



To lead without governing in the knowledge society: The enlightened despotism in European techno-corporative discourse

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Abstract

Over the last few decades, the process of governing in the European Union (EU) has come to mean a whole series of activities conducted by social, political, and administrative actors, which guide, direct, control, and administrate society. The relationship between these actors in the governmental process is not hierarchical, but polycentric and mutually dependent. Therefore, the *techno-corporatism* alliance is formed by an epistemic community along with the industrial and financial lobbies. It organizes society around its own projection of a differential unit, thereby affirming its position of leadership and power – a differential unit which, in an ideologically broader definition, expresses itself and inevitably takes place throughout and within this language. First, this implies thinking of the techno-corporative discourse not in its apparent ethereal nature, but as a social practice of the legitimation of a mediated political direction that has intervened in the conception, construction, and approval of public policies over these last few decades. Even though this discourse contributes to the delineation of a certain social form, this does not suggest that it cannot contrast with it, or even exceed it because this form itself is contradictory. Second, the longitudinal analysis (2000–2010) of the techno-corporative discourse allows us to relate and articulate different discourses (critical, subordinated, and dissident discourses) which have affected the programs and projects of the European governance in the direction of society, thereby constructing a hegemonic vision in order to obtain general consent.

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Introduction

Over the past few decades, the process of governing in the European Union (EU) has come to signify a whole series of activities conducted by social, political, and administrative actors, which guide, direct, control, and administrate society (Hix, 1998). The relationship between these actors in the governmental process is not hierarchical, but polycentric and mutually dependent (Jachtenfuchs, 1997). Cartographically, there is a noticeable divide between European and national actors of the comitological system and a network of agencies in the administration and legislation of the EU:

Looked at as an experimentalist framework for generating (experimentalist) rules, comitology seems less a curious, idiosyncratic response to the problem of the regulatory integration of the EU and more a key instance of a broad re-orientation of law-making. To see comitology as both example and component of a general movement in the direction of experimentalism, it is necessary only to peer ‘down’ from the level of comitological decision making into the national administrations that, among other things, must implement EU decisions, or gaze ‘up’ at the level of macro-policy making the procedures for encompassing policy areas, such as ‘employment’ that affect countless particular programs and regulations. Although the actors and their scope of action are only distantly, if at all, comitological at these levels, the institutional architecture of decision making has a strong family affinity indeed. (Gerstenberg and Sabel, 2002: 325)

The key function of the governance is centered around the establishment of political agendas with long-term plans. These plans, which are based on regulation parameters, are coercive for national and local governments (both federal and/or regional). The result is a partial change by the local governments in their intervention and decision-making process; they continue to administrate what we call *small politics* (Coutinho, 2011). In other words, they focus narrowly on the ‘solution of intermediate problems’ concerning already established processes. In the decade between 2000 and 2010, after the Lisbon Strategy was adopted, the problem-solving style and modus operandi was to strengthen the public–private interaction (*techno-corporatism*). However, the *small politics* part remains the determinant component because it is not in conflict with bureaucratic centralism; rather, it is in harmony with a system similar to the *Directly-Deliberative Polyarchy* (Gerstenberg and Sabel, 2002). The legitimization forms that are no longer defined by the political representation or common identity are thus transformed, as was the case of the national states. Lacking the presumptions of an *input legitimacy*,¹ the *techno-corporatism* has focused on the construction of legitimacy forms that center the public attention on a series of technical predefined results. In fact, with the public policies on information and knowledge society, the following idea is reinforced:

substantive legitimacy depends on such features as the expertise and problem-solving capacity of the regulators, their ability to protect diffuse interests, a rational selection of regulatory priorities, the congruence of agency actions with statutory objectives and, most important, the precision of the limits within which regulators are expected to operate. (Majone, 1998: 21)

The discursive processes produced by *techno-corporatism* are part of these legitimization relationships: the significant challenge around the construction process of legitimization is a *sine qua non* condition of this European revolution.

Beyond providing such grounding, however, the semiotic or experimentalist view is crucial to our argument as a heuristic for the interpretation of the novel institutional developments that both contribute to the undeniable success of Europe as a project in public decision and deepen the puzzle of its democratic legitimacy. Indeed, arrangements such as comitology can be thought of as precisely the institutional embodiment of the semiotic view of language and meaning. With regard to particular policy areas, comitology establishes a framework that enables [the] discussion of contrasting views of a common object, and is in turn transformed (with respect to the outcomes that continue to be explored and elaborated) by that discussion itself. The common object sought is, as we [have seen], typically a regulation (for the safety of foodstuffs or machine tools or cosmetics) which respects both the integrity of the common market and the public interest in its well being, where the public('s) interest in this regard reflect differing national traditions regarding the burdens to be assumed by the state, the market, and citizens. (Gerstenberg and Sabel, 2002: 324)

The political agendas on the Knowledge Society are part of a revolution of the capital accumulation forms, which some theorists define as *Immaterial* or *Cognitive Capitalism* (Maniglio, 2009a; Vercellone, 2002, 2007). In this revolution, the *techno-corporative* is constituted in a technical, intellectual, and moral direction. They deliberately refer to it as *technical* direction because the struggle within the circumscribed intellectual field does not resolve the hegemonic dispute, especially in advanced capitalism where these fields are instituted on the basis of a wide pluralism and even abound in critical and subordinate conceptions:

[...] the specific function, mediator of the ideologies that promised to entrust the connection of a gradually closing system – the theoretical knowledge one – with a gradually opening system – the everyday life's – has become debilitated [...] the ideologies didn't solely propose to translate to a simple language the discoveries of science but also proposed to utilize them in a selective manner in their statements on reality, in order to integrate them in collective mobilization public projects. [...] A public sphere degradation [has occurred], in which the symbolic manipulation has replaced the debate and in which the clarification of opinions has been reduced to a technical issue that must be resolved by public relations and propaganda experts. In a way, the ideologies have become more autonomous; but at the cost of developing as such, that is to say, as rational forms of discourse. (Nun, 1989: 44–45)

This implies thinking of the techno-corporative discourse not in its apparent ethereal nature, but inscribing it in concrete effects of social interaction as a social practice for the legitimization of a technocratic direction for European public policies.

The construction of the European Governance hegemonic discourse

The idea of *cultural dominant* (Jameson, 1991) in the conjunctural post-Lisbon context takes us away from a natural or absolute dimension of political and economic relationships and is well within a series of dialectical relationships produced in the hegemonic process, before specific action contents produced by class alliances in which we are organically placed (Maniglio, 2009b):

Yet the totalizing account of the postmodern always included a space for various forms of oppositional culture: those of marginal groups, those of radically distinct residual or emergent cultural languages, their existence being already predicated by the necessarily uneven development of late capitalism, whose First World produces a Third World within itself by its own inner dynamic. In this sense Postmodernism is 'merely' a cultural dominant. To describe it in terms of cultural *hegemony* is not to suggest some massive and uniform cultural homogeneity of the social field but very precisely to imply its coexistence with other resistant and heterogeneous forces which it has a vocation to subdue and incorporate. (Jameson, 1991: 159)

Under these convictions, we have adopted the critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach with the idea of analyzing how the *techno-corporatism* produces and relates to particular significances which articulate discursive constructions. A fundamental premise in this perspective of the praxis theory is to renounce all the metaphysical and transcendental pretension in order to define the concept of discourse² (Ruiz and Sylvia, 2005). The discourse is determined by conventions associated with social institutions, which are simultaneously modified by the discourse itself, contributing alternatively to its transformation. It is through this dialectical relationship between discourse and social structures that the discourse is of great importance in terms of power relationships because individuals with power have control over these institutions. Those with such power play a significant role in maintaining these social structures (Franquesa Strugo, 2002). The advantage of relating CDA with the Political Economy of Knowledge is in the adoption of an approach that underlines the techno-corporative discourse as a particular response. This occurs in a specific moment within social practices, without losing sight of the dialectical relationship between the discursive moment and other non-semiotic moments of hegemonic processes (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999).

Delimitation and selection of text corpora

Regarding the purpose of analyzing the ideological convergence process of the European governance, I selected the sample based on different and specific periods of time (texts produced in the same years). These texts address the following key themes: public policies of information/knowledge society, information and communication technology (ICT), educational systems, and employment. They also demonstrate the extrinsic political, social, and relational importance of correlated state forces. Based on these criteria, I selected four reports (two of them produced by the European Round Table³ and the other two produced by the European Commission) of strategic importance while noting the start of decennial plans of structural adjustments in the development of the Knowledge Economy in the EU (Table 1).

Table 1. Text corpora.

Year	Author(s)	Author(s)	Text	Ref.
2000/2001	European Council	Institutional/governmental EU	<i>Lisbon Strategy. Lisbon European Council 23 and 24 March 2000</i>	UE (2000)
	European Round Table of Industrialists	Institutional/political pressure group of the 50 main multinational corporations in Europe	<i>Actions for Competitiveness through the Knowledge Economy in Europe: Message from the European Round Table of Industrialists to the Stockholm European Council</i>	European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT, 2001)
2010	Commission of the European Communities	Institutional/governmental EU	<i>Europe 2020. A European Strategy for Smart, Sustainable, and Inclusive Growth</i>	UE (2010)
	European Round Table of Industrialists	Institutional/political pressure group of the 50 main multinational corporations in Europe	<i>ERT's Vision for a Competitive Europe in 2025</i>	ERT (2010)

Source: Compiled by author.

The techno-corporative significance processes (2000–2010)

... word order, clause structure or clause relations may put information in more or less prominent positions, and as is the case for all structures and strategies discussed here, this will subtly effect processing and the construction of models. (Van Dijk, 1998: 272)

The discourses of the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT), the Council, and the Commission of the EU are particular representations of the conjunctural⁴ level of social practices. The selected texts, however, represent significant events. Therefore, the denominated *experiential values* (Fairclough, 1989, 1995; Fairclough and Wodak, 2000) of the words can be found in the researcher's praxis, a process of close interrogation and critical analysis of the words and the meanings or values ascribed to them. In this regard, the socio-cognitive posture assumed by Van Dijk also confirms the first step in the analysis I propose here:

The most obvious and therefore most widely studied form of ideological expression in discourse may be found in the words being chosen to express a concept. (Van Dijk, 1998: 270)

The *query word frequency* identifies the themes with potential significance, indicating the exact words as well as the concepts that appear most frequently. In the next section, I highlight the significance of the vocabulary model with a normative orientation (Fairclough, 2001: 231) (Table 2).

Table 2. Ideological significance per se (techno-economic vocabulary frequency).

Year	Ref.	Word	Count	(%)	Similar words
2000/2001	UE	Employment	66	1.42	Applied, applying, employability, employers, employment, exercise, use, used, using, utility, work, working
		Training	72	1.29	Aim, aimed, conditions, develop, developed, developing, development, direction, directly, educated, education, preparation, prepare, prepared, preparing, schools, take, taking, training
		Knowledge	35	0.85	Initiative, initiatives, knowledge, learning
		Growth	43	0.80	Develop, developed, developing, development, emergence, emerging, growth, increase, increased, increasing, increasingly
		Economic	24	0.78	Economic
		Market	24	0.78	Market, markets, selling
		Innovation	34	0.70	Concepts, creation, designed, initiative, initiatives, innovation, innovative, institutions, introduce, introduced, introducing
		Jobs	29	0.68	Business, businesses, job, jobs, line, occupational, problems
		Targets	28	0.55	Aim, aimed, direction, directly, marked, objective, objectives, place, point, points, target, targets
		Research	16	0.52	Research, researchers
		Economy	15	0.49	Economy
		Competitiveness	18	0.46	Challenge, challenges, challenging, competition, competitive, competitiveness, competitors, content, fight
		Skills	19	0.46	Acquired, good, goods, nice, practice, skill, skilled, skills
		Technologies	15	0.46	Engine, engines, technological, technologies, technology
		Development	30	0.44	Acquired, develop, developed, developing, development, evolution, modernising, underdeveloped
	ERT	Knowledge	31	1.90	Initiatives, knowledge, learning

Table 2. (Continued)

Year	Ref.	Word	Count	(%)	Similar words
		Skills	28	1.59	Acquire, acquired, acquisition, attained, attainment, experts, skills
		Competitiveness	20	1.30	Challenge, competition, competitive, competitiveness, content
		Economy	18	1.25	Economy
		Training	23	0.87	Aim, aimed, develop, developed, developing, development, education, educational, prepared, school, schools, taking, training
		Business	15	0.86	Business, concern, jobs, line
		Innovation	15	0.73	Concept, creation, designed, found, foundations, initiatives, innovate, innovation, innovative, innovators, introduce
		Task	10	0.57	Jobs, project, projects, task, tasks, tax
		Companies	9	0.56	Companies, company, society
		Information	7	0.49	Information
		Learning	17	0.48	Acquire, acquired, acquisition, learning, taking, teaching
		Technologies	7	0.45	Technical, technological, technologies, technology
2010	UE	Growth	182	1.33	Develop, developed, developing, development, developments, develops, emerge, emergence, emerging, grow, growing, growth, 'growth, increase, increased, increasing, increasingly
		Innovation	119	1.00	Advance, creation, design, designed, designing, initiative, initiatives, innovate, innovation, innovative, institutional, institutionally, institutions, introduction, modern
		Market	87	0.99	Commercial, commercialisation, market, markets
		Targets	102	0.83	Aim, aimed, aiming, aims, direct, direction, directive, directives, mark, objective, objectives, place, placed, point, points, target, targeted, targets, targeted

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued)

Year	Ref.	Word	Count	(%)	Similar words
		Employment	111	0.82	Applied, applies, employability, employed, employment, work, working, works
		Education	118	0.78	Civil, derivatives, develop, developed, developing, development, developments, develops, educated, education, educational, school, training
		Economic	63	0.69	Economic, save, saving, savings
		Economy	60	0.65	Economies, economies', economy, save, saving, savings
		Challenges	77	0.64	Ambitious, challenge, challenged, challenges, challenging, competition, competitive, competitiveness, competitors, dispute
		Financial	55	0.62	Financial, fiscal
		Efficiency	65	0.62	Effect, effective, effectively, effectiveness, effects, efficiency, efficient
		Business	72	0.60	Business, businesses, concern, concerned, engage, engaged, job, jobs, line, lines, occupations
		Global	64	0.55	Global, globalisation, globally, world, worlds, worldwide
		Work	133	0.52	Act, acted, acting, acts, bring, bringing, exploit, exploited, exploiting, work, working, works
		Funds	60	0.49	Finance, finances, financing, fund, funded, funding, funds, stock
		Crisis	42	0.48	Crisis
		Investment	58	0.47	Commit, commitment, commitments, empower, empowered, empowering, invest, invested, investing, investment, investments
		Progress	73	0.46	Advance, build, building, 'building, buildings, builds, increase, increased, increasing, increasingly, process, processes, progress, progressing, progressive
		Governance	74	0.41	Administration, administrative, authorities, establish, established, establishing, establishment, governance, government, governments, order, organizations

Table 2. (Continued)

Year	Ref.	Word	Count	(%)	Similar words
		Develop	92	0.40	Acquire, acquired, arise, develop, developed, developing, development, developments, develops, evolving, exploit, exploited, exploiting, get, grow, growing, modern, modernisation, modernise, modernised, modernising, rise, rising
		Resource	34	0.39	Resource, resources
	ERT	Global	121	1.87	Global, globalisation, globalising, globally, world, worldwide
		Development	96	1.33	Arising, develop, developed, developing, development, developments, growth, modern, modernise, original, producers, rising, training
		Policy	59	1.12	Policies, policy
		Market	55	1.05	Commercialisation, market, marketable, markets
		Work	95	0.97	Act, acts, bring, bringing, employ, employment, work, working
		Competitive	58	0.95	Challenge, challenges, competition, competitive, competitiveness, content, fight
		Technologies	48	0.89	Technical, technological, technologies, technology
		Business	51	0.85	Business, businesses, engage, engagement, engaging, job, jobs, line, lines, occupational
		Companies	53	0.84	Accompanying, companies, companies', company, societies, society
		Innovation	61	0.79	Advance, advanced, advancement, concept, creation, design, designed, founded, initial, initiatives, innovation, innovations, innovative, innovator, innovators
		Investment	54	0.71	Commitment, commitments, committed, empowered, invest, investing, investment, investments
		Economic	36	0.69	Economic
		Economy	30	0.57	Economies, economy

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued)

Year	Ref.	Word	Count	(%)	Similar words
		Sustainable	52	0.49	Keep, maintain, maintaining, prolong, sustain, sustainability, sustainable, sustained, sustaining
		Productivity	26	0.43	Fruit, generated, generation, generations, product, production, productive, productivity, products, richness
		Trade	21	0.40	Trade, trading
		Governance	41	0.37	Control, established, establishing, govern, governance, governed, governing, government, governments, organisation, organisations, political, regime, rules
		Education	38	0.37	Civil, educated, education, educational, school, schools, teaches, teaching, training
		Industrial	20	0.33	Industrial, industries, industry, manufactured, manufacturing
		Knowledge	21	0.29	Initial, initiatives, knowledge, learning
		Research	15	0.29	Research, researchers
		Growth	34	0.28	Emergence, emerging, growth, increase, increased, increases, increasing, increasingly
		Private	15	0.26	Individual, private
		Global	121	1.87	Global, globalisation, globalising, globally, world, worldwide

Source: Compiled by the author – NVivo 10 QSR International.

In this case, I noticed that the frequent occurrence of specific words in the four sampled texts reflects the ideological and political spectrum of the new growth paradigm of the European governance. Analyzing the *similarity of the words*⁵ reveals a high value in the similarity rate, which indicates an ideological convergence (in terms of consensus) in the techno-corporatism euro (Table 3).

The techno-corporative society

Without a doubt, words are not isolated; there are always deeper meanings ascribed to them. Second, it is through an analysis of the placement of words and lexicons, based on their position and distance in relation to the adjectives, that we illustrate their potential significance and the implications of these words – both ideological and political. The political meaning of the term *society*, in the discourse of the EU Council, takes shape through

Table 3. Word similarity index.

Resource A	Resource B	PPMCC
Internals\UE 2010	Internals\ERT 2010	0.545368
Internals\UE 2010	Internals\UE 2000	0.495941
Internals\UE 2000	Internals\ERT 2001	0.364993
Internals\UE 2000	Internals\ERT 2010	0.353545
Internals\ERT 2010	Internals\ERT 2001	0.28665
Internals\UE 2010	Internals\ERT 2000	0.275201

Source: Compiled by the author – NVivo 10 QSR International.

Table 4. Placement of the terms *society* and in the discourse of the European Council in Lisbon in the year 2000.

<Internals\UE 2000> – § 11 references coded (0.13% coverage)

Reference 1 – 0.01% coverage its values and concepts of society and also with a view	Reference 7 – 0.01% coverage for jobs in the Information Society ’. 9. Businesses and citizens must
Reference 2 – 0.01% coverage moving towards a knowledge-based society . Growth and job creation have	Reference 8 – 0.01% coverage work in this new information society . Different means of access must
Reference 3 – 0.01% coverage a knowledge-based economy and society by better policies for the	Reference 9 – 0.01% coverage and working in the knowledge society 25. Europe’s education and training
Reference 4 – 0.01% coverage better policies for the information society and R&D, as well	Reference 10 – 0.01% coverage he demands of the knowledge society and to the need for
Reference 5 – 0.01% coverage Europe in an emerging new society which is more adapted to	Reference 11 – 0.01% coverage The new knowledge-based society offers tremendous potential for reducing
Reference 6 – 0.01% coverage An information society for all	

Source: Compiled by the author – NVivo 10 QSR International.

the *knowledge/information and economy* modifiers of the European Council of Lisbon in 2000 (European Council, 2000). The chart in Table 4 highlights some of these references.

The potential significance is reduced by the frequency context and the proximity context in which the word is placed. This context reveals several significant points as it relates to the indicated item. Moreover, its strategic attributes constitute normative potential:

preparing the transition to a knowledge-based economy and **society** by better policies for the information society and R&D, as well as by stepping up the process of structural reform for competitiveness and innovation and by completing the internal market. (UE, 2000: 2)

This normativity expressed by the term can be considered a major strategic goal that contributes to the political revolution of a wide sector in the social reality, through a direct

association between the terms *society/knowledge/information/economy*. It is a strategic exercise in interdiscursivity to the extent that different elements of the potential significance of the words express different types of discourse. This is evident in the following clause:

The European Council needs to set a goal for full employment in Europe in an emerging new society which is more adapted to the personal choices of women and men. (UE, 2000: 2)

There is a relationship between the proximity to emerging new society and the references that allude to the knowledge-based economy society and the information society. This relationship determines the normative structure (*society/knowledge/information/economy*) and at the same time it does not exclude others (emerging new society).

Employment and education in the knowledge society

We can see in the four reports how the word employment is used to signify economic-developmental lexicons such as financial markets, growth, entrepreneurial culture, productivity, and technology industry. In so doing, this word is used to establish a complementary relationship with other terms such as **better allocation**, **essential role**, **fueling new ideas**, and **opportunities** in the scope of the *appropriate*, the adequate, the relevant, the opportune, and the acceptable (*the appropriacy of appropriateness*) (Fairclough, 1995: 233–253):

Efficient and transparent financial markets foster growth and **employment** by **better allocation** of capital and reducing its cost. They therefore **play an essential role** in **fuelling new ideas**, supporting entrepreneurial culture and promoting access to and use of new technologies. (UE, 2000: 6)

We need a strategy to help us come out stronger from the crisis and turn the EU into a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy delivering **high levels of employment**, productivity and **social cohesion**. (UE, 2010: 3)

A strong and productive manufacturing and technology industry will drive private-sector investments in **promising** new industrial activities, providing the basis for sustainable growth and **attractive jobs**. All Europeans **can benefit** from the **opportunities** presented by this new economic dynamism. (ERT, 2010: 3)

The appropriate, relating to qualifications and abilities, also dominates the educational thought in the texts.

European framework should define the **new basic skills** to be provided through lifelong learning: IT skills, foreign languages, technological culture, entrepreneurship and social skills; a European diploma for basic IT skills, with decentralised certification procedures, should be established in order to promote digital literacy throughout the Union. (UE, 2000: 8)

recasting national educational systems so that they enable everyone to acquire the **new skills** they need during a process of lifelong learning. (ERT, 2001: 3)

This logic is manifested through interdiscursivity since the operational knowledge (what we can and must do) is considered an educational function. The transformations of the study plans and the reforms in the educational systems in Europe are thus presented in order to promote **new basic skills**, which refer to an undetermined series of specific abilities:

This means empowering people through the acquisition of **new skills** to enable our current and future workforce to adapt to new conditions and potential career shifts, reduce unemployment and raise labour productivity. (UE, 2010: 16–17)

To ensure that the **competences required** to engage in further learning and the labour market are acquired and recognised throughout general, vocational, higher and adult education, including non formal and informal learning. (UE, 2010: 17)

European labour markets need to become much more inclusive, enabling business to mobilise employees of all ages and at all **levels of qualification**, and to remunerate work in line with performance. Continuous education and training will help with successful matching of skills and business needs. (ERT, 2010: 10)

It is much more dependent on the continuous acquisition of **new skills** by people and companies and being ahead of the **competition** in exploiting critical knowledge. (ERT, 2001: 3)

The **new skills** are then established in order to adequately respond to the exploitation of knowledge. This **new skills'** goal is configured in the order of labor productivity and corporate necessities. The models are based on abilities and skills that transcend the specific field or level of education, expanding in many areas of social life and include wider social and cultural thematic areas. These models emphasize the values of **entrepreneurship**:

The new European needs more than skills to make a success of the Knowledge Economy. He or she needs to be able to bring a **spirit of enterprise** to life as an employee and a citizen. (ERT, 2001: 4)

To promote knowledge partnerships and strengthen links between education, business, research and innovation, including through the EIT, and to promote **entrepreneurship** by supporting Young Innovative Companies. (UE, 2010: 11)

A vibrant business environment must support their efforts to maximise productivity, enabling them to place **entrepreneurship**, innovation and research and development at the heart of Europe's socio-economic transformation. (ERT, 2010: 3)

Entrepreneurship is one of the basic competences, which is a common goal for all students. It calls for normalized knowledge and skills according to the demands of the new Economy of Knowledge. We thus incorporate a particular vision of a social subject, constructing an *ideology of educability* based on the democratization of education as a system. Within this vision, the *ideology of educability* qualifies the subjects as actors,

presupposing⁶ the relationship between exploitation of heterogeneous knowledge, the formation of even more private learning capacities, and the adoption of always more specific formation systems. Therefore, the models based on abilities in these technopolitical reports must be seen as an educational ideology by corresponding them with the perspectives and interests of a specific social group.

The normative and prescriptive nature of the key terms with regard to the *appropriate* term defines a type of socio-linguistic order, which the hegemonic process dominates. As we have affirmed when referring to the particularity of the dialectic relations in Gramsci, the ideology is a form of consensual domain (Coutinho, 1999) that does not eliminate one practice over the other, but operates in virtue of a relative marginalization, thereby incorporating an array of heterogeneous practices. The establishment of a socio-linguistic hegemony means an institution of domination and subordination between the alternative linguistic practices. The point of view of the discursive order as a ground for the hegemonic struggle is more evident if we can understand the differences that may exist between different types of discourse, on the basis of the *expressive value* of the words contained in them. These assume an ideological signification, whereas a speaker expresses his own specific evaluations by making use of the ideologically contrasting classifications, which involve several values in different discursive types:

As a particular form of positioning before aspects of the world the evaluations are always partial, subjective and, therefore connected to specific identification processes. [...] Evaluations are, thus identification significances that can be materialized in textual traces as appraised affirmations, affirmations of a deontic nature, affective affirmations and evaluative presumptions. (Ramalho and Resende, 2011: 119)

In the sample under analysis, particular evaluations carried out through the presence of the terms **opportunities** or **preferences** are common and relate to favorable actions. Consider, for example, the following references:

In pursuing other **preferences** and **opportunities**, they will need, among other things, to be able to identify emerging *employment opportunities* and to acquire the necessary training for them. (ERT, 2001: 4)

However, in this case, this lexicon is being utilized in a discourse whose final message is highly unfavorable to the audience: the precariousness of labor and life in general. This discursively inadequate usage of a lexicon may respond to several factors, one of which is the ideological intention of the author. We can observe this signification exercise through other items which, in general, refer to favorable actions and/or deeds such as **quality** and **sustainable**:

Smart growth means strengthening knowledge and innovation as drivers of our future growth. This requires improving **the quality of our education**, strengthening our research performance, promoting innovation and knowledge transfer throughout the Union, making full use of information and communication technologies and ensuring that innovative ideas can be turned into new products and services that create growth, **quality jobs** and help address European and global societal challenges. But, to succeed, this must be combined with entrepreneurship, finance, and a focus on user needs and market opportunities. (UE, 2010: 9–10)

Public policies based on a **new understanding of job security** – putting less focus on preserving jobs and more on **ensuring high levels of productive and sustainable employment** – would help Europeans to embrace change. With this kind of flexibility, a well-educated and well-led workforce could help raise European productivity to amongst the highest in the world. (ERT, 2010: 10)

A situation occurs in which it is consciously presented an unfavorable condition such as the *precariousness* (European and global societal challenges) as something positive (**the new understanding of job security, the quality of jobs, the sustainability**, etc.) to specific particular or communal interests such as the production of surplus value of the maximum exploitation of the ICT. The author of the message would then be reflecting his own favorable evaluation of a particular deed, which in reality would not be considered as such. And if selected in the discourse, a more positive message would be associated.

The flexicurity

Also, for example, with regard to the complementary relationship in the significance of different terms, the announcement *Europe 2020* (European Commission, 2010) reveals the emblematic case of a new word, **flexicurity**:

Implementing **flexicurity** principles and enabling people to acquire new skills to adapt to new conditions and potential career shifts will be key. A major effort will be needed to combat poverty and social exclusion and reduce health inequalities to ensure that everybody can benefit from growth. Equally important will be our ability to meet the challenge of promoting a healthy and active ageing population to allow for social cohesion and higher productivity. (UE, 2010: 16)

The creation of new lexicons, such as flexicurity, allows the construction of new particular perspectives in the field of the experience from different points of view: ideological, cultural, scientific, theoretical, and otherwise. The multiplicity of the word flexicurity may be considered an aspect of the *intertextuality* (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 1989, 1995; Ramalho and Resende, 2011). To name an experience field is equivalent, in vocabulary terms, to the constitution of a particular configuration of intertextual elements in the production of a text (Fairclough, 2001: 237):

To define and implement the second phase of the **flexicurity** agenda, together with European social partners, to identify ways to better manage economic transitions and to fight unemployment and raise activity rates. (UE, 2010: 17)

To implement their national pathways for **flexicurity**, as agreed by the European Council, to reduce labour market segmentation and facilitate transitions as well as facilitating the reconciliation of work and family life. (UE, 2010: 17)

In the quoted examples, the relationship between the item **flexicurity** with the reconciliation of work and family life and the reduction of labor market segmentation as well as facilitated transitions is a dimension of a *non-manifested intertextual configuration* centered on the articulation of different perspectives, voices, interests, and goals. In fact,

Table 5. Cluster nodes by similarity of encoding (European Commission, 2010).

	Flexisecurity
Flexibility	
	Security or Protection

Source: Compiled by author – NVivo 10 QSR International.
Similarity calculated with the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient.

the item flexicurity is in itself an intertextual exercise because it is composed of two distinct and opposed lexicons and by its experiential and historic-ideological value. The flexicurity is a double-sided coin: one the flexibility (which generally translates to even more precariousness) and the other more tempting – the possibility of reinforcing the Welfare State in Europe. The debate on this politics is forged in the relationship between these distinctive positions and in the ambiguity that it generates. It produces an ambiguity that signifies a new form of hierarchicalization of significant relationships, where the flexibility and the economic demands acquire more relevance.

The diagram displayed below reveals how the dialectic synthesis which exercises the term flexicurity cannot, in fact, be interpreted in terms of reciprocity between distinguished non-antagonistic opposites, but rather in terms of antagonistic opposites. It is the potential significance of the *flexibility* (thesis) that elevates to the sense of the *flexicurity* (synthesis), incorporating the personal quality and socio-political experiences’ scale represented by *security* (antithesis) (Table 5).

The strategy and the ideological consensus, in which the flexicurity concept seemed to be included, have set an inevitably imprecise and ambiguous course that generates distrust and uncertainties. The main danger that is presented is the reticence that may result in a unidimensional perspective. This is based on exclusively economic assumptions in models that are uncommon to all member states. In any case, a progression to the extent that the term has come to acquire over the years in community policies is advised, since recently the social nuances of the concept have been reinforced (Ballester Pastor, 2012; Cabeza Pereiro and Ballester Pastor, 2012).

The exchanges in the socio-linguistic techno-corporative order (2000–2010)

With the *Lisbon Strategy* in 2000, European governance has come to search for a consensus centering its political-economic discourse in the employment, with new reforms to complement the European Employment Strategy (EES). The relevance of the term *employment* is based on a subordination to the economic policy: the *useful* as much as the *appropriate*, concerning the right to work (protection, security) are established regarding economic goals. The reforms in the employment policies are established as an urgent *necessity*, thus becoming a central axis of the public speech. However, the hegemonic processes, the relationship word-significance, may rapidly change and many potential significates may become unstable, including disputes between conflictive attributions of significate.⁷ For over a decade of deregulation and continuous exploitation of the labor

market across the entire Eurozone, this stability no longer meets its original function and the Commission, in the attempt to continue its permanent revolution, turns to new forms of exploitation and new market coordinates, centralizing the discourse relationships around the term *growth*.

With the *Europe 2020* strategy, we can, in fact, observe how the Commission establishes the new axis of the economic agenda with a discourse that recuperates and extends its developmental logic, setting the term *growth* in a complementary relationship regarding the terms *intelligent*, *sustainable*, and *integrative*. The term *employment* thus loses its centrality, falling in subordination to the term *growth*. More specifically, the term *employment* is in subordination to *integrative growth*, which intends to represent the continuation of employment techniques having the flexicurity as an instrument and a complementary relationship with the terms *economic*, *social and territorial cohesiveness*, *qualifications*, *labor market*, and *formative systems*.

This integrative and global phenomenon regarding the economic system also takes advice in the new configuration for the employment's orientations, which are no longer autonomous, but are instead integrated in the economic politics' orientations. The employment ultimately results in something with a tendency to be modified by means of superficial exchanges. This process is even more evident while analyzing the texts altogether.

The variation in the codifications of the sample in the node *Education and qualifications: competences, skills, techniques* indicates how the European governance focus has revolutionized: it is the passage from the centrality of the *knowledge economy* (in which the employment policies and the formation, education, innovation, and investigation policies become central) to a *growth economy* (in which the knowledge economy is only complementary) (Figure 1).

The codifications of the node *Development or Growth* underline new point of stability and, in general, a new emphasis on the developmental paradigm (Figure 2).

The economic crisis and the accountability differences

The *accountability* differences on the varied forces that compose the European technocratism are manifested in numerous themes in the texts. Without a doubt, *crisis* is the most emblematic theme in this regard. In fact, in 2010, the ERT industrial and financial lobby alluded to the social context of the media set by the consequences of the *financial crisis*, focusing on themes such as *sustainability* and *growth*, saturating the texts with items such as *companies*, *market*, *sustainable development*, *worldwide*, *global*, *innovation*, and *services*. The European Commission, on the contrary, is *accountable* regarding national governments and public opinion in general: it cannot avoid a theme which is always socially more relevant and therefore requires urgent responses (Figure 3).

The recent economic **crisis** has no precedent in our generation. The steady gains in economic growth and job creation witnessed over the last decade have been wiped out – our GDP fell by 4% in 2009, our industrial production dropped back to the levels of the 1990s and 23 million people or 10% of our active population are now unemployed. The crisis has been a huge shock for millions of citizens and it has exposed some fundamental weaknesses of our economy. (UE, 2010: 5)

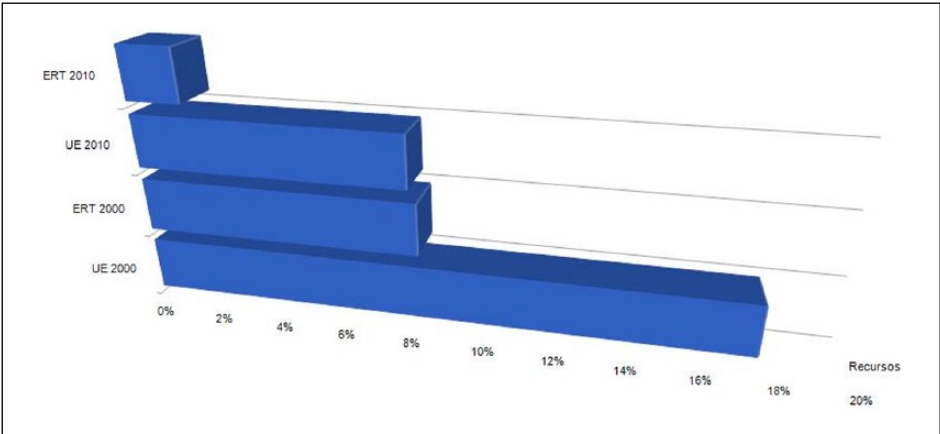


Figure 1. Education and qualifications: competences, skills, techniques (variation – codification by element).

Source: Compiled by author – NVivo 10 QSR International.

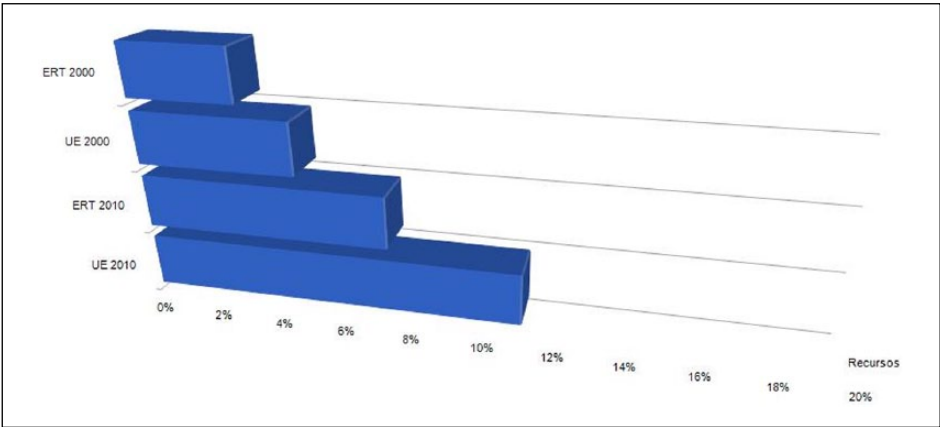


Figure 2. Development or growth (variation – codification by element).

Source: Compiled by author – NVivo 10 QSR International.

The **crisis** is thus described as a supernatural, mystical event (has no precedent): the causes of this critical occurrence disappear, creating a causal context characterized by the uncertainty, in which there are evident economic consequences. To an uncertain causal context, the EU responds with dogmatic infallibility (*the appropriate theory*): more and new growth typologies:

Europe is able to act in times of **crisis** and to adapt its economies and societies. And today Europeans face again a moment of transformation to cope with the impact of the **crisis**, Europe’s structural weaknesses and intensifying global challenge.

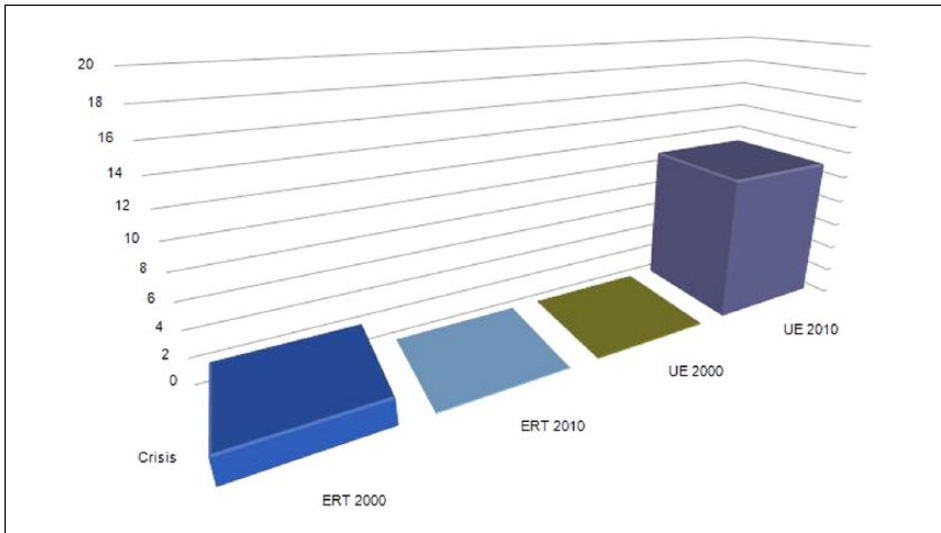


Figure 3. Crisis (variation – codification by element).

Source: Compiled by author – NVivo 10 QSR International.

In so doing, our exit from the **crisis** must be the point of entry into a new economy. (UE, 2010: 8)

However, notwithstanding the critical context, the inherent dialectics to the hegemonic process find new synthesis in their future agenda: the **crisis** is absorbed by the *growth*:

Europe is able to make a full return to earlier *growth* path and raise its potential to go beyond. (UE, 2010: 7)

This dialectic process is produced due to a ramified description of concepts,⁸ which set significant complementary relations in a continuous interdiscursivity exercise. We can see in the following how the *developmental discourse* (thesis) articulates to the *sustainability* (antithesis), thus reinforcing a new economic agenda with a whole series of significances which, by experiential value, we can define as antagonistic: **well-being on Earth, quality of life, health protection, environmental protection, peace**, and so on:

A strong and productive manufacturing and technology industry will drive private-sector investments in promising new industrial activities, providing the basis for **sustainable growth** and attractive jobs. All Europeans can benefit from the opportunities presented by this new economic dynamism. (ERT, 2010: 3)

Sustainability implies that – ‘the needs of the present generation should be met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’. Sustainability is necessary to ensure the long-term ‘improvement of the **quality of life and well-being on Earth** for present and future generations’. This calls for ‘a **dynamic economy with full employment**

and a high level of **education, health protection, social and territorial cohesion and environmental protection** in a **peaceful and secure world ...**' (ERT, 2010: 4)

A collective agenda (ERT2010/EU2010) underneath the slogan of *sustainable growth* indicates a new field of exploitation and market:

Resource efficient Europe to help decouple economic growth from the use of resources, support the shift towards a low carbon economy, increase the use of renewable energy sources, modernise our transport sector and promote energy efficiency. (UE, 2010: 4)

They will provide the solutions that help to tackle societal challenges, including those arising from global megatrends, population growth and demographic change, urbanisation, climate change, globalisation and increasing **resource scarcity**. (ERT, 2010: 3)

Europe's people should be empowered to contribute to the continent's **sustainable development**, through an inclusive labour market allowing all talents to be applied to the benefit of society. (ERT, 2010: 4)

The *interdiscursivity* exercise is common to all the significant axes constructed around *growth* which set the guidelines to the new communal economic agenda: an *intelligent growth*, based on knowledge and innovation; an integrative growth, which, as we have seen previously, represents the continuation of the employment policies.

The techno-corporative discourse for 2020 amplifies the potential significance of *growth*, alluding to a permanent transformation of the political-economic agenda, with regard to the exploitation of resources and an ever new, heterogeneous, creative, and innovative market. This movement is, in itself, a part of the European governmental strategic evolution over the last decade. In the first part of this period, the starting presupposition of public speech was to keep reinforcing the structural conditions toward the deregulation of labor market, services and welfare policies, of education, formation, and investigation, of services and welfare policies by correlating an ever more dominant exploitation form (knowledge economy) with a new living form (knowledge society).

With the culmination of the deregulation of the labor market and with the European Economic Area (EEA) at its height, once ratified the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and privatized the universities' domain, as well as reduced the welfare services and privatized the best *assets* of the Member States, the techno-corporatism continues the permanent revolution by implementing the exploitation of old and ever new fields of society. This indeterminacy of the market limits is accompanied by the abstract and cryptic nature of the discourse: a profound conceptual indeterminacy which involves the EU's strategies and projects.

These are usually integrated by references filled with high-reach interdiscursive terms, almost cryptic (*employability, adaptability, flexicurity*) but calculatedly undefined and/or ambiguous. Their main characteristic is they are usually easy to assume by any ideology or cultural parameter. These are goals we can all agree with and that, throughout the years, usually repeat themselves in content and consecutive strategies. On the other hand, as we will see with the study of *intertextuality*, they usually intertwine with different programs, with a similar cryptic sense, which makes the situation particularly complex, not exactly in the content of its goals, but in their meanings.

The ideational dimensions of the techno-corporative discourse

The exchanges in the dimension of techno-corporative discourse's ideation are also constructed with several typologies of processes codified in clauses involving different participants. Along with the lexicon, the syntax is one of the most evident means that the speakers have to express their ideological opinions on events, people, and participants, since, just as the isolated words, the grammar structures also exhibit *experiential*, *relational*, and *expressive value* (Fairclough, 1989; Van Dijk, 1998).

Techno-corporatism: The protagonists of the social-economic exchange

Through the analysis of the *transitivity*,⁹ we provide fundamental information regarding this hegemonic process and regarding the discursive practices of the European techno-corporatism. We can accurately determine who the elected participants are in both the information and action; which types of phenomena execute, in different texts, distinct entities, or individuals; and to whom power is most attributed:

These three main types of sentence most typically (but not always—see below) express respectively the three main types of process: actions (SVO), events (SV), and attributions (SVC). (Fairclough, 1989: 122)

During the final decade of the 20th century, under the omen of a global economic exchange, the European governance was implementing the *Europeanization*, with the transition of many decisive powers to different actors through procedures in which the 'classical' democracy's transparency, representation, and participation were not granted. A wide process that intended to legitimate a political-economic revolution, which in several measures and agendas, proposed to

- implement the deregulation and exploitation of the work market;
- reform the educational and formative systems;
- constitute a new architecture of knowledge and measurement of competences and skills ever more transversal;
- expand the denominated economy of knowledge through the privatization and exploitation of the services market, and the expansion of the digital economy.

With the European Council of Lisbon (European Council, 2000), the European governance introduced this political agenda seeking legitimation in the light of the decanted global economic exchange. The economic exchange is constituted, in fact, as a universal event (globalization) and as a debate (challenge) without contestants. The EU is the only (reflexive verb) inanimate¹⁰ agent of an inevitable process (is confronted) responding to a supernatural event (quantum shift):

The European Union *is confronted* with a quantum shift resulting from globalisation and the challenges of a new knowledge-driven economy. (UE, 2000: 1)

These processes are mystified while they are not connected to some human agencies (these changes), although their action not only intervenes (are affecting) in society (aspect of people's lives), but also imposes (require), in normative terms, its economic agendas (radical transformation of the European economy):

These changes are affecting every aspect of people's lives and require a radical transformation of the European economy. (UE, 2000: 1)

In this sentence, the EU is constituted as an acting agent, regarding the potency of the events. Events that become agents/causers of processes in the succeeding clause will affect society as a whole. They construct the subordination of the Political Europe regarding the forces of neo-liberal economy. This hierarchization, as the legitimizing ideational disposition, is also quite evident in the first macro propositions of the ERT report (European Council, 2000):

Europeans are in the process of constructing a new Europe on the foundations of improved competitiveness and a dynamic, knowledge-based economy that will ultimately extend over a significantly larger group of countries than the present 15 members of the European Union. (ERT, 2001: 3)

In the first sentence, it is registered as a concrete event: the construction of the agent in an inclusive and consensual form (Europeans), acting in an existential process already in action (are in the process of constructing), and therefore unquestionable, in order to achieve a goal (new Europe) through coercive methods (on the foundations of competitiveness and a dynamic, knowledge-based economy). In the following sentence, the medium is transformed in the agent/causer (economy) that marks a material process (extend) regarding the patient (a significantly larger group of countries than the present 15 members of the EU).

However, in 2010, the conjunctural context evolved and the differences of *accountability*, in the different forces which compose the European techno-corporatism, revealed themselves also regarding discursive practices. The European Commission in the *Europe 2020* (European Commission, 2010) no longer legitimated its new political agenda based on an undetermined *worldwide economic exchange*, but rather based on an even more undetermined moment of transformation:

Europe *faces* a moment of transformation. (UE, 2010: 3)

This moment of transformation, in reality, constitutes an inevitable universal event: a supernatural event in which the Union, as its only agent, must respond (faces). In the following sentence, the event becomes an *inanimate agent* (crisis) responsible (has wiped-exposed) for its critical context (structural weakness in Europe's economy):

The crisis has wiped out years of economic and social progress and exposed structural weaknesses in Europe's economy. In the meantime, the world is moving fast and long-term challenges – globalisation, pressure on resources, ageing – *intensify*. (UE, 2010: 3)

This way it is obviated the determination of the direct responsible of an action (agent), considering that anyone can be regarded as responsible, even when it is not the case. On the other hand, the paragraph under examination becomes complete through two more events, marking a context that strengthens the transformation of the first sentence's action into an event, as well as the interpretation of the acts as something natural and perhaps even inevitable. Furthermore, the ERT in its report (ERT, 2010) obviates the legitimization of its political-economic proposal in terms of critical events, directly projecting its action toward a distinctive, but undetermined, future: a process toward the future in general, poorly defined and without a history (this is only what 'will be'):

In 2025, the world will be very different from today. (ERT, 2010: 3)

In this sentence, the industrials construct an undetermined existential process, involving an *inanimate agent* (the world) and, in the continuation of this verbal process (*will be*), an attribute. This attribute (very different from today) legitimates a whole series of actions (political agendas), which are explicit in the continuation of the text.

The techno-corporative ethos

From a rhetorical perspective, these sentences contribute to the establishment of the European techno-corporatism *ethos*. In the European Commission (2010) and the EU Council (2000), the EU *is confronted*; the **ethos of potency or power** is constructed (expressing itself through the means of the verbal force against an adverse, critical, or particular context) and revealed as the only proposed and competent agent for the action. In the ERT texts (ERT, 2000), along with the declaratory procedure 'Europeans are in the process of constructing [...]', the **ethos of virtue and competence** is cemented, thereby amplifying the identification collective including a reference to us (the Europeans). Meanwhile, through the *declaratory* procedure 'the world will be different from today ...' (ERT, 2010), the author uses the knowledge modality (*it will be, it is*), demonstrating his capacity of evaluating determined situations and thus deciding future actions (*intelligence ethos*). The verbs *to believe* or *to know*, proper of the epistemic modality, combine, with others, characteristics of the volitional modality: *to want, to wait, to desire*. Through these last ones, present only in the European Commission's (2010) text, the EU intends to establish the **ethos of the humanity** (with the capacity of reflection and expression of emotions and weaknesses) regarding the declination (and the new capacity of generating consensus) of the European institutions in the social-political context marked by economic crisis:

For our own and future generations to continue to enjoy a high-quality of healthy life, underpinned by Europe's unique social models, we need to take action now. (UE, 2010: 8)

These targets are representative, not exhaustive. They represent an overall view of where the Commission *would like* to see the EU on key parameters by 2020. (UE, 2010: 9)

Without a doubt, it is the deontological modality associated with the idea of duty or obligation that prevails in the analyzed sample. This is a duty that belongs not only to the issuer, but also to all Europeans. The European techno-corporatism compromises with the 'truth' and the necessity of a certain action and attempts to achieve the adherence and action of the citizen. The **ethos of virtue and competence** places it not only in the place of knowledge, but also in the *being able* to make effective the proposed measures:

Much *can be done* to speed up and encourage the transition of entire populations via the electronic delivery of public information and services. (ERT, 2001: 7)

The EU *can only address* the challenges of the future and remain an attractive place to live and work if it reforms its own governance system. By 2025, the EU's governance structure and decision-making process *must become* more efficient, more transparent and more democratic. (ERT, 2010: 12)

Steps *must be taken* to ensure that Europe maintains its lead in key technology areas such as mobile communications. The speed of technological change may require new and more flexible regulatory approaches in the future. (UE, 2000: 3)

This partnership approach *should extend to* EU committees, to national parliaments and national, local and regional authorities, to social partners and to stakeholders and civil society so that everyone is involved in delivering on the vision. (UE, 2010: 4)

These determined senses of the *ethos* construct a 'techno-intellectual and moral direction' of the European techno-corporatism, which is to say its degree of imposition and action through a specific view of the world. In the case of European government, we know this implicates the acceptance of a direct political direction. By speaking of a *governance without a government*, we refer to the particular disposition of actors which do not present themselves as a direct part of the dominant class, but as intellectuals, technicians, and political professionals (administrators). These individuals indirectly defend the European corporativism's interests, which continue to be represented as the most common interests. This would be the acceptance of a mediated political direction that, even while assuming the centrality of the consensus and the acceptance in the hegemonic processes, does not implicate an idealistic or naive vision that denies more profound determinations of power – fundamentally because the consensus and, inclusively, the 'will' are socially constructed through multiple processes of socialization that tell us what we 'must' want (Foucault, 1979).

The 'must be' of the European citizen

The techno-corporatism thus constitutes a determined *ethos* of virtue and competence, by which it legitimates the agent that responds to these inevitable processes in a particular form: 'it is' that implies 'it should be' or 'must be' (Fairclough, 2003: 44–46). However, this 'mode' does not present itself in a direct relationship with the functions of the subject, but rather in the *declarative and exhortative* forms. In these particular texts, the presence of the declarative mode assigns *objectivity* to what has been said; at the same time it shows certitude (epistemic modality). For its construction, this certitude usually used the indicative mode (Figure 4).

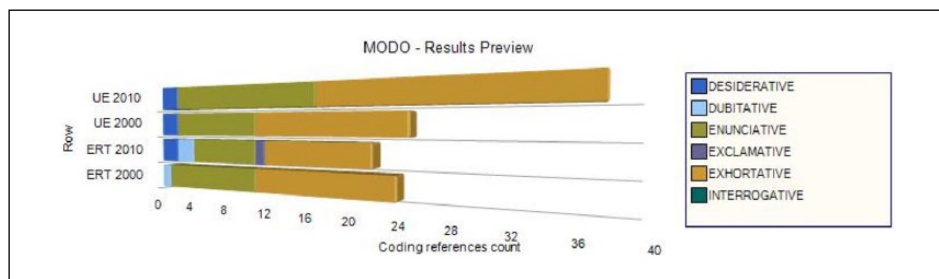


Figure 4. Frequency* of the modes in the selected texts (references by code).

Source: Compiled by author – NVivo 10 QSR International.

*Projection of the data contained in each text's first part (introduction).

Here are some examples,

The looming crisis for EU business posed by the growing shortage of professionals in information, communication and other technologies. This shortage is handicapping growth, innovation and productivity. (ERT, 2001: 3)

Europe has a relatively balanced economy, with an advanced industrial and technological base and a sophisticated services sector. The EU Single Market provides industry with a large home market that is essential for its ability to compete globally. Its economic policies are generally well-founded, but they are often stifled by uneven implementation and contradicting policies in other areas. (ERT, 2010: 3)

The Union has today set itself a **new strategic goal** for the next decade: *to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion.* (UE, 2000: 2)

The targets are representative of the three priorities of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth but they are not exhaustive: a wide range of actions at national, EU and international levels will be necessary to underpin them. (UE, 2010: 3)

With a significant occurrence, the *declarative mode* relates somewhat to the *exhortative mode*, in order to influence the addressee (deontological modality) through imposed (order, prohibitions) or non-imposed (appeals, advices, recommendations, suggestions, etc.) statements:

Our aim in this paper is to build on the Commission's recommendations and to urge the Council to focus, in particular, on two aspects [...]. (ERT, 2001: 3)

The European economy must be characterised by an ever-improving climate for domestic investment, which would also allow it to continue to attract significant levels of foreign direct investment. A growth-friendly business climate and a high level of prosperity and societal well-being should be magnets for the best scholars from around the world. A majority of Europe's young citizens should benefit from accessible and high-quality education. (ERT, 2010: 3)

Table 6. Lexical items, adverbs, and evaluative locutions that indicate necessity.

Text	References	%
ERT 2000	9	0.28
ERT 2010	7	0.13
UE 2000	14	0.19
UE 2010	5	0.05

Source: Compiled by author – NVivo 10 QSR International.

The Union must shape these changes in a manner consistent with its values and concepts of society and also with a view to the forthcoming enlargement. (UE, 2000: 1)

Integrated guidelines will be adopted at EU level to cover the scope of EU priorities and targets. Country-specific recommendations will be addressed to Member States. Policy warnings could be issued in case of inadequate response. (UE, 2010: 4)

In the few cases where the *potential mode* and the *desiderative mode* were utilized, these strategically acted as *declarative* and *exhortative* by means of an *exchange of functions* (Ramalho and Resende, 2011: 115). In this range, the evaluative (moralizing) items that prevail in the texts are those which express a necessity or obligation (Table 6).

The new European *needs* more than skills to make a success of the Knowledge Economy. He or she *needs* to be able to bring a spirit of enterprise to life as an employee and a citizen. Not *necessarily* in the sense of developing and pursuing business ideas, although Europe certainly needs more business entrepreneurs, but definitely in terms of developing a capacity for creativity, innovation, flexibility, team work and intellectual curiosity. (ERT, 2001: 4)

Sustainability is **necessary** to ensure the long-term – improvement of the quality of life and well-being on Earth for present and future generations. (ERT, 2010: 4)

Steps must be taken to ensure that Europe maintains its lead in key technology areas such as mobile communications. The speed of technological change may require new and more flexible regulatory approaches in the future. (UE, 2000: 3)

Stronger economic governance **will be required** to deliver results. Europe 2020 will rely on two pillars: the thematic approach outlined above, combining priorities and headline targets; and country reporting, helping Member States to develop their strategies to return to sustainable growth and public finances. (UE, 2010: 4)

In this hegemonic process, the will and the acceptance are dialectically constructed along with coercion. Let us analyze, for example, how the occurrence of the verb *can*, associated with the significations *possibility* and *permission* (consensus), is clearly insignificant, while the association of the verb *can* with certainty and obligation (coercion) is central in all the analyzed texts (see Table 7).

Table 7. Comparison between the deontological and epistemic modalities of the verbs *can* and *must* with the number of references.

Nodes	Number of coding references	Number of coded elements
Results\DEONTIC MODALITY-VERB MUST	173	4
Results\EPISTEMIC MODALITY-VERB CAN	7	3

Source: Compiled by author – NVivo 10 QSR International.

In this way, the modalities of the verb *must* – which present the actions as mandatory or necessary according to the issuer’s point of view (deontic logic) – are predominant in the analyzed texts.

Conclusion

Over the last few decades, with the development of techno-corporatism, the importance of the specifically intellectual meaning of ideology (exchange of ideas) has become debilitated in favor of the technical progression of problem resolution (*ideology without ideology*). Effectively, the techno-corporatism’s discourse clearly indicates a reduction/extension (always dialectic) of the possible, which does not imply the unauthorization of other possibilities, but instead the assumption of alternative possibilities. We might call this exchange unintellectualization of the hegemony (Balsa, 2006), because under the wing of the governance processes, we seek an agreement not so much on a vision of the world, but rather on a particular group to become responsible for the administrative management of the EU. However, the technical-intellectual direction is, in reality, a political direction mediated by its command capacity. In fact, although the legitimacy is issued to people who do not present themselves as part of the dominant class, but as intellectuals, professionals, technicians, or politicians, they clearly share the defense of the direct interests of the dominant class. In this sense, we can affirm that European capitalism *leads rather than governs us*.

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Notes

1. Some analysts, mainly Fritz Scharpf (Marks et al., 1996; Scharpf, 1997, 1999, 2000), distinguish between two legitimacy forms, according to a pre-existing form of legitimacy of the studied community (*input legitimacy*) or the results achieved through the same political community (*output legitimacy*).
2. Mikhail Bakhtin (1982) and Valentin Voloshinov (1976) have proposed a language philosophy which dialectically deconstructs the linguistic currents of the abstract subjectivism (Wilhelm Humboldt) and abstract objectivism (Ferdinand de Saussure).

3. ERT is a forum bringing together around 50 Chief Executives and Chairmen of major multinational companies of European parentage covering a wide range of industrial and technological sectors. Companies of ERT members are widely situated across Europe, with a combined turnover exceeding €1300bn, sustaining around 6.8million jobs in the region. They invest more than €51bn annually in research and development (R&D), largely in Europe, which is equivalent to 18% of the total EU R&D expenditure.
4. 'The analysis of conjunctures and private practice grant the contextualization of the discursive analysis, which is to say, they grant that the analyzed texts are related to broader causes and with their own private context [...]' (Ramalho and Resende, 2011: 107).
5. Through the 'Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient' we can calculate the correlation, which is a measure of common variability between two variables (the growth of both through time or the growth of one of them and the decrease in the other). It is affected by the units in which each variable is measured. Thus, it is necessary to define a measurement for the relation between the two variables that is not affected by the changes in the units of measure. A possible form of achieving this goal is to divide the covariance by the product of the typical deviations of each variable. Thus, a dimensionless coefficient, r , that denominated **Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient** is obtained.

$$r = S_{xy} / S_x S_y$$

Properties of the product-moment correlation coefficient

It lacks units of measurement (dimensionless).

It does not vary in linear/product-moment transformations (change of origin and scale) of the variables.

It only takes values comprised between -1 and 1 .

When $|r|$ is close to 1 , there is a very strong linear relationship between the variables.

When $r \approx 0$, we can affirm that there is not a linear relationship between the two variables. In this case, we can say that the variables are **uncorrelated**' (Rius Díaz, 1997: 81).

6. The presumption, as observed by Fiorin (2002: 182), brings us to accept some ideas that are imposed as truths: in the text, the relationship between maximum productivity/entrepreneurial spirit/I+D and the socio-economic transformations in Europe is given as certain and unquestionable.
7. This situation could be conceptualized in Gramscian terms such as the irreducibility of the 'good sense' that arises from practice beyond all the hegemonic construction, regarding all attempts to conceal domination (Nun, 1989).
8. As we have seen before, three axes arise around *growth* (intelligent growth, sustainable growth, and integrative growth).
9. The experienced aspects of grammar are constituted as ideational dimensions which, in the analysis of our sample, have to do with the way a certain language codes the events or relationships, including the participants, the circumstances, the occurrence forms, and so on. This coding may be understandable in functional terms such as the linguistic representation of *action*, *events*, and *attribution* processes (Halliday, 1985; Halliday and Hasan, 1991; Lirola, 2007).
10. The actions, also called *material processes*, are structures in the S-V-O form (subject-verb-object), for which they involve the participants, acting one over the other. These participants, categorized as agents, may be animated or inanimated.

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