location for market share targets, figures were displayed which showed current and projected market share. The only way of winning a medal was to gain market share. An injured competitor was being stretchered off, implying an acceptance that someone would get hurt and that this someone would be the competition. And the use of the terms ‘higher, faster, stronger’ indicated a drive to constantly push for productivity and market for improvements.

The sporting motif here set the premise for the surrounding literature. Having built the notion of competition and fight, people were then bombarded by information telling them how and when we will launch attacks. The company has taken away any ideas that this competition is in anyway conditional or optional. Plans to gain more market share, to promote new products, to attack new targets and to re-brand products from a bought-out competitor were all vividly portrayed. Yet only a select few had access to this.

The vividness of the foyer stood in stark contrast to the canteen in which the people at the bottom of this organisation took their breaks. Additionally, although the use of imagery paints a picture of the ways in which the company sees themselves and their markets, the foyer was not accessible to those who use the canteen. Instead, they accessed the facility via a narrow, dimly-lit corridor at the back of the building.

5.5.1 Conclusions

Observations from within the canteen would indicate that there is, at an organisational level, no clan based organisational culture. Instead, there is fragmentation, division and hierarchical control. The only notion of collectivity for the workers here appears to be a shared sense of determinism, and the spontaneous division of people into exclusive ethnic and gender-specific groups. Asian people sat with Asian people, white people sat with white people, men sat with men and women sat with women. The idea of a clan culture here would appear to be founded on the notion of multiple small clans rather than any overarching sense of the corporate family.

However, the notion of the corporate family appears to be more apparent in the restaurant. The openness of communication and the mutuality of relationships implied
respectfulness and some notion of a shared sense of identity which was not seen in the canteen. Indeed, in terms of a shared sense of corporate identity between the catering staff and the workers, they may well have been from different planets. They could not even share civility let alone a sense of identity and belonging. The abruptness with which people were addressed, and the blasé way in which a festive occasions was approached was indicative of a group with little or no respect for the people with whom they are dealing.

The key themes emerging from the notion of non-participant observation hinge on the huge discrepancies between the two settings. The physical environment imputes values to the collective. Each group then assumes responsibility for managing to reconcile that sense of value with their own need for self worth. Within the canteen, the values exuded from the physical environment and the derogatory ways in which the canteen staff treated the workers build an image of oppression. Non-verbal behaviours showed a flatness of mood. The absence of noise and the routinised ways in which people arrived, sat in the same places, with the same people and then left implied that people were accepting of this oppression. There was a determinism bordering on fatalism. Contrarily the restaurant produced a different image. The liveliness of the environment was reflected in the liveliness of the people. Segregation was rare and the ambience was as one would expect from a social space.

Having discussed the results of both the functionalist and interpretive research, these are now considered alongside the research questions set originally. In addressing these, two discussions have been produced.
Chapter 6: Contributions to the Literature

6.0 Introduction

In this section, I will consider the contributions that this thesis makes to the literature. In doing this I will return to the research questions posed at the beginning of this thesis, namely:

- How does the use of paradigm specific research methods shape the view of culture?

- Can the use of bi-paradigmatic research challenge the traditional views of culture?

Each of these questions will be addressed in turn and the results of my empirical work will be referenced back to the literature reviews undertaken previously.

6.1 Shaping Views of Culture

In the previous section, I outlined the data and analysis produced by the functionalist and interpretive research methods. In the following, I discuss the implications of these results for my thesis. The discussion has two broad themes.

First, I provide an analysis of the implications of using paradigm-specific research methods for organisational research. This analysis has both general and specific dimensions. Interpretive and functionalist methods will be shown to generate differing understandings of generalised organisational processes. Moreover, the use of a bi-paradigmatic approach to study a single organisation, Food Co, enables me to show how these general differences go on to produce diverging understandings of the same organisation. These differences will be shown to reflect divisions in the culture literature that were identified in Chapter 1.

Second, I argue that the use of a bi-paradigmatic approach produces a fuller understanding of culture in Food Co. than would have been available via a single method study. Moreover, in relating this understanding back to the existing literature I will argue that the study surfaces important ramifications for the ways in which we conceptualise culture in organisations.
6.2 How the Functionalist Method Shapes the Views of Culture.

As I have demonstrated, the use of the OCAI methodology for the functionalist research exemplified the functionalist paradigm. The use of this instrument produces for us a graphic representation of culture which shapes the way in which we perceive the concept. The production of an image which is seen to characterise culture is the result of reducing culture to a predefined set of numeric indicators. This emphasis on measurability is in concert with the meta-theoretical assumptions which found the functionalist paradigm. Indeed, the functionalist affiliations of the OCAI are evident in the way in which the instrument not only provides the means for converting responses from a rigidly structured questionnaire into neatly bounded depictions of culture, but then goes on to provide a range of “average culture profiles for different industry groups” (Cameron and Quinn, 1999: 68) to enable comparison. The use of the instrument means that culture is normalised within the researched organisation and the use of the comparisons means that culture in the researched organisation is normalised within a wider industry context.

There are merits to this approach. The use of one static mode of assessment across different levels within the organisation allows for a comparison of results generically and across the specifics of each question. But of course the approach is not without problems. Cameron and Quinn (1999), in constructing the method, included reliability and validity measures. (see pages 138-145) These measures stand as a guarantee that the method produces an actual representation of the culture within the researched organisation. This I will challenge. I will consider here how the research instrument used in this thesis is seen to privilege a particular view of culture in Food Co. By privileging a particular view, the instrument necessarily places limits on our understanding. These limits begin with the use of a reductionist approach. We have seen previously how the process of reductionism starts by the use of definition. The language used in defining reduces the level of complexity associated with the concept and invites the imposition of a normative structure. (see section 1.1) Culture is modelled in line with the structure imputed by the use of language. It is this idea of converting culture into a taxonomy which invites a functionalist mode of investigation, one in concert with Schein’s (1990) structuring of the concept. Indeed, his functionalist affiliation is reinforced by his assertion that people must only measure what it is they seek to
There are two implications here. First, by defining the dimensions of measurement\textsuperscript{162} one reduces the researcher's ability to recognise difference. Second, this assertion assumes that culture can be understood in an uncomplicated way.

In considering the first implication, the OCAI epitomises an approach in which dimensions of measurement are defined. For an organisation, this means that the results of OCAI research present a view of culture which is shaped by the method. It creates a consistency of results. Culture at all levels is viewed through the same frame of reference. This focus on the same set of dimensions allows for a commentary on similarity and difference between and across groups. However, in order to create this basis for comparison, the OCAI has reduced the concept of culture to four discrete headings. What one sees here is not an all-encompassing functionalist view of reality but a partial and partisan view of reality grounded in a functionalist tradition. To compound the limits imposed by the framing of the concept, the method of research imposes a rigid structure. By using a structured questionnaire, respondents are presented with a script. For each question, they are given a particular set of words juxta-positioned against three other particular sets of words between which they decide a rank order. There is no room for manoeuvre, no point at which free text is captured to explain, clarify or contradict. To do so would undermine the functionalist necessity to create simplicity from complexity. Moreover, the production of the graphic profiles is achieved by calculating aggregated means. Difference and disparity are smoothed. Variation is reduced; variation in what people perceive as culture is reduced by the imposition of a reductive structure and variation of responses within that structure is reduced by aggregating the results. As a result, the view of the culture in the researched organisation is narrowed by the frame of reference and then narrowed further by the means of analysis. What we see, therefore, is the way in which functionalist research methods work to reduce the complexity of the research focus even before the research begins.

In considering the second implication of Schein's assertion, the idea that culture can be understood in an uncomplicated way, I note how functionalist methods see reductionism as 'unproblematic'. In my view, Schein's emphasis on measurement means that he needs to render the world measurable. Measurability requires a clear focus on the dimensions of measurement, and a certainty that the methods measure the correct

\textsuperscript{162} The same effect can be achieved by defining the concept itself.
things. As we saw in the literature review on organisational culture (see section 1.6), the idea that culture is a notional construct comes to the fore. In order to measure culture one needs to identify specific and measurable inclusions. Accordingly, the organisation is not allowed to define itself in the terms that it would choose; rather it is measured against authorially determined dimensions which have proved measurable. Moreover, functionalist research is grounded in the tradition of upholding the integrity of the functionalist paradigm. In order to do this, one would have to hold that the existing reality is externally verifiable in its entirety. This can only be so if one realises a number of assumptions. For reality to be shared by all people, then all people must perceive all things the same way. They must all make sense of the physical context in the same way. As such, where one perceives reality as being externally existing and verifiable (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) there is a question of recognition. Recognition implies the individual engagement of thought processes which pattern match current experiences to previous experiences. To uphold the shared reality (Ibid) premise of functionalist research, what we are expecting in vivo is that, within any context, a group of individuals with 'unique' life experiences will coalesce to recognise the same external reality. Difference outside the organisation becomes sameness within the organisation. It is this sameness which provides the collective consciousness from which an homogeneous existing reality is viewed and therefore experienced.

There are two ways of thinking about this. First, that homogeneity within an organisation exists. That it is the role of functionalist research to simply select the correct instrument to measure the sameness that is already there. Second, that homogeneity within an organisation does not exist. It is incumbent upon functionalist research to create that homogeneity by the ways in which research instruments characterise the research focus. Within the context of organisational culture this idea of reducing a concept of such complexity (see section 1.1) to a specific set of measurable dimensions has a marked affinity with the managerialist traditions (cf. Peters and Waterman, 1982: Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Kilmann et al, 1985). The process becomes self-reinforcing. Defining culture from a managerialist perspective incites a normative structure congruent with that definition. Research methods then focus on measuring those dimensions of culture nominated as measurable and the results produce a characterisation of culture which is in concert with the frame of reference determined by the definition.
6.2.1 How the Functionalist Method Shaped the Views of the Culture.

Within the context of this thesis, a functionalist research method was used to view part of the culture in Food Co. In this section, I will consider the manifestations of culture as shaped by the use of functionalist research method. The results of the functionalist research produced a series of profiles of culture. These profiles related to the 'actual' culture as perceived by those at the bottom of the organisational hierarchy (canteen) and those in the middle of the organisational hierarchy (restaurant), and the 'ideal' culture as perceived by the same respondent groups. It should be re-emphasised that when expressing their views on culture, both groups were confined to responding within the four typology framework presented by the OCAI.

The results of the functionalist method produced an unexpected degree of consistency across the respondent groups. One might have expected that, given the levels of hierarchy within the organisation, the results for people in middle management would have differed from the results of those at the bottom. However, the profiles of the 'actual culture' of both groups, demonstrated domination by the market. Across both groups the emphasis on the market was significant and far in excess of the other culture types. Whilst the reductionist approach discussed earlier imposes considerable restrictions to the results, the consistency with which the market culture rated most highly was marked. Food Co takes its strategic inspiration from the market. Accordingly, the internal rhetoric of Food Co produces a message imbued with a sense of the market. The functionalist method has picked up on this sense of the market which is then translated into the representation of culture. It is yet to be seen whether this reflects the culture of the organisation, or whether this is simply the way in which the organisation metes out the desired image of itself. Regardless, the precedence of the market across all profiles implies that people recognise attributes of Food Co from the descriptors in the questionnaire. They are aware that the dominant characteristic of the organisation is competition, how the leadership is results-oriented and how the style of management is hard driving (Cameron and Quinn, 1999). They acknowledge that the organisational glue is aggressiveness, that the strategic emphasis is on hitting targets and that the criterion of success is market leadership (Ibid). There is no clarity, however, as to whether these attributes are thought to be reflective the nature of culture within the organisation or whether the responses reflect Food Co's modes of management. The exclusion of free text from the functionalist research framework prohibited any further exploration here.
Consistency is also seen in the rating of the hierarchy as the second most dominant feature. To enable success in the market, Food Co use hierarchy as a means of control. Hierarchy is the mechanism by which disparities and differences between work groups are smoothed by locating people around one central organisation structure. This central structure provides a frame of reference which gives people a position within the organisation. Again the limits of the functionalist method are surfaced. For example, the research shows the domination of the market, followed by the imposition of a hierarchical structure to leverage control. Although these are statistically calculated results, the functionalist instrument used fails to consider whether, for the workgroups within Food Co, these issues are appropriate. The method does not enable the respondents to alter the profile of culture. Moreover, the range of responses does not include data on employee satisfaction with the organisational culture.

To make the transition to the ideal culture, what the profiles suggested was the simultaneous reduction in the domination by the market and increase in focus on the clan. The groups did not, however, reject all emphasis on the market. In most cases the ideal culture showed the focus on the market to be reduced but not abandoned. The groups recognise the need for Food Co to be successful in the market and to continue to drive forward against the competition. However, what they suggest is that the magnitude of the emphasis be reduced and more emphasis be put on a culture based on trust, human development and teamwork (Cameron and Quinn, 1999). According to both groups, Food Co needs to achieve a better balance between chasing market success and the effective management of the people within the company. The switch in emphasis implies some degree of disenchantment with the high level of emphasis on the market, and likewise disenchantment with the paucity of emphasis on elements of the clan.

The functionalist results did produce a clear account of the culture within the organisation. This allows one to draw a relatively coherent set of conclusions. Consistency is seen in the ways in which the work groups unanimously rejected the notion of an adhocracy culture. In the profiles produced for both the actual and the ideal cultures, the groups noted that within Food Co elements of adhocracy are neither

\[163\] Acknowledging the previously discussed difficulties in establishing whether or not what the respondents are rating is actually culture.
present nor needed. Innovation and spontaneity are not desirable traits for either of the
groups responding. Rather, in the view of the respondent groups, Food Co need to
achieve a culture in which there is a more equitable relationship between the emphasis
on the market and the emphasis on the clan. The hierarchy stays as a means of control
but this structural control is moderated by the increased focus on the human side of the
organisation.

Despite the nominalist stance adopted by the OCAI, the results of the questionnaires
showed a relative consistency in how people perceive the actual culture in Food Co.
That consistency was repeated in their consideration of how they would prefer that
culture to be. Yet, the limitations of empirical research within the functionalist
tradition need to be surfaced within the context of the culture of Food Co. First, in
presenting the questions, the questionnaire does not use the word 'culture'. People in
Food Co were presented with six sets of four statements and asked to rank each set of
statements by dividing 100 marks between them. Although the introductory text clearly
mentions culture, at no stage in the actual questions is culture mentioned. For many of
the questions it is difficult to see how the respondents could distinguish between aspects
of Food Co more readily associated with the culture and aspects of Food Co more
readily associated with strategic intent. Whilst the reliability and validity measures may show repeatability of results and an affinity with the core characteristics of the
organisation, what is in doubt here is whether or not those core characteristics pertain to
distinctive values and beliefs or to the behaviours of management.

Second, the ways in which difference is smoothed by aggregating the results means that
issues which would at a local level be recognised as outliers, are simply absorbed in the
grand calculations. In many instances respondents from Food Co rated specific
dimensions with a zero (cf C31: Q1b). Failure to incorporate any open narrative
structure in the questionnaire meant that it was not possible to seek the meanings behind
these responses. Likewise, some people rated the actual culture in Food Co as being
absolutely equitable (cf R30: Q2), i.e. they gave each statement 25 marks. For others,

164 Discussed previously
165 See Appendix 1
166 See section 3.2.4
167 Respondent No. 31 in the canteen in response to question 1
168 Respondent No. 30 in the restaurant in response to question 2
the ideal culture in Food Co was rated as equitable (cf R20: Q6)\textsuperscript{169}. The lack of open adjuncts meant that the rationale behind these ratings was lost.

This approach to viewing culture has privileged a particular characterisation. The use of the taxonomy pushes people towards the reproduction of the managerialist message. The resulting characterisation of culture panders to the intention of producing a quantifiable and verifiable view of culture. This is in concert with the meta-theoretical assumptions which underpin the functionalist paradigm (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) and with the characterisation of culture as being corporate (cf. Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Peters and Waterman, 1982; Kilmann et al, 1985; Kotter and Heskett, 1992). By questioning how these particular views have been achieved, I have surfaced a number of issues. Functionalist research needs first to ensure that the subject of the study is amenable to quantitative analysis. There is, by necessity, a process of conceptual reductionism. For the OCAI, complexity is removed by reducing the concept of culture to being a composite of four components. The focus on the concept so reduced is compounded by the ways in which the questionnaire is structured. Moreover, the ways in which the results are calculated guarantees the narrowness of the functionalist focus. The implication is that the culture within Food Co, an organisation of approximately 1,700 people, producing 5 million packets of crisps a day and servicing 65% of the UK geographic coverage is now reduced to four headings. Neatly bounded profiles characterise the culture within Food Co although it is difficult to distinguish whether the profiles characterise culture or the modus operandi of the organisation.

The use of a functionalist research method has privileged a particular view of the culture of Food Co. The limits of the method notwithstanding, some interesting conclusions can be drawn from the similarities across the results. These conclusions, however, are partial. They are conclusions shaped by the reduction of the concept of culture to four dimensions. The use of a single functionalist method here produces a narrow view of culture from which some useful observations can be made. The view, however, is shaped by the functionalist necessity to see culture as uncomplicated. The profiles produced reflect that lack of complexity. To comment more widely on the manifestations of culture it is necessary to view the concept through a different lens. In exploring the ways in which paradigm specific lenses favour specific manifestations of

\textsuperscript{169} Respondent No. 20 in the restaurant in response to question 6
culture I will now review the ways in which an interpretive lens implies a particular view.

6.3 How the Interpretive Method Shapes the Views of Culture.

In considering how the use of interpretive research methods shape the views of culture I will discuss each of the three interpretive methods used in this thesis. First, I will consider how the use of individual interview shapes research outcomes and will then focus on how, within this thesis, the method has shaped my view of the culture in Food Co. Next, I will discuss how the use of focus groups privileges a particular view of culture before focusing on the impact that this has had on the results for Food Co. Last, I will consider the use of non-linguistically based non-participant observation and the ways in which this invites a specific view of culture, elaborating on the ways in which my view of the culture in Food Co has been informed by this method.

6.4 How the Individual Interview Shapes the Views of Culture.

Compared to the functionalist method discussed previously, the use of the individual interview as an interpretive research method affords the researcher considerably more freedom to recognise the potentially emergent aspects of culture. Locating a research method within the interpretive paradigm meant that I was no longer tied to a particular characterisation of culture. Specifically, I was not tied to the use of a definition generated by the use of conceptual reductionism. Accordingly, my ability to shape a specific view of culture was significantly reduced. In the case of the individual interview, culture was perceived in its broadest sense; thus there was a broad palette from which to paint a picture of the culture in Food Co. However, the existence of such breadth required me to provide a focus in order to produce meaningful findings. What emerges is the idea that when trying to elicit the views of reality of the researched, I have at the same time to provide a structure and a sense of meaning to the interview. Additionally, in isolation and retrospectively, I then try to infer meaning from the structure of the narrative and from the use of language.

The objective of the individual interview was to determine how the most senior person in the researched organisation viewed the culture of that organisation. Accordingly, the interview was structured around the salient points. In compiling this structure, I have
privileged specific manifestations of culture. This process of shaping, although still intrusive, may be seen as being of less significance than the conceptual reductionism associated with the functionalist method. However, by structuring the interview, I influence the way the culture is characterised by imposing an authorially induced focus. Moreover, this idea of a reductionist stance is compounded by the use of predetermined modes of analysis. By the ways in which I have structured the questionnaire and the elements of discourse I have chosen to analyse, I would argue that I have provoked a specific set of research results. As directive mechanisms, the ways in which the structure of an interview and the modes of analysis can be seen as constitutive of a normative structure are apparent.

There are also procedural considerations as part of the interview process. Within the data gathering process, the way in which the interview progresses is determined not only by the structure of the interview but also by the nature of the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee. The motives of each, in terms of what they perceive as an acceptable research outcome, may be different. This highlights the possibility for the researcher to consciously or sub-consciously skew the narrative towards a desired set of results. Likewise, the reciprocal nature of communication implies that the researched is also in a position to impose structure on the process of interview and, ipso facto, shape the research results.

By using an individual interview as an interpretive research method, I argue that, rather than engaging in a process of the social construction of reality, as a researcher, one is excluded from the formation of that view of reality. When discussing the culture of an organisation, whilst remaining true to the ethos of the interpretive paradigm, one is, according to the paradigm, party to a mechanism through which “intersubjectively shared meanings” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 31) are used to contradict or reinforce the individual’s view of reality. To engage in discussions premised on “intersubjectively shared meanings” (Ibid) implies the acculturation of both parties. How else would both have an understanding of the empirical context necessary to invoke or revoke meaning? What emerges here is an acknowledgement that the researcher is limited in what they can contribute to the process of constructing a cultural reality. Failure to be a part of the organisation and failure to be schooled in the ways of the organisation militate against any constructive involvement. Social construction in this context is the social construction of the reality that is the interview. Here the reality constructed becomes the
means through which the interviewee uses language to deliver an account of culture to
the interviewer. Whilst I can use language to clarify my understanding of the account
being given, I cannot contribute to that account. His view of culture is shaped by the
nature of his relationship with the organisation, with a priori engagement in processes of
social construction and by the ways in which the shared meanings (Ibid) of the
acculturated group contribute to establishing a particular characterisation of the culture.

The issue raises a fundamental question about the ways in which interpretive research
shapes the view of culture. At what stage in the research process do researchers
recognise that they are not a party to the social construction of reality, rather they are
the audience who will extract meaning from a performance? Moreover, the ways in
which interpretive research shapes a particular view of culture is contingent on the
political dynamic. Within an individual interview, where control of the discourse is at
the behest of the interviewer, then the view of culture is likely to be in concert with the
research objectives. Where control of the interview is at the behest of the interviewee,
then they shape the view of culture. Locating an individual interview within the
interpretive paradigm shapes the view of culture in a number of ways. The structuring
of the interview and the modes of analysis provide a narrowed and a narrowing lens.
Process implications rest control with either the interviewee or the interviewer, the
account of culture produced reflects the power relationship between the two. Moreover,
the idea that the interviewer is isolated from the process of social construction implies
that they can contribute only to the social construction of the interview and not to the
social construction of the cultural reality. These issues became apparent within the
individual interview research undertaken in Food Co.

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6.4.1 How the Individual Interview Shaped the Views of Culture.

The use of the individual interview within the interpretive methodology presented a view of the culture in Food Co. shaped by the interviewee. The interviewee was the most senior person within this organisation. The image of culture he presented was one of power, aggression and ruthlessness\(^\text{170}\). According to his responses, the company fights in a highly competitive market and uses a robust internal structure to ensure that the corporate objectives are met. The cultural emphasis is on the measurable attributes seen to have a greater affinity with the functionalist paradigm. The company is focused on metrics, market share measures and on “make{ing} things cheaper” (R9: 5). The culture is “founded on real results”\(^\text{171}\) (R5: 3).

Having acknowledged previously that the structuring of the questionnaires implies a shaping of the research results, the nature of the power dynamic within the individual interview allowed that structure to be breached. The respondent’s ability to control the interview meant that he directed the account of culture which emerged. Here the interviewee had the means and the will to shape a particular view of culture, one in concert with the image of the organisation he wished to portray.

The use of the individual interview as part of the interpretive method here has raised a number of key issues. The ways in which researchers invite a particular view of culture are manifest in the structuring of the interview and in the modes of analysis selected. The structure narrows the lens and analysis narrows the view of organisation as seen through that lens. Despite this, where one is interviewing a person in a position of seniority, the power dynamic of the relationship between interviewer and interviewee may militate against researcher control. Within the frame of the interpretive paradigm, the use of an open rather than restrictive language set facilitates this. Moreover, to participate in the social construction of reality implies that the researcher has access to the intersubjectively shared meanings used to test subjective views of the world (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). It implies acculturation. Where acculturation of the researcher is not possible then we can see how the process of social construction is one from which an interview is produced rather than one from which a view of the social world is produced. The interview can moderate and mediate an account of reality as delivered by

\(^{170}\) “The culture is about results” (R19: 10).

\(^{171}\) Emphasis added.
the respondent, but failure to be able to speak in the language of the organisation prohibits any contribution to the construction of that reality. The image I have of the culture in Food Co is not an image that I am involved in constructing.

The individual interview was controlled by a power dynamic in which the interviewee, the most senior person in this organisation was able to direct an account of culture. His ability to control the process was a privilege of position. In considering how his account of culture matches others within the organisation, I will now discuss the Focus Group research. In this I will first consider the ways in which Focus Groups as an interpretive method shape the views of organisation, before going on to look at the specific example of the culture in Food Co.

6.5 How Focus Groups Shape the Views of Culture.

In considering how the use of focus groups as an interpretive method shapes a particular view of culture, a number of issues are surfaced. The structuring of focus group research using specific types of question, in a particular order, produces a particular set of results. The ways in which I use language to frame questions invokes a set of responses appropriate to that use of language. Moreover, the ways in which I sequence questions sets a particular direction and implies a relationship between consecutive themes. As a researcher, I impose both linguistic and procedural control. The constraints introduced by the use of language in structuring the questions, and in the sequencing of these, is compounded by the means and modes of analysis I choose to use. The emergent views of culture are shaped by the linguistic frames of reference which I have imposed.

Procedurally, I control the discourse. I pose the questions which frame responses. Although, in practical terms, the presence of a number of people complicates the issue of control,172 control still rests with the researcher173. The use of phrasing and eye contact can invoke a particular response from a particular person. It is for the researcher to decide whether the responses to a particular question are sufficient and to move on, or whether to continue to explore a theme. Within the context of focus groups, the

172 I have previously noted Morgan's (1998) recognition that whilst it is your focus it is actually their group.
173 See Kitzinger and Barbour (1999) referred to earlier regarding the political dynamics within focus groups.
researcher controls the series of communications through which shared meanings are used to revoke or reinforce an individual’s view of reality.

It is this idea of the collective construction of a fundamentally subjective view of reality which surfaces some of the methodological complexities associated with trying to use focus groups within the tradition of the interpretive paradigm. The ways in which views of reality are shaped by the use of focus groups within the interpretive tradition is complicated by the assumptions contained within the interpretive paradigm (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). Whereas, from a functionalist perspective, the reality to be observed is readily recognisable as an externally existing and verifiable entity, from an interpretive perspective one is trying to comment on the nature of a socially constructed reality.

The focus group provides the opportunity for individuals to use language as a means of validating their own views of reality by testing these across the social network. By testing their views against a set of shared meanings, the reality which emerges provides “status quo, social order, consensus, social integration and cohesion” (Ibid: 31) as a means of stability. This process of social construction is the means by which a shared view of reality is achieved by the collective. For me as a researcher, this is problematic for a number of reasons. The social construction of reality is a process from which I am excluded. As a researcher, I do not have access to the “intersubjectively shared meanings” (Ibid) from which people make sense of their own perceptions. Rather, I can engage with the narrative through which the focus group interview is conducted, but cannot contribute to the reality being constructed by this group. Unlike the individual interview, however, the researcher is not simply in receipt of an account of reality. Instead, they are witness to the process of social construction. Here I was able to observe the ways in which the focus groups used language to make sense of the world in which they as individuals are located. There are ramifications. There is a need to determine when the process of social construction produces a definitive output that is a subjectively recognised reality. One needs to consider at what point does reality become real, as distinct from being a reality in-train? Moreover, how do both the focus group members and the researcher recognise that reality?

Likewise, there are implications here for how researchers direct focus groups towards a particular view of reality. When using focus groups as a means of investigation, the process of construction continues until the researcher invites a new focus. Yet there is
no way for the researcher to recognise whether the notional concept of reality has been achieved. As researcher one is marginalised to a position of observing the process of construction. The inability to contribute because of a failure to understand intersubjectively shared meanings likewise frustrates the recognition of a socially constructed view of reality. In considering how this shapes the view of culture within an organisation, the difficulty is in determining if this is culture as has been shaped or culture as is being shaped. It is by trying to identify a point in time at which reality becomes real that one provokes the wider question of the time value of reality; a question pertinent to research within the interpretive tradition. Where one is seeking a view of reality constructed through social processes, at what point in those processes does reality become real and at what point does an existing reality concede to the onslaught of a new reality?

I would argue that it is the role of the researcher to make that judgement. Having structured the process prior to engagement, controlled the process of social construction through direction, it is now within the gift of the researcher to infer meaning from the processes observed. The term 'observed' is used here to reflect the understanding that, without being acculturated, one is unlikely to have access to the intersubjectively shared meanings needed in order to participate in the construction process. Instead, as researchers we impose our subjective opinion on what we have experienced, shaping the way in which we see culture.

Focus groups used within the frame of the interpretive paradigm are seen to shape views of culture sequentially. First, the structuring and the ordering of the questions invites a particular narrative from which the researcher tries to extract an understanding of the researched. Next, the conduct of the focus groups raises the issues of the researcher being distinct from the process of social construction and the fundamental question of when social construction delivers a definitive reality. As a researcher, perhaps one seeks to comment on what one sees rather than trying to recognise this as reality. Last, this process of analysis brings control of the interpretation back into the lexicon of the researcher.

The ultimate view of culture is framed by the language used in constructing that image. The ways in which culture is shaped by the use of focus groups as an interpretive research method are characteristic of the ways in which interpretive methods promote a
particular characterisation of reality. Indicative of this is the way in which the use of Focus Groups privileged the view of the culture in Food Co.

6.5.1 How Focus Groups Shaped the Views of Culture.

As with the individual interview, the focus group research indicated that the culture in Food Co was dominated by the emphasis on the market\(^{174}\). However, the use of focus groups as an interpretive method has allowed access not simply to the views of culture, but also access to how those views of culture were reached. By observing the ways in which language was used to reinforce individual and collective perceptions of the culture in Food Co, I begin to question not simply the view of reality as presented but also the rationale for that view. To illustrate: the ways in which the company was promoted as being “leading edge” (FG1: R6), as “going for world class” (FG1: R123) and as being “very successful” (FG2: R28) built a context within which it was acceptable to tolerate the demands of the company, “all under pressure to meet targets....I got to make my numbers” (FG3: R82). Here the transactional relationship that the company has with the external environment was reflected in the transactional nature of the relationship that the work group has with the company.

The structure and the sequencing of the questions used invited the focus groups to present a particular view of reality. However, the ways in which their views were contextualised alongside the corporate rhetoric implied that the group needed to adopt a specific view of reality. What was not apparent, however, was whether the group constructed an emergent and spontaneous view of reality, consistent with their actual relationship with the company; or whether the group constructed an intentional reality in which the excesses of the corporate were balanced with the need to retain ego strength.

Observing\(^{175}\) the process of construction presented me with two things. It has given me an image of the culture in Food Co as presented by the focus group members. This view is consistent with the views presented in the individual interview. Moreover, observing the processes involved has allowed me see how people within Food Co made sense of

\(^{174}\) The company is “very, very ruthless” (FG3: R10), “a very aggressive business” (FG2: 28) who aim “at the end of the day to be the best” (FG1: R137).

\(^{175}\) I am still cognisant here of my ability to prompt construction but not to engage. Failure to understand the shared meanings accessible to those who are acculturated prohibits anything more than a superficial engagement in the process.
their location within that organisation. The transactional nature of the relationship was seen as reciprocal. The corporate need the people and the people need the corporate. At a basic level, Food Co needs the work to be done and the people need to be paid for doing this. By observing the dynamics of the focus groups, the process of social construction appeared to be a means by which the materialistic excesses of each group were translated into a more tolerable and values oriented premise for the relationship.

The use of individual interview and focus group techniques as interpretive methods have presented views of the culture at Food Co as framed by method. Both, however, have depended on the use of language. In an attempt to move away from the domination of language based methods in research, the third of the interpretive methods involved the use of non-linguistically based non-participant observation.

6.6 How Non-linguistically based Non-participant Observation Shapes the Views of Culture.

The use of non-linguistically based non-participant observation was an attempt to move away from the research bias on language as a means of inferring the cultural reality in which the people in Food Co were located. Despite the affinity this research method has with the interpretive paradigm, there are a number of ways in which it shapes the views of culture seen. The use of non-linguistically based non-participant observation does not provoke a specific set of reactions in the way that linguistically based methods do. The behaviours demonstrated were not contingent on my behaviours in the same way that one can correlate linguistic responses to the verbal prompts given. In this method I was not providing a script for the actors to follow; rather I was observing them in their natural habitat. Likewise, the lack of a script prohibited the authorial shaping of the concept by sequencing. Procedurally, I had no control over the behaviours demonstrated and the ways in which these evoked the behaviours which followed; these were at the behest of the observed group.

Despite there being no language-based script, I still contributed to the shaping of the research results. I had, a priori, determined which aspects of non-verbal behaviour I would observe. As such I was attuned to the use of eye contact and gestures; I was aware of proximity and of movement, in the same way that one would have sought to recognise key words in a linguistically-based method. The motives here were to use
these non-verbal behaviours as prompts from which I (as researcher) could infer the relationship between behaviour and cognition. Behaviours, as observed, differed from the linguistically-based methods as they were not indicative of the social reality. Rather, they were behaviours which were the result of an ascription to a particular view of reality. It was my role, to infer cognitive ascriptions to a particular view of the world from the ways in which that view invoked a behavioural response. A difficulty arose for me in trying to distinguish between transference, attribution and actuality. For me, the nature of the physical context in the canteen created an ambience of oppression, which in turn evoked an emotive response. In shaping my view of the culture in Food Co, my own reaction to the physical context could have produced a particular view, one which I would then seek to validate by selective observation. Likewise, my view of a physical context which I felt to be indicative of the commoditisation of the workforce may have inspired me to attribute my emotional responses to the workgroup. The culture I perceived then was shaped by my own prejudices which materialised through selective observations and which result in a view of culture founded on how I felt people should view that reality.

Although the detachment from the researched group reduced my ability to shape the results during the observations, the recording of field notes in line with the previously determined criteria reinforced the process of shaping. To compound this effect, the point of analysis consolidated that shaping. Despite the free-form method of analysis used, I did, out of necessity, focus in on those aspects of the field notes which I felt had an affinity with the nature of the research. There was the potential within the analysis process for those facets of observation not in concert with or opposing\textsuperscript{176} the proposed views of culture to be lost in translation. Moreover, the analysis process itself was the point at which a unique mode of data gathering had to make sense alongside the more standardised approaches. The potential here was for the field notes gathered from a breadth of focus to be surreptitiously coalesced with the results of the more structured interpretive analyses. To do so may have allowed for the construction of a more cohesive narrative.

The use of non-linguistically based observation within the interpretive tradition afforded a breadth of consideration not seen by those methods founded on language. The focus

\textsuperscript{176} Premised on the understanding that research needs to say something, whether this be what the researcher had intended to say or in contradiction of that.
on non-verbal behaviours challenged me to make sense of the behaviours of the research group without seeking solace in linguistic certainty. Despite this, in future applications, the opportunities for the research to be shaped by the method are manifold. Lacking a normative structure to begin with may be compensated for by recognising those aspects of behaviour on which the researcher needs to focus. Although procedurally the researcher may be less able to direct the behaviours, the values and emotive responses of the research can be seen to privilege a particular view. Moreover, the mode of analysis is seen to bring the breadth of a focus on behaviours into line with parallel research methods more overtly premised on normative structures. In elaborating on the ways in which non-linguistically based non-participant observation can be seen to shape the views of culture, I will now consider how this method shaped the views of the culture in Food Co.

6.6.1 How Non-linguistically based Non-participant Observation Shaped the Views of Culture.

In the results of the non-linguistically based non-participant observation, I have described the culture of Food Co as being fragmented and divided within the context of the canteen, and as being clan like in the restaurant. Within the canteen, my perception of the culture in Food Co was framed by the impoverished physical conditions and the en masse apathy of the work group. The failure of the method to provide definitive cultural attributes on which to focus has allowed an emotive response which I have then sought to rationalise by describing the situations observed. My views of the culture in Food Co are premised on the relationships which I have inferred between the emotional and cognitive templates likely to underpin the demonstrated behaviours, and the ways in which the values imputed by the organisation can be seen to provoke those templates. The shaping of the culture is a direct result of my own sense-making processes. As such, where I perceive gender and ethnic fragmentation and no evidence of cross cultural communication, I have inferred that any sense of the clan exudes not from the corporate but from the local level groups in whom one seeks solace. Where I have noted the consistently condescending ways in which the canteen staff speak to the shop floor workers, I have assumed informal hierarchical division. And where I have observed people eating and drinking in a dark, dirty and greasy environment I have inferred that they lack value to the organisation. In contrast, within the canteen, the value of the work group was reflected in the brightness and cleanliness of the environment. There was little segregation and people communicated across groups. The notion of a clan culture
was reflected in the willingness and the ability of all people to speak across hierarchical, gender and ethnic differences.

My view of the culture in Food Co was framed by my own experiences and by the ways in which I made sense of the things that I saw. In many ways, this is the ultimate in allowing a native view to drive the empirical research; however, this method also allowed for me to privilege the views of culture that I wanted to see.

6.7 Conclusions

In the preceding discussions, I have surfaced the ways in which paradigm-specific research methods shape the views of organisation. By using my own research in Food Co, I have provided examples of how this shaping process has influenced my views of the culture within Food Co.

The use of the functionalist method provided useful comparable data regarding the ways in which the culture in Food Co is perceived by those within the company. However, the ways in which the use of a functionalist lens shapes that view are manifold. Prior to undertaking the research, conceptual reductionism reduces the concept of culture to four discrete headings. The use of language and research structure ties people into responses limited to this framework. Analysis smoothes any variability still further. Heterogeneity outside the organisation is transformed to homogeneity inside the organisation as the shared sense of reality is read from externally verifiable facticities. And the paradox of using a value-based assessment (the OCAI) to measure culture within a value neutral paradigm is tolerated.

From an interpretive perspective, the ways in which culture is shaped are less overt but of equal importance. The use of language and the ways in which questions are sequenced provokes a series of responses and a series of connections. The marginalisation of the researcher is a direct result of not being a party to the “intersubjectively shared meanings” (Burrell and Morgan, 1979: 31) against which views of reality are consolidated. And the means and methods of analysis promote particular dimensions whilst demoting others. However, what appears to be a fundamental issue in considering how an interpretive lens shapes the views of
organisation, is the difficulty in establishing when, what one is observing is a socially constructed reality as opposed to a reality being socially constructed.

What emerges from my research is an understanding that the use of a single paradigm lens privileges a specific view of the researched. Whilst that view allows for comment, the comments are necessarily reductionist.

Having considered the ways in which the use of paradigm specific lenses shapes a view of culture, I will now consider how the use of a bi-paradigmatic approach has allowed me to draw specific conclusions about the nature of the culture within Food Co.

6.8 Challenging the Traditional views of Culture

6.8.1 Introduction

The empirical research undertaken as part of this thesis has allowed me to consider two distinctive issues. First, the ways in which the use of paradigm-specific lenses privileges a particular view of culture. Here, I was able to show how the use of the functionalist and interpretive research methods gave rise to specific characterisations of culture. Second, by adopting a bi-paradigmatic research approach, I have been able to draw on the manifestations of culture in Food Co to consider the ways in which the results of my empirical research have a broader relevance to the ways in which we conceptualise culture. In this section, I will start by identifying the difficulties with the traditional views of culture as surfaced by my empirical work. I will then discuss my approach to the re-conceptualisation of culture and compare this approach to the traditional views of the concept. I will conclude by discussing how my re-conceptualisation of culture frames the relationship between work groups and the organisation.

6.8.2 Problematising Culture

This research indicates that the role of the culture in Food Co is that of creating and maintaining control. Culture is the means by which the company is able to control the workgroup towards achieving success in the market. Workgroups are aware that they are driven by the demands of the market; the language of aggressive competition is built into the managerial rhetoric. The relationship between the company and the workgroup
is transactional. The workgroup provides a means of production and the organisation rewards them. Control is infused into the fabric of the organisation. We have seen previously how hierarchy controls relationships, how numeric targets control behaviour and how the organisation promotes an image of itself as the battling underdog. We have also seen how all the workgroups studied in this research have identified the need for the company to adopt a more person-centric focus. What is obvious to the workgroups is that the company requires the work that they do, but not necessarily them as individuals.

What I infer from this consensual manipulation of the workgroup is that, rather than there being a picture of culture as a shared set of beliefs, what emerges is a discrepancy between two value sets. The values imputed to the workgroup by the company are the values of the market. People are of little more than productive worth. However, the transactional nature of the relationship anchors the workgroup to the organisation; the group are unable to exit to find a place where they are of greater personal value. It is now incumbent on the work group to reconcile the differences between the values imputed to them by the company and their own need for self-esteem and ego strength. It is from this position I argue that the traditional models of culture are untenable.

As we have seen previously, traditional conceptualisations of culture use definition to frame the normative structure then deemed to be culture. (see section 1.1-1.2) Managerialist models (cf. Schein, 1984; Handy, 1985: Quinn and McGrath, 1985) nominate elements which collectively constitute culture. Even in Czarniawska’s (1998) more paradigmatically-oriented consideration, both ostensive (functionalist) and performative (interpretive) manifestations produce a definitive output that is culture. Both functionalist and interpretive perspectives are problematic.

Accepting the functionalist assertion that there is a recognisable and nominable output that is culture is contestable, especially, when one is cognisant of the disparities between the assumed nature of the constituent parts and the need for these to be verifiable. Moreover, the notion of sharedness is complicated further when one acknowledges the different frames of reference of those constructing the views of culture. Culture as a shared and externally verifiable reality is either the result of an

177 Such as shared values, beliefs and assumptions, artefacts, myth and symbol.
improbable degree of inter-organisational homogeneity or the result of a perception of homogeneity created by conceptual reductionism (see section 6.1).

As discussed previously, from an interpretive perspective, one has to consider whether culture is a product or a by-product of social construction. Where culture is seen as the product of social construction, then the process of construction is imbued with a sense of intentionality; the purpose of the construction is to create a characterisation of the culture. Paradoxically, this intentionality is underpinned by a positivist ambience in which culture is a recognisable commodity\(178\) that can be manufactured at will. In contrast, where one considers culture to be a by-product of social construction, the primary motives of the construction process take precedence. The focus, the tenor and the ambience of the construction process will determine the nature of any emergent manifestation of culture. Culture here is a philosophically labile set of secondary ascriptions, an incidental by-product. This complexity is compounded when one considers how those involved in the processes of social construction distinguish between a culture \textit{in vivo} and a culture in train? If culture is a definitive output, then how this is recognised and, indeed, is this recognition shared across the acculturated group? From an interpretive perspective, the founding assumption is that the process of social construction produces a deliverable that is culture; be that construction purposive or accidental. Social construction continues until a consensual view of culture is reached.

When holding on to the traditional characterisations of culture (cf Schein, 1984; Handy, 1985; Kotter and Heskett, 1992) we are faced with a dilemma. Does the culture formed remain as a static and stable set of affiliations across the range of cultural components, across the groups acculturated and across time? In replying to this, we surface the dualisms associated with the concept. From a corporate culture perspective (cf. Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Peters and Waterman, 1982; Kilmann et al, 1985), I question whether it is the role of someone within the organisation to purposefully reconfigure ‘culture’ as and when it is deemed useful to present people with a new set of values and beliefs. Here, the traditional perspectives align the Kuhnian notion of scientific revolution. Disquiet, be that insipidly accumulated or by revolution, determines the need for a new culture which it is beholden on management to produce. From an organisational culture

\(178\) There needs to be a point of collective recognition to trigger the conclusion to the processes of construction.
perspective (cf. Linstead and Grafton Small, 1992; Parker, 2000) I question how the contemporary relevance of the construct is judged by the acculturated. Is it for them to decide whether to retain the extant culture by halting the process of social construction (intentional or spontaneous) or whether to reconfigure the culture further? Not only do these perspectives offer uncomplicated views of the concept of culture, but they then incite research methods in concert with this simplicity. As such, researchers use traditional means to assess the traditional views of the concept. Moreover, the idea that culture is simply produced by one or other group fails to account for the political and psycho-social aspects within an organisation. In traditional views of culture, there is no point at which the process of mediation or moderation takes place in order to reconcile the demands of the work groups with the demands of the organisation and vice versa.

To illustrate, Xenikou and Furnham (1996) assert that culture comprises organisational priorities and preferences, alongside the ways in which people are expected to behave. Implicit within this is an absolutism. The power of the organisation is all and is premised on the idea that people will comply without any reference to their own notion of self worth. Yet within the context of Food Co there would appear to be a different interpretation. Whilst the organisational environment sets the frames of reference within which people reconcile their relationship with the organisation, their complicity in that reconciliation is important. People are not impotent, and there is not a carte blanche acceptance of all things corporate179; rather there is an instrumentality in the ways in which the organisation is perceived and interpreted. In essence, within any reality, socially constructed or as an externally verifiable environ, there needs to be at best a congruity premised on a mutuality of benefit or at least a means by which an image of congruity can be constructed180. The notions of ego strength and self worth are of key importance here.

However, the existing theories of culture circumvent these notions of self worth and ego strength; rather they locate culture on one or other side of the dualist debates181. So, where culture is managerialist or academic, we debate the futility of manipulation at the behest of the organisation. Where culture is homogenous or heterogeneous, we replace consistency themes with those of difference and disparity and where culture is perceived as a variable or a metaphor, we focus on the ability of management to leverage all

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179 Albeit this assertion is highly context specific.
180 The idea of presenting ways of imagining organisation will be discussed later in this chapter.
181 See sections 1.3 and 1.4
things corporate. Even Martin’s (1992, 2002) notion of differentiation, integration and fragmentation can be seen as proposing a dualist perspective with an opt out clause\(^\text{182}\).

This notion of dualities is problematic (Beech and Cairns, 2002). Such definitive locations at each end of a continuum ensnares people in a conceptual tunnel down which they wander in search of an entity to call culture. In essence, the transfer of the concept of culture from its anthropological ancestry to the realms of organisation has created a name in search of a being. Defining what culture is has evolved into a process akin to people trying to describe the colours of the Emperor’s new clothes. Subsequently, authors take the notions of corporate culture and organisational culture as dependent variables. Using narrative they add them together and divide by two in a vain attempt to create some philosophical mean. People are driven to evidence the concept. Thus, gifted with the name, people determine a set of means and modes to give some definitive or pseudo-definitive perspective on something that may or may not be there. Indeed, the idea of then recognising culture by the presence of the attributes which people have imputed to the concept seems, at best, a self-fulfilling prophecy and, at worst, disingenuous.

6.8.3 Re-conceptualising Culture

The results of my research in Food Co and the recognition of cross group similarities and disparities has prompted a wider thinking around the whole notion of the concept of culture. If culture has such disparate manifestations, is dependent on some degree of fusion between the unique relationships between individuals, collectives and the organisation, is manipulated through discourse and is specific to the context of derivation, then why do we even try to think of culture as being a construct? The notion of a construct implies a static normative structure. I suggest that rather than a discrete neatly-bounded commodity, culture is a series of engagements premised not on the achievement of corporate homogeneity, but rather on retaining the integrity of those engaged. The definition of integrity used here: “quality of being unharmed” (Collins Paperback Dictionary, 2003: 418).

\(^{182}\) The notion of fragmentation simply purports a middle ground between what are essentially definitive terms. In any literal sense differentiation cannot be partial, even if couched in a different term.
From the results of my research, I argue that culture is not a set of definable attributes but a series of cognitive, emotive and affective behaviours through which people reconcile their own self worth with the demands of the organisation. Culture, thus framed, moves substantially away from the traditional perspectives discussed earlier. Culture is neither corporate nor organisational, it is neither homogeneous nor heterogeneous, and it is neither a variable nor a metaphor. Culture is a rubric. It is a set of rules but not the set of rules imbued with an instrumentality in mediating the relationship between the company and the workgroup, rather it requires a degree of complicity between the two. Culture is no longer simply at the behest of either party, but requires a degree of complicity from those within. This conceptualisation of culture as a template for locating the ‘self” within the corporate is cognisant of Parker’s (2000) suggestion that there are difficulties in perceiving any aspect of culture as predominant. Rather than characterising culture as a taxonomy, I suggest a characterisation of culture as a frame of reference though which disparate sets of values and beliefs can be reconciled against the messages of value exuded by the company.

In drawing this conclusion I highlight the opportunity for the academic community to move away from thinking about culture in ‘construct’ terms. As we have seen, thinking about culture in construct terms defines and then consolidates a particular image of organisation, one which culture is characterised as shared sets of values and beliefs. The only debate is how these are derived. Within the context of Food Co this was not the case. Rather than a shared set or shared sets of values, what emerged was a cleave between what those acculturated perceived as the values of the company, and the values that they needed to perceive in order to salvage any sense of the self. Culture is seen as the frame of reference through which people reconcile their relationship with the organisation. Culture is thus repositioned as a rubric. It is the set of rules used to create an image of cohesion and homogeneity, even if that image could be perceived as illusory. Here, there is no one image of organisation, rather a series of different ways of creating one that is least disadvantageous.

Using Food Co to illustrate. People must accede to the demands of the company, whilst maintaining a positive sense of the self. People manipulate reality into an intentional reality within which they can locate themselves. What results is not a traditional view of culture, it is not a set of shared values and beliefs. Instead, it is the way in which values and beliefs are positioned to create a basic integrity. In achieving this integrity, the
rubric cannot be flouted. The company imputes values to the workgroups by act or omission. Fracture and divide imply that the corporate objective here is not a unitary happy family motif, rather the objective is economic gain.

People are of different levels of value to this company, thus different frames of reference make it more or less easy to retain a sense of self worth. For the people at the bottom of this organisation, integrity is numbness rather than an image. It becomes a way of not imaging organisation, as to do so would present an image of the self as nothing more than a means of production. The difference between this and what would traditionally be termed culture is apparent. The outcome of using the rubric is a sense of personal value which exudes from those within. This is firmly located within the frames of reference presented by the organisation. As such, the emergent sense of self worth is constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed in line with the changing messages received through corporate act or omission. Indeed, it is this idea of the political skewing of the ways in which people view reality which proffers an overt connection between this aspect of the research and the Burrell and Morgan taxonomy (1979).

In applying the concept of paradigms to Food Co we have seen how these form the worldview through which individual and collective relationships with the company take shape. The verifiable components of functionalism imply value. The values inferred are moderated and mediated through social construction and the reconciliation (or non-reconciliation) of these invokes the application of the radical structuralist or radical humanist frames of reference. It is with particular reference to the radical humanist paradigm that the notion of culture as a rubric becomes most potent. Individuals and work groups have a view of the self. This view of the self purports a degree of self worth which is sufficient to retain ego strength. The company, likewise has a view of the individual and the work groups. The values imputed are seen to reflect the degree of dispensability.

Culture re-conceptualised as a rubric is the mode through which reconciliation between the individual, the collective and the company is attempted\textsuperscript{183}. The rubric is uniformly applied, to flout the rubric would imply personal degradation. However, the extent to which people need to skew the reality that they perceive is variable. The hierarchy of

\textsuperscript{183} It is worth considering that for some groups within the organisation such reconciliation may not be possible.
imputed value determines the nature and the magnitude of the distortion required to achieve the intentional reality. As such, those who are of value to the corporate engage in a process in which the imputed levels of value are moderated and mediated with only a little collective deception. They see their relationship with the company as being precisely that which they need to see, one of mutual respect. Those with little or no value are politically impotent; as such any attempt to distort the reality into an intentional reality is futile. Their relationship with the company is outside their control.

Emerging from the process for each group is a view of reality in concert with their ability or inability to reconcile their own sense of self worth. Reality becomes a rationale for domination; a view of the world which so frames the sense of self as to create the confines of ones own existence. The process is contemporaneously pejorative and protective.

In this thesis, I have re-conceptualised culture as a rubric. Organisational culture is an emergent philosophical template which determines how individuals and collectives locate themselves within the organisation. Culture is not a unitary set of values and beliefs, it is not solely at the behest of any one party, neither is culture something that can be recognised. Rather, culture is an implicit set of rules within which those acculturated make their own adjustments to the reality in which they need to belong. This re-conceptualisation of culture as a rubric moves thinking about culture substantially away from the traditional normative models seen in the literature, away from models in which culture is portrayed as a definitive output. Culture as a rubric is sympathetic to the hierarchical fracture which was found to be endemic in Food Co. I will now consider the relevance of conceiving culture as a rubric at the three levels of hierarchy considered in the empirical research.

Manifestations at the bottom of the hierarchy in Food Co

The workgroup in the canteen exuded an air of determinism. The impoverished physical environment in which they were located implied that they are of mechanistic rather than human value to the organisation. The political slant of culture as a rubric is irrevocably skewed in favour of the company. Constraint is complete. This workgroup needs the company more than the company needs them. There is no point in revolution as this equates to expulsion. The collective mindset is one in which the group have no doubts that they are peripheral. The only sense of belonging comes from the formation of
ethnic and gender-specific groups. Yet one needs to remember the transactional nature of the relationship they have with the company. This workgroup is given remuneration and job security in exchange for this commoditisation. It could be argued that there is an intentionality here. People within this workgroup refuse to challenge why they are of so little value to the organisation. To do so would reinforce their lack of self worth and reinforce the futility of doing anything other than conceding to the demands of the company. Rather than a placid determinism, what is in evidence is an instrumental determinism. Paradoxically, this implies that determinism was a choice.

Instrumental determinism implies that the rubric of culture cannot be adhered to. The collective is unable to offer any mode of reconciliation between what they do experience and what they need to experience. The balance of power has shifted so far towards the corporate that redress is not possible. Rather, the collective assumes the mantle of the oppressed, mechanistic in mind and in manner. Reality is what happens because they cannot construct anything else. However, within Food Co, the levels of oppression are perceived differently by the canteen staff. By perceiving their customers as the lowest of the low, the canteen staff salvage some sense of superiority. The relationship between the canteen staff and the worker is fundamentally that of agent: principal. As agent the canteen staff incur the risk of being seen as equal to those they serve (literally). Accordingly, they behave as though they are of greater standing. The use of language, of behaviours and of action and inaction, all allow the canteen staff to perceive themselves as superior. For this group their own sense of self worth is promoted by the collective demoting of the sense of self worth of those who use the canteen. Culture as a rubric requires the group to reconcile their own sense of self with the values imputed by the company; the rightness or wrongness of this collective victimisation is unproblematic.

Manifestations in the middle of the hierarchy in Food Co

Within the middle of the hierarchy the premise is different. The corporate rhetoric reinforces the idea of individual and collective worth. Accordingly, the relationship between the company and the workgroup appears to be more symbiotic. The rubric is less skewed in favour of the organisation, giving those inside the company more freedom to manipulate their own perceptions.
The company uses physical evidence to demonstrate that this group is valued. The behaviours of the workgroups observed reflect an acknowledgement of this. It is, however, only when one aligns the results of the non-participant observation with the discourse analysis from the focus groups that a discrepancy begins to emerge. The vitality of the exchanges within the restaurant is somewhat at odds with the all-controlling nature of the corporate as inferred from the discourse. Indeed, reverting back to a previous assertion, the primacy given to the market drivers is seen to have a systemic influence on all manifestations of what would traditionally be described as culture. Accordingly, the drivers for efficiency and a fatalistic attitude to control necessitates a collective subordination, an obedience to the company. Yet this group has a value. Unlike those at the bottom of the organisation, they are not immediately replaceable. As such they need to be treated differently. This different treatment is characterised by an external environment which implies a sense of being valued. The company has invested in their environment. This allows people to construct a sense of self-worth in keeping with what they need to see.

The nature of the staff groups in the middle of this organisation exemplifies the ways in which culture as a rubric helps to reconcile the collective need to be valued. The company commoditises, it uses people to meet the demands of the market and is unashamed in doing so. The company competes in a capitalist market where the profit motive drives, yet within this there is a mutuality of benefits. For these people, beyond remuneration, the corporate allows them to develop a sense of worth. The corporate needs this group and as such deals with them differently. In many ways, they are commoditised to the same extent as those at the bottom of the organisation, but this group has the potential to exit the company and thus the political relationship on which the rubric is based is altered. Reconciliation between the need for self-worth and the values imputed by the company becomes crucial, and it is this notion of reconciliation which invites the link between the nature of the research conducted and the radical humanist paradigm. Here, reconciliation is motivated by the need for people to construct a reality in which their sense of worth is not compromised. They do this with what borders on a collective pseudo-psychosis in which they have only a tenuous grip on reality.\textsuperscript{184} As such, all consuming control is good as this drives the corporate success in which they share.

\textsuperscript{184} Functionalist overtones acknowledged.
Culture as a rubric sets the perimeters. The frames of reference presented by the company, indicate the level of value attributed to this group. As such, they have the basis from which they need to construct an extant reality; one that balances the organisational ‘givens’, the messages exuded via the physical architecture and the ways in which these groups are treated with the collective need to be valued. The subtext would imply that there is an intended reality, a reality within which ego strength is preserved by the perception of individual and/or collective usefulness. So critical is this notion of being valued by the company, that throughout the research the groups offer rationalisations and justifications for the ways in which the company treats them. The workgroups are secure in doing this; there is a personal and collective imperative across each of the groups which supports the deception.

The deception is fragile, so challenge cannot be tolerated. Any slight towards the company implies that the group has prostituted themselves to a less than worthy cause. The love affair becomes the abusive relationship. By ascribing to the tenets of the radical humanist paradigm, the group allow themselves to construct and reflect a reality that, whilst determining their own mode of constraint, indicates collective worth. Radical humanism becomes a defence mechanism. Constraint by the company is for their own good and, as such, a collective rationalisation process allows the groups to create a shared sense of belonging. The outcome of applying the rubric is a reality in which, with only minimal self-deception, the collective view of the world is supportive of self-esteem.

Manifestations at the top of the hierarchy in Food Co.

The fundamental impression taken from the interview with the senior manager was one of control. He controls the company. He directs the infrastructure within which the work groups are located. Even if one were to ascribe to traditional and normative conceptualisations of culture, this man would remain outside any notion of sharedness. His approach to the organisation is driven by success: as such the only thing he values is market success. In considering how culture as a rubric relates here, there are two manifestations: his own relationship with the company and the ways in which he determines the relationship between the company and those further down the hierarchy.

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185 That the company is driven first and foremost by the market. Thus it will exert rigid control and pressurise people to ensure success in that market.
His own position here reinforces the futility of perceiving culture as a normative set of shared values. Within Food Co there is no such unitary focus. Rather groups conspire to make sense of their own relationship with the company. The senior manager appears immune to this. As the most powerful person within this organisation, he sees himself as being beyond making concessions to the company. For him the company is a manipulable commodity. He directs and controls, and as such, invokes a worshipful reverence from those at the bottom. The ways in which he reconciles his relationship with the company is by constructing a Master-Servant relationship. He is the Master here and the company does and will continue to do what he says. This Master-Servant relationship is then played out further down the organisation as people try to reconcile their relationships with the company as Master. Yet this notion of being beyond organisation implies a mode of reconciliation. He is employed by the company, there is a transactional basis to his relationship with the company. He too is driven by the achievement of targets. Whilst the company is doing well, he has the luxury of seeing himself as being beyond the control of the organisation; in leaner times his ability to do this may be challenged.

The second manifestation relates to the ways in which he directs the frame of reference within which the rest of the organisation are located. As the most senior person here, he constructs the messages of value imputed to the workgroups. The physical environment results from his decisions to invest or not. The transactional nature of the relationships with the work group, and the comparative ease with which these people can be replaced, means that he need do little more. If people need to stay here, then they need to reconcile their relationship with the company. He sets the frame of reference based on the need to meet market demands. If people need to feel as though they are anything other than a mechanistic means of production, then this is their problem. He is not implicated. The controlling aspect here is all-consuming. He offers a basic and well-reasoned image of organisation. Market success is all-important and the company is structured around achieving this. People are free to criticise, but are aware that the consequence is exit. The organisation is mechanistic, and this focus on the market is immovable. If people want any more from their relationship with the company, then it is for them to construct a way of perceiving this. He simply gives them scope to create their own way of imagining organisation.
6.9 Conclusions

The traditional views of culture as a construct were challenged within the context of the research undertaken in Food Co. Far from being a neatly bounded output, as the proponents of corporate culture would argue, or an emergent and dynamic output as the proponents of organisational culture would suggest, culture is re-conceptualised as a rubric. The rubric of culture determines at a fundamental level the terms and conditions of the relationships people have with the corporate. It is politically skewed depending on whether or not people are of value, and if so, what that value is. Culture as a rubric presents a set of rules but not the set of rules. Rules vary within organisations, however, the role of the rules is to outline the precepts on which relationships are formed. People must conform to these rules and take responsibility for their own conformity.

Thus framed, culture as a rubric is a way of imagining organisation rather than a discreet set of cultural components. It allows for subcultures and fracture within organisations as groups coalesce around a set of imputed values and work to reconcile these with some sense of being of value. The relationships people have with the company develop and evolve with minimal challenges to the political structures. There is no unitary organisational culture, only degrees of difference. Yet the difference is not simply from the perspective of the resultant realities; difference is also invoked in the levels of engagement with the process of instrumental reconciliation. Instrumental reconciliation is premised on intentionality. The corporate provides the frames of reference within which people find themselves. The values that the company attributes are apparent. However, when the reality as perceived is incongruent with the perceptions of self worth, there has to be a system of rationalising away the negative elements in order to skew the view of reality to one which is minimally tolerable. The process of skewing perceptions entices people towards radical humanism. By engaging in sequential deceptions, people construct a reality in which they can then locate themselves. This reality is reflected back and despite being a mode of constraint, determines integrity. People are no longer overtly damaged by the excesses of the corporate.

186 The term ‘subcultures’ is used here cognizant of Parker’s (2000) assertion that this simply implies subordination.
Chapter 7: Conclusions and Reflections

7.0 Introduction

In this thesis, I have demonstrated how the literature on culture translates complexity into a range of dualisms. In these dualisms, culture is characterised as either corporate or organisational, homogenous or heterogeneous, as a root metaphor or as a critical variable. To achieve these characterisations requires a process of authorial manipulation. First, meta-theoretical assumptions found the creation of a definition, definition, in turn produces a particular normative structure. So, definitions here are less about describing the concept of culture, and more about producing an account of culture consistent with the image of culture that needs to be presented. Where culture is required as a managerialist commodity, then precision and accuracy in definition are needed to impute the normative structure with measurable attributes. Where culture is the subject of academic enquiry then a focus on the “paradoxes, conflicts, ambiguities and dysfunctions” (Trice and Beyer, 1995: 182) necessitates a broader range of considerations and, indeed invokes a decision as to whether definition is required or indeed possible.

Despite being driven by potentially disparate sets of meta-theoretical assumptions, contemporary portrayals of culture are remarkably consistent. As we have seen in the literature, culture is frequently presented as a composite of values, attitudes and beliefs. Where culture is characterised as corporate, these are created and controlled by management. Where culture is characterised as organisational, these emerge from the acculturated group through processes of social construction. Few question why people consistently assume that values, attitudes and beliefs are constitutive of culture. Instead the disagreements are about their derivation. This oppositional stance, in which people are located at the extremes of the either/or debates, sets a regulatory framework for thinking about culture. All authors exist in an autopoetic (Morgan, 1986) world in which their own philosophical bias presupposes the definition which then implies a specific normative structure. Structure frames research, and ultimately the research results reinforce the original philosophical bias. This self-referential and self-perpetuating process emphasises the fundamentally paradigmatic nature of culture.

In this thesis, a consideration of the literature on paradigms contextualised the view of culture as being paradigmatically derived. Here, we also saw that the ways in which authors define paradigms attributes a particular set of characteristics. For Thomas Kuhn (1962/1970), paradigms are specific views of the world taken at a specific moment in time. Differences in language and taxonomic structure mean that existing and emerging paradigms are incommensurable. For Burrell and Morgan (1979) paradigms are framed by meta-theoretical assumptions about the nature of society and about the nature of social science. Thus framed, the four paradigms they produce are in “fundamental opposition” (p. iix) and therefore incommensurable. However, in this thesis I have questioned such absolutisms. I have demonstrated how, in Kuhn’s thesis, the insidious rather than spontaneous nature of scientific revolution compromises his incommensurability thesis. Likewise, Burrell and Morgan’s position on incommensurability is ambiguous. Despite paradigms being described as “mutually exclusive” (p. iix), contiguity which enables “some inter-paradigm debate” (p. 36) undermines their assertion of incommensurability. I conclude that where people argue in favour of incommensurability, they do so by having privileged a particular characterisation of paradigms.

As we have seen in Chapter 2, this conceptualisation of paradigms is fundamental to upholding the integrity of this thesis. Whether or not bi-paradigmatic research is desirable is a moot point, a priori I have had to decide whether or not bi-paradigmatic research is possible. In this conceptualisation, I have applied a meta-paradigmatic conceptualisation of paradigms. I have rejected the restrictive conceptualisations of Kuhn and Burrell and Morgan because they insist that people are only able to view reality through specific lenses. Additionally, the inability to see any other manifestations of reality incites social and intellectual isolation. To assume that meta-theoretical assumptions are anything more than assumptions imputes them with a sense of truth. Thinking becomes confined to the process of conceptual reductionism we have seen previously with the use functionalist research methods. Likewise, I do not imply that paradigms are superficial guidelines that one can opt into and out of at will. Rather, they are established over time and thus form the basis for intuition. However, in the same way that not all thought is intuitive, not all views of the social world are confined to the tenets of a paradigm. Within this thesis, therefore, paradigms have been perceived as sets of meta-theoretical assumptions which advise rather than control the way in
which people view the social world. Here, paradigms are seen as cognitive frames of reference which, alongside issues of motive, context and affect, guide the views of reality. This view necessarily reveals my own epistemological stance.

My conclusion that writing on paradigms is itself paradigmatic, and that incommensurability is a product of that writing, has allowed me develop a distinctive bi-paradigmatic approach to research. We have seen previously that many authors (cf. Hassard, 1985; Graham-Hill, 1994; Lewis, 1997; Kamoche, 2000) propose multi-paradigm research as a means of bringing depth and insight to the study of organisations. This thesis has been advised by that literature. A bi-paradigmatic approach was chosen to allow for a greater depth of focus on a single organisational feature. In producing a bi-paradigmatic research method, I have viewed culture from a functionalist and an interpretive perspective. Bracketing (Hassard, 1991; Lewis and Kelemen, 2002)) each paradigm has allowed me to frame the distinctive sets of meta-theoretical assumptions and use these as lenses through which to view culture.

The research, therefore, sought to answer two questions:

- How does the use of paradigm specific research methods shape the view of culture?
- Can the use of bi-paradigmatic research challenge the traditional views of culture?

The following offers some critical conclusions relating to these central questions.

7.1 Shaping Views of Culture

Using two paradigm specific lenses to view a single concept, has allowed me to identify different views of culture and to explore how the use of particular research methods have invited those views. The functionalist research produced a series of graphic profiles illustrative of the culture in Food Co. Whilst there was a marked degree of consistency between the results, by considering how a functionalist lens shapes a particular view of the world, I uncovered the reason for that consistency. Research in the functionalist tradition seeks to produce results located within a definitive set of meta-theoretical assumptions.
Functionalist methods engage a systematic process of conceptual reductionism in order to produce 'required' results. In defining a concept, literal inclusions and exclusions reduce the permissible range of considerations. That definition advises a normative structure constitutive of the dimensions of measurement. The use of the OCAI in this thesis was indicative of the ways in which functionalist methods smooth variation. We have seen how the complex and ambiguous concept of culture has been reduced to four plots on a 2 x 2 matrix. Therefore, the image of culture produced is less an image of the culture in Food Co and more an expression of the relationship between the four factors considered. Indeed, in producing the final results, any remaining elements of discrepancy are removed by calculating the aggregated mean. The results produced confirm the validity of the functionalist paradigm. Viewing the world as objective, shared and value free requires a particular characterisation. The world needs to be rendered measurable. Difference and variation are ameliorated in order that consistency and objectivity can be achieved.

However, in this thesis I have also demonstrated how research within the interpretive tradition can, likewise, be accused of conceptual reductionism. Although there has been no a priori attempt to define culture and thus to reduce the concept to a list of nominated components, we have seen that, where interview formats are used, the views of reality are shaped in three ways. First, the use of language and the structure of the questions indicate a particular focus. The complexity of culture is narrowed to a focus on authorially derived issues. Moreover, the sequencing of the questions implies connections and relationships between the themes. Second, the ways in which the interview process is controlled is influential. The use of verbal and non-verbal cues is seen to encourage or discourage a particular response. Emergent views of reality are shaped by the political dynamic of the interview. Finally, the methods of analysis pull a diverse range of answers into a limited analytical framework. Views of reality are shaped by the ways in which themes are promoted or demoted during the analysis. It is argued, therefore, that interpretive research methods set a narrowing frame of reference, even where the researcher is inclined to seek fragmentation and difference.

In drawing my conclusions regarding research in the interpretive tradition a key issue was the relationship between the researcher and the process of social construction. According to Burrell and Morgan (1979) reality is constructed based on “intersubjectively shared meanings” (p. 31), yet without being acculturated, the
researcher does not have access to those meanings. The researcher may contribute to the research narrative, but without an understanding of the shared meanings against which views of reality are tested, he or she is not a party to the social construction of reality. Within this thesis, this was manifest in two ways. In the individual interview I was presented with a predetermined view of reality. Whilst discourse facilitated the flow of the interview, there was no, and could not be any, engagement in the process of social construction. The views of reality delivered were shaped by the interviewee through his relationship with the company. Moreover, within the context of the focus groups, failure to comprehend “intersubjectively shared meanings” (Ibid) likewise excluded the researcher from the processes of social construction. However, here one was in a position to observe that process. Group members who are acculturated use the implicitly shared meanings as the frames of reference through which they can construct a view of the world. The group shapes reality and the researcher is privileged to watch that process.

However, where non-linguistically based non-participant observation is used, the shape of the views of reality is largely at the behest of the researcher. What results is a wholly subjective image. Here I conclude that, as a method, this approach challenges the domination of language based approaches to research. It removes the certainty of recourse to literal definitions. Yet despite this there is still an acknowledgement that the views of reality are imputed by the researcher.

Therefore, in considering how the use of paradigm specific research methods shape the view of culture, I have surfaced the limitations of using research grounded within a single paradigmatic tradition. In compensating for these limitations the opportunity arises to use a multi-paradigm focus. The suggestion is not that one tries to manufacture a symbiosis between the methods, rather that each provides a distinctive view creating a breadth and richness of insight that would otherwise not be possible.

In recognising how the use of paradigm specific research methods shape the view of culture, I have surfaced the limitations of each particular method. Moreover, by using a bi-paradigmatic approach I have been able to recognise where the views of culture produced are both similar and different. It was by focusing on the relationship between the two paradigm specific views of culture that I was prompted to challenge the
traditional views of culture, those in which culture is seen as a shared set (or sets) of values and beliefs.

In reflecting on some pragmatic issues relating to the research process here, some key themes emerge. First, it was naïve to rely on the managers within the organisation to distribute and collect questionnaires on my behalf. They had nothing to gain from doing this and their non-cooperation necessitated a change in the research process and resulted in a smaller sample than had been planned for. Second, the political dynamic of the interview was the inverse of what I had anticipated. And, whilst it would have been useful to exert more control over the senior manager during the interview, as he was the gate keeper to the wider organisation, it was politically prudent to let him direct the narrative. Third, the results of the non-linguistically based non-participant observation were difficult to articulate. Although I have tried, in my use of language, to convey a sense of what it was like to be in the canteen, I fear that this does not evoke the emotional reaction that being able to see the images would. In future I would endeavour to film the observations and use image as a means of adding depth to the narrative.

7.2 Challenging the Traditional Views of Culture

By using a functionalist lens, the view produced of culture at Food Co was one dominated by an emphasis on the market. The fundamental change desired by the respondents was a switch in emphasis to that of the clan. By using an interpretive lens the ways in which the market drivers translated into pressure within the organisation became apparent. People acknowledged that they were a means of production. The conclusion that was drawn, was that culture within this company was not a unitary set of values or beliefs shared between the organisation and the work groups. Rather, there were two oppositional value sets. The organisation perceives people as being of purely economic worth; the people within want to be seen as having personal worth. However, the transactional nature of the relationship here means that exit is not possible. People, thus tied, need to try and reconcile their relationship with the organisation in order to salvage any sense of being valued. This view was enabled by adopting a bi-paradigmatic approach which allowed the discrepancy between the two value sets to be appreciated. The view so produced also highlighted the ways in which the traditional characterisations of culture downplay the fundamentally paradigmatic nature of the concept. What emerged was not a shared set of values and beliefs or indeed ascription to
a particular sub-culture. Rather the organisation presents a value set which was discrepant from the value needs of the work groups. Here, I considered the metatheoretical assumptions which could underpin the views of culture seen. My conclusion was that, in order to salvage any sense of the self, the difference between the two value sets needed to be reconciled. Failure to do so would undermine any sense of self worth and ego-strength. Yet, in doing this, the group has to acknowledge the values of the organisation. What emerges is a view of culture not as a bounded set of components, but as two oppositional value sets which form the frame of reference within which reconciliation takes place. Culture is re-positioned as a set of rules but not the set of rules through which people make sense of their relationship with the organisation.

This re-conceptualisation therefore, moves thinking about culture substantially away from the oppositional dualisms seen in the literature. Rather than being an either/or concept, culture is a rubric. This rubric is the frame of reference through which people reconcile their need for self esteem and self worth with the values imputed by the company. However, by re-conceptualising culture as a rubric I have perhaps surfaced an affinity with the traditions of the radical humanist paradigm. Culture is re-presented as an implicit set of rules for conduct which guide people’s attempts to reconcile their relationship with the organisation whilst retaining some sense of self-worth. To commoditise oneself for the sake of a work organisation is problematic, but perhaps only if this is viewed in a pejorative way. However, if one skews the perception of reality in to being positive rather than pejorative, then commoditisation is not only excusable but is desirable. It salvages ones sense of self-worth. In this re-conceptualisation of culture, social construction becomes the means by which work groups can collectively skew meanings to paint a positive image of their relationship. By drawing on the “intersubjectively shared meanings” (Ibid), they test their individual views on the collective.

Parker (2000) asserts that “organizational culture is a continuing process of articulating contested versions of what the organisation should be doing” (p. 226). Perceiving culture as a rubric allows this theme to be expanded. As we have seen previously, the traditional conceptualisations of culture as a shared set (or sets) of values and beliefs are problematic. Culture as the output of a functionalist creation becomes impacted in a steady state managerialism. But by seeing culture as the output of a social construction process struggles to determine the point at which the constructing becomes the

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construction. By re-conceptualising culture as a rubric one takes the notions of values and beliefs and repositions these as mechanisms through which people reconcile their relationship with the company.

Whether culture is deemed functionalist or interpretive in origin, my research was unable to produce any evidence of culture as a neatly bounded set of shared values or beliefs. There was nothing to imply that at a macro level (seeking homogeneity) or a micro level (seeking heterogeneity) there was anything other than a need for people to make good their relationship with the company. This process involves an individual and collective appreciation of the political dynamic. It determines the degree of compromise required. Moreover, it involves the ongoing ways in which people utilise that understanding to construct their individual and collective realities. The links with the Burrell and Morgan (1979) taxonomy therefore become apparent. The reality in which people 'need to exist' is an intentional reality. It is a reality which is least disadvantageous and allows them to salvage what they can of their own sense of self-worth.

Therefore, I assert that culture as a rubric provides the backdrop for instrumental reconciliation. Culture is not a shared set of values and beliefs, rather it is a means by which the collective create at worst a basic integrity for themselves, and is at best the opportunity for some degree of contentment. In referring back to Parker's (2000) statement, culture framed as a rubric becomes less about "articulating contested versions of what the organisation should be doing" (p. 226) and more about reconciling the self with what the organisation is doing. The usefulness of simply articulating potential corporate action (or inaction) is a moot point. Of considerably more importance are the ways in which people deal with the context in which they find themselves, the messages perceived, the behaviours of the company and the values that those behaviours imply. The process is the means by which people desensitise themselves to the detrimental behaviours of the organisation.

The political importance of culture as a rubric now comes to the fore. By presenting people with an image of their own commoditisation, the company sets the frame of reference within which people are located. The company do not need to present and represent distinctive sets of values and then persuade people that they have an affinity with these. Instead the company simply presents a view which leaves people with a
choice. Those who do not like that view can leave. Those who wish to reconcile that view with some sense of self-worth use social construction to create an intentional reality. I propose that Culture considered as a rubric allows for shared meanings to be used to construct a 'least disadvantageous' view of the world. Here I assert that the relationship between the workgroups and the organisation is reconciled, and people are free to extract a sense of personal value, albeit this may be obtained by deception.
Appendices

Appendix 1: OCAI Questionnaire

See overleaf
Organisational Culture Analysis Instrument

This questionnaire is used to assess what type of corporate culture is most effective in supporting successful employee volunteering. This part of the research is aimed at finding out what you think would be the ideal type of culture to encourage volunteering and seeing how this matches with the culture you think exists now in Snack Co.

The questionnaire has six questions, each containing four statements of cultural issues. You are to decide which of these issues you feel to be most important, through to the least important. You do this by dividing 100 points between the four statements. The statements given higher marks should be those things that you think are more important for creating a culture supportive of employee volunteering those statements with lower marks are less important.

Example -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Dominant Characteristics</th>
<th>Ideal</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The organization is a very personal place. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of themselves.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The organization is a very dynamic and entrepreneurial place. People are willing to stick their necks out and take risks</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The organization is very results oriented. A major concern is with getting the job done. People are very competitive and results oriented.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. The organization is a very controlled and structured place. Formal procedures generally govern what people do.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questionnaire

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<tr>
<th>1. Dominant Characteristics</th>
<th>Ideal</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The organization is a very personal place. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of themselves.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The organization is a very dynamic and entrepreneurial place. People are willing to stick their necks out and take risks</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. The organization is very results oriented. A major concern is with getting the job done. People are very competitive and results oriented.</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. The organization is a very controlled and structured place. Formal procedures generally govern what people do.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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### 2. Organisational Leadership

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ideal</th>
<th>Actual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify mentoring, facilitating or nurturing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify entrepreneurship, innovating or risk taking.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify a no nonsense, aggressive results oriented focus.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>d. The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify coordinating, organizing, or smooth running efficiency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3. Management of Employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ideal</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The management style in the organization is characterized by teamwork, consensus and participation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The management style in the organization is characterized by individual risk taking, innovation, freedom and uniqueness.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The management style in the organization is characterized by hard-driving competitiveness, high demands and achievement.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>d. The management style in the organization is characterized by security of employment, conformity, predictability and stability in relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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### 4. Organisation Glue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ideal</th>
<th>Actual</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The glue that holds the organization together is loyalty and mutual trust. Commitment to this organization runs high.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The glue that holds the organization together is commitment to innovation and development. There is an emphasis on being on the cutting edge.</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. The glue that holds the organization together is the emphasis on achievement and goal accomplishment. Aggressiveness and winning are common themes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. The glue that holds the organization together is formal rules and policies. Maintaining a smooth running organization is important.</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
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### 5. Strategic Emphases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ideal</th>
<th>Actual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The organization emphasizes human development. High trust, openness and participation persist.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>b. The organization emphasizes acquiring new resources and creating new challenges. Trying new things and prospecting for opportunities are valued.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The organization emphasizes competitive actions and achievement. Hitting stretching targets and winning in the market place are dominant.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>d. The organization emphasizes permanence and stability. Efficiency, control and smooth operations are important.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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### 6. Criteria for success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ideal</th>
<th>Actual</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The organization defines success on the basis of the development of human resources, teamwork, employee commitment and concern for people.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The organization defines success on the basis of having the most unique or newest products. It is a product leader and innovator.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. The organization defines success on the basis of winning in the market place and out pacing the competition. Competitive market leadership is key.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>d. The organization defines success on the basis of efficiency. Dependable delivery, smooth scheduling and low cost production are critical.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation.

Kind Regards

Deborah Price

Management Centre
University of Leicester
Appendix 2: Individual Interview Structure

Senior Manager: Food Co

Interview date: 20th May 2002

1. What is your position within this organisation?

2. How would you describe the style of management at Food Co? (Dominant Characteristics)

3. How would you describe the culture at Food Co? (Organisation Glue)

4. How would you describe the leadership at Food Co? (Organisational Leadership)

5. How would you describe the strategy of Food Co? (Strategic Emphases)

6. How would you describe communication within Food Co? (Management of employees)

7. How do you motivate people within Food Co? (Management of Employees)

8. How do you monitor the effectiveness of the business? (Criteria for Success)
Appendix 3: Extract from Expansive Analysis Focus Group 1

Text in original preceded by introductions and seeking permission to tape record interview.

DP: How would you describe Food Co as a company? What kind of things spring to mind?”

Response 1 - “Very well organised, good company to work for”.

Interpretation of Response 1

Communicative Intentions – to give a positive impression of the company to both the outsiders (researchers) and insiders (peer group).

Cooperative Principles –

Quality – Sub-optimal, not a great depth of information

Quantity – just enough information to give some sort of answer

Relation- focussed on the question, no preceding respondents to build from.

Manner - Only one person answered, and nobody picked up on what was said or wanted to elaborate on the theme.

Face and politeness- Positive face phenomenon demonstrating social inclusion via a shared notion of corporate goodness.

Deictic elements – Positive but detached. No ownership denoted.

Conversational Implicatures – Working here is enjoyable because of the efficiency of control mechanisms, therefore control is good. Control is viewed from a corporate perspective represented by the linkages between the notion of organisation preceding
the goodness of the company, i.e. the reference to the company being good is predicated on the notion of good organisation.

DP “Why is it a good company to work for?”

Post-hoc researcher direction – Trying to explore the connection between the primary notion of control and being a “good company”.

Response 2 – “Erm, because they've got a good product brand. Erm, nice people, friendly people”.

Interpretation of Response 2

Communicative intentions – to substantiate the fact that the company is good from both a corporate and an interpersonal level.

Cooperative principles-

Quality. – Reasonable but struggling to justify this being a good company, still the same respondent speaking. (Would have been useful to have video to see supporting NVC). Responds to the crux of the question. Appears sincere in intonation

Quantity – Brief could be expanded on. Minimalist response seems to be asking for other to contribute. As only respondent thus far, is likely be considering the wisdom of being the only person to answer, even though only at the second response.

Relation – Question makes a direct link with previous response, but respondent struggles a bit to justify his previous assertion.

Manner – hesitant, not very confident. Unambiguous answer, but perhaps too brief.

Face and politeness - Positive face but now appears to be trying to hand over the role of answering (initially indicating social acceptability) to others, creating the notion that answering is fine but answering too much is not.
Deictic elements - first introduction of the notion of them rather than us.

Conversational Implicatures - Starts with the product brand as the primary driver, thus noting that the key factor in making this a good company to work for is corporate success. In doing this located the ownership of the brand not with group present (we have) to an unidentified 'they'. This impersonal expression acknowledges a divide between those present and another body, be that a human perspective (a controlling tier of management) or a non-human perspective in the reification of the company.

Secondary notion of the human perspective which differentiates people as being both nice and friendly as though there is a recognised distinction between the two.

Response 3 - “It’s a company that’s growing, not shrinking (DP – “yes”- encouragement to reinforce engagement and to elaborate further), which for most people it means you’re fairly secure, unless you’re really stupid, you’ve got a secure future and you can enjoy that”.

Interpretation – Response 3

Communicative intentions – To support the notion of the corporate future by placing initial emphasis on the longevity of the company and align this with the benefits to the workforce.

Cooperative principles – recognised signals from previous respondent and aligned his response to the same format, i.e. corporate first, personal second.

Quality- response came over as data rather than anything that the individual truthfully believed.

Quantity – extra information. Useful to have the concept of the corporate future and the links with the workforce feeling good about security but no specific need to mention the stupidity of some.

Manner – Following logical sequencing of the previous answer, unambiguous.
Relation – Make the connection between a good product brand and how this feeds the long term survival of the company, and then the humanist perspective of how this makes people feel good.

Face and politeness – Different stance here, higher degree of assertiveness and the inclusion of the caveat gave a negative face perception. Still within the politeness conventions by helping first respondent out and replicating his answer protocol but from the stance that this is what I want you to know rather than this demonstrates my need to belong here.

Deictic elements – move back from the detached notion of ‘them’ to the impersonal concept of ‘it’s’.

Conversational Implicatures – A move to support the previous respondent by entering the discussion. Clearly assertive especially when compared to the less than confident manner of the exiting speaker. Replicated protocol for answer, corporate as primary focus, interpersonal as secondary focus, but moved to identify the company as an ‘it’, a second potential reification. Interesting notion of inclusion and exclusion. Aligns corporate growth with job security but introduces a caveat which advocates that there are those within the company excluded from this. The company appears to be prepared to tolerate some degree of stupidity (altruistic or paternalistic?) as those excluded have to be not only stupid, but ‘really stupid’. The answer implicitly recognises a hierarchy within the company with stupidity being (at this stage the only clearly identifiable) (a) means of sub-ordination. Those with lower levels of stupidity are granted favour by the company who allow them to benefit from the corporate success.

Interesting mention that the company is not shrinking, an acknowledgement which appears to be surplus to requirements. Having noted that the company is growing, the additional recognition that it is not shrinking places emphasis on the notion that some other companies may be, thus promoting the company to being superior to them.

Response 4 - “I think what influenced me quite a lot is, is that there is a very young management team and a very lot of enthusiasm and that (DP “yes”), that helps”.
Interpretation of Response 4

*Communicative intentions* – Seems to want to present a truly personal perspective reflective of individual concerns about the youth of the management and the relative degree of enthusiasm.

Cooperative principles – No obvious relationship with the preceding comment other than recognise the need for other people to engage in responding to the questions.

*Quality* – Seems to be circumventing the truth, i.e. I am struggling to cope with the enthusiasm of youth and the impact this has on the wider organisation.

*Quantity* – Not really sufficient information to engage the group more, almost confessional in quality.

*Manner*– very brief and concise, there seems to be an ambiguity between the words and the way in which they are spoken.

*Relation* – Tangential theme generated by the individual rather than following any logical or connective link with the preceding response.

*Face and politeness phenomena* – a negative face but portrayed in a needy rather than domineering way, i.e. I need to make people aware of this not to demonstrate social inclusion but to look for peer support.

*Deictic elements* – clear location within the realms of personal perception. The inclusion of I as the owner of the perception then builds to recognise a personal perception (I think) and an individual outcome (what has influenced me).

*Conversational Implicatures* – An almost confessional quality in which ownership of the statement is clearly located to the individual. Discrepancy between the substance of what is being said and the way in which it has been said creates an ambiguity within which it is possible to see the meaning as being counter to the semantics. As such the recognition of a ‘very’ young management team places the emphasis on the extreme end of youth, likewise the notion of enthusiasm. Having started with a clear notion of
personal possession, ensuring that the text is seen in a non-critical light is done by noting that the combination of youth and enthusiasm helps, but this stops short of recognising who it helps and how it helps. The implications are that it helps, but not me.

Response 5 - “It’s a very fast pace, things change all the time and you’ve got to go along with the flow, you’ve got to teach yourself to.”

Interpretation of Response 5

Communicative intentions – support for previous speaker. Puts forward a more clearly defined output from the combined impact of youth and enthusiasm, i.e. change. Relays the nature of change (i.e. continuous) within the context of this company.

Cooperative principles – offering clear support for the previous respondent and even clarifying the issues by specifying the ways in which the enthusiasm manifests itself.

Quality – Seems very truthful, again building on an almost confessional feeling, a therapeutic ‘sharing’.

Quantity – sufficient to note both the impetus for change and the location of personal responsibility.

Manner – logical, starts with connection to the previous statement and then progresses through to control issues secondarily.

Relation – response tailored to align specifically the previous response.

Face and politeness phenomena – interpreted as a positive face as the response is in support of the previous response. Although this may have been something that the individual wanted to say specifically, the low volume and hesitant nature of the flow of communication leads me to conclude that this statement would not have been made spontaneously.
Deictic elements – Moved away from the ‘I’ but presents a detached view, not locating the statement within any particular area. Clearly locates control to some external agent who in turn has expectations of personal responsibility for conformance.

Conversational Implicatures – Overwhelming notion of concurrence with the previous statement making the consequences of the ‘enthusiasm’ apparent and nominating those consequences as the fast pace and organisational change. Moves away from personal ownership (I) of the perspective but fails to critique the wider organisation by not locating blame or responsibility. A clear recognition of corporate control, i.e. there is continuous change as a given, and thus a necessity for you to go along with this. No idea of challenging the change, it is a fait accompli which simply requires conformance. But within this, the instigators of the change accept no role in aligning the individuals to that change, that responsibility lies with the individual (“you’ve got to teach yourself to”). A voluntaristic organisation directing change internally presents a deterministic mode for those inside the organisation (you have no choice but to change) which converts to voluntarism in its assumption that how you do that is your responsibility.

DP “And do you think the company thrives on that? Because one of the things we come across in management is organisations that face change, is....”

Post –hoc Researcher direction- Would have liked to have seen response to the question ‘What happens if you don’t teach yourself’, but at this stage in the interview it would have lost all responses and closed down the process. Instead opted to pursue the relationship between the organisation and change.

Response 6 - “It's one of the things that keeps you at the leading edge isn't it?”

Interpretation of Response 6

Communicative intentions – Presenting a positive rationale for the change, again associating this with corporate success.
Cooperative principles – supporting the assertion of continuous change as per the previous responses but building a bridge between the negative undertones of trauma to the individual and the positive notion of corporate success.

Quality – pragmatic rather than demonstrating any heartfelt engagement.

Quantity – concise and focussed, opening for others to elaborate.

Manner – business-like and unambiguous.

Face and politeness phenomena – Neutral stance (explain this as the literature does not have this) in which the ‘face’ of the company is that being protected rather than being aimed at demonstrating social conformance or a need to assert an individual view.

Deictic elements – Interesting recognition of ‘you’ as the company, as distinct from ‘us’. Reference assumed to be to the company in line with the wording being ‘leading edge’, a term more readily associated with organisations rather than individuals.

Conversational Implicatures - A response which acknowledges the traumas experienced by continuous change but recognises these as being simply a component in corporate success. Use of ‘you’ retains the notion of a detachment from the company, and the response then seeks confirmation from the wider group.

(Inaudible text – many noises of confirmation)

Response 7 - “Change is a battle, it’s a way of life in this company change, it is really.”

Interpretation of Response 7

Communicative intention – To reinforce rather than simply confirm what has been said previously.
Cooperative principles – Building on the previous response, increasing the emphasis on the critical nature of change implicitly confirming the correctness of the previous statements.

Quality – Grand and dramatic rather than sincere.

Quantity - Concise enough to have an impact.

Manner – Brief and visual. Uses a fairly safe metaphor in the most people perception of ‘a battle’ is fairly similar.

Face and politeness phenomena – positive face, I fit with this group because I can give your words currency by creating a meaningful image.

Deictic elements – no location to context or notion of specific ownership.

Conversational Implicatures - Sudden interjection of metaphor to give visual currency to the preceding arguments, which whilst being clear in their meanings, did not have the magnitude of impact that this response had. Consideration of the metaphor chosen recognises the potential similarities between change and a battle. As battles are generally fought out of necessity, does this imply a deterministic focus on organisational change? Battles present opposing factions, within the context of the company, who are these? Battles have winners and losers and both of these incur losses on route to victory or defeat, does the same apply to the company? Are those who cannot cope with the change (or are simply too stupid) the organisational casualties, a cost incurred on the way to a wider organisational benefit. Battles have a finite beginning and usually and end, yet this statement notes that change here is a way of life, a constant battle in which everyone at some time must become weary. The metaphor presents an image which can be seen as superficially relevant, but in a deeper consideration can also highlight some of the negative features inferred from previous responses. The question to be asked here is when does this company declare victory? And when can the people relax and reap the spoils of war?
Response 8 - “It's so frequent that it isn't a shock. In other companies where you get change (Respondent 7 interrupts “they get stuck in a rut, we don’t”) it's like a one off but because it’s so frequent here that it’s just the next stage that’s all.”

Interpretation of Response 8

Communicative intentions - Doesn’t pick up on the war analogy, relates back to the original question. Reinforces the idea that the company is special (negative slant on other companies) and continues to re-affirm the continuity of change.

Cooperative principles – Reads the need for support and continues building the case from the previous responses but downplaying the issue.

Quality – pragmatic response, no indication from intonation of a firm belief in what’s being said, or a politically correct answer. Because of the lack of emotion I am drawn towards the latter.

Quantity – Has a brief answer and will complete this despite the interruption, which does not phase the respondent or distract her from what she wants to say.

Manner – logical and predicated on a clear message.

Relation – Supportive but contradictory. Reinforces the notion of change as a continuum but dispels the ‘battle’ metaphor on favour of an understated approach (“it’s just the next stage, that’s all”).

Face and Politeness phenomena – Negative face. Tone and persistence give the impression that this person wanted to say this to bring a more realistic slant on the organisations approach to change.

Deictic elements – Neutral in terms of owning the perception but answer firmly located ‘here’ recognising that the sometimes anonymised context within which this change takes place is indeed the organisation in which the group are currently located.
Conversational Implicatures - A purposive attempt to downplay the battle analogy. A move which undermines the previous dramatisation of change as being fraught and frantic by noting that it is simply "just the next stage". Respondent not thwarted by the interruption, albeit this would appear to be adding emphasis to the superiority of this company over the 'others'. Interesting use of the word 'shock', has negative connotations and is not a word I recognise as being associated with organisational change, even from a radical/revolutionary perspective. Implies that what the organisation is used to is not change, but the shock. Here the people are seen as being desensitised to the introduction of change rather than welcoming of that change. Change is seen as a continuum, just the "next stage". Does change become the stability element within both the organisation and the culture? If so how does this relationship between the organisational use of implicit and explicit control and individual and interpersonal implicit and explicit control develop?

DP “So you would notice it if there was no change?”

(Inaudible text as many voices concur with the statement)

Response 9 - “Yes, we’d know, yeah, we’re the opposite, where a lot of companies don’t change much and then there’s change and it’s very noticeable.”

Interpretation of Response 9

Communicative Intentions – Group agreement with the statement made. The dominant voice emerging places this within a competitive context by noting the difference between this company and others. Text supports the group agreement.

Cooperative principles – respondent was the emergent voice from an entire group of people offering confirmation of the statement presented. Managed to persist with comments until other parallel respondents dropped off.
Quality – again pragmatic, truth of statement perhaps evidenced by the notion that a lot of companies don’t change much, perhaps a slightly unrealistic perspective of the world outside.

Quantity – Concise, had a specific message to relay and did so succinctly.

Manner – Logical assertion in which this company appears better than others.

Relation – relevance to both the statement posed at the beginning and congruent with the preceding themes from other respondents.

Face and politeness – decidedly negative face, despite the consensus amongst the en-masse initial response, this respondent determine to pursue what she was saying, eventually being the dominant voice and being allowed as such to lead the response.

Deictic elements – very much located with those present by using the word ‘we’. May be due to ownership of the recognition but more likely prompt driven by use of the deictic ‘you’ in the question posed.

Conversational Implicatures – Initial agreement with the statement with a few voices trying to present an extended discussion. Female voice came out as dominant and re-located the notion of change from within this company to how other deal with change in the broader competitive environment. Recognised the gap between this company and others by advocating that this company are not just different but are the opposite. Located as ‘we’ but may be prompt driven. Confirms that they would know twice within the same response laying emphasis on that recognition.

Response 10 – “We've got an excellent system of people management as well here, whereby they have the company aims and they devolve them individually to everybody's objectives, so that everyone is trying to keep pushing in the same direction. (DP “right”). And you know you do have a review every year and you can see where you fit in.”(DP “right”)

Interpretation of Response 10

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Communicative intentions – to elaborate on the idea that we are better, by giving organisational examples of how the company is better. Trying to clarify the issues for those engaging in the research.

Cooperative principles – Response running parallel to previous response by taking a slightly more in depth notion of why this company is successful in controlling it’s people to accept organisational change.

Quality – a much more elaborate answer with recognisable additions to the previous core text.

Quantity – one of the longer answers but complete within itself, highlighting the key factors.

Manner – Strange use of language (excellent system of people management, devolve) which appears incongruent with the language used previously. Seems to be trying to use ‘management speak’ rather than talking normally as per the previous responses.

Relation – Appears to be a connection here between change and the manipulation of people in order to meet the demands of that change.

Face and Politeness – In trying to promote the positive face of the company appears to highlight the ways in which people are seen as a mechanistic means to achieving the corporate goals.

Deictic elements – Denotes a complicity here. The people with the good systems are the people here. The use of the term we denoting ownership.

Conversational Implicatures- In some respects quite a naïve answer in the assumption that a lot of companies don’t change much. Seems to have overlooked the main competitive rivals in the market who must be changing at least as quickly as Food Co to remain in direct competition with them. The next section screams Fayol’s sub­ordination of the self. The driver and direction is unitarily the corporate aims and objectives. A “good people management system” here is judged by the ability to devolve the corporate goals to an individual level, implicitly making him or her
responsible for the achievement of them and ipso-facto (because of the purposefully emphasised link between these and corporate success, the success of the organisation). No notion of personal or individual objectives, desires or aspirations, the corporate is all, and you are measured by your conformance to the corporate so that you “can see where you fit in”. If you can see where you fit in, you can also see where you don’t fit in, as can the people/systems monitoring your “fit”. Interesting the way the idea of corporate control by means of performance objectives is absorbed by the group on the grounds that it is illuminating their fit within the company and is therefore for their own personal benefit.

End of extract
Appendix 4: Extract from Contracted Key Words Focus Group 1

Response 1

We are here to be controlled and support the organisation in controlling us, accordingly we create a mutual acknowledgement of constraint.

Response 2

Brand takes precedent within the company. Brand drives success and success requires control as mentioned previously. The brand being located at the top is owned by those at the top, rather than being a shared commodity. After hard nosed business case, the human case but in a sloppy and soft guise.

Response 3

Benevolent autocrat inference. The corporate leads and if you are good you are rewarded by being allowed to follow. The company as a reified body not only allows this but acts to stratify the organisation to determine levels of ‘favour’. Behaves kindly to the very stupid showing a tolerance of them whilst still excluding them from the main body of organisation.

Response 4

Sub-critical critique. Venturing near to criticism but circumventing this leaving an incongruity between words and meaning. Sense of tiredness, almost Gilbert and Sullivanesque ‘and youth of course must have it’s fling but pardon us, please pardon us, if we decline to dance and sign’.

Response 5

Interesting cycle of voluntarism provoking determinism provoking pseudo-voluntarism with the willing buy-in by people despite them being tired of the constancy of change. Cycle is the consequence of enthusiasm with nobody to blame.
Response 6

Inference of negative attitude to so much change but not in so many words. A Greek paradoxical approach in which the true meaning is the inverse of what has actually been said.

Response 7

Continuous fighting, chronic weariness, casualties and losses all incurred in order to be the victor. The enemy is the market, the competitor, anyone who would challenge corporate success, and by locating an enemy outside, lurking and waiting to take market share the company presents people with Hobson’s choice, say and change despite exhaustion or we all go down.

Response 8

In down playing the dramatic the notion of shock is introduced. Almost Stockholm Syndrome. The organisation traumatises people to the extent that they become desensitised to the challenges (cognitive, behavioural and attitudinal) of organisational, and the staff adore the company because of this.

Response 9

Proposing to validate the superiority of this company beyond the competitors by berating what the competitors do. Pulls on the notion of an external enemy consolidating the reason for being chronically traumatised.

Response 10

The person here is prepared to make what appears to be a slightly tangential statement which really could not be justified, in order to be seen to toe the line. Comments are not contributing anything other than flagging-up conformance to the company demands as indicative of being acculturated. Re-appearance of this notion of rigid corporate control which infiltrates the entire organisation and for which people are indebted. Interesting way of skewing the traditional view of appraisal, i.e. it is there so you can see where you fit. Again elements of radical humanist can be seen as a way to justify the complicity of being controlled.
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