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**Employee reactions to management
communication: A study of operations
personnel in the oil industry**

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Robert Gordon University

PhD Thesis

May 2012

**Thesis submitted to Robert Gordon University in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own original work (except where referenced) and does not infringe copyright.

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Abstract

Based on an intense small scale study which observed a small team of operations personnel who work in a telecommunications company within the oil industry, this thesis examined employee reactions to management communication. Employee interpretations and reactions after each communication from the management team were analysed as the 'organisational story' 'unfolds' from the 'other side' (i.e. employee perspective) instead of the rather usual/dominant one (i.e. managerial perspective). Behaviour was observed from an interactionist, interpretive and critical perspective and analysed in the light of several managerial and communication theories with the aim of critically examining the claims of the post-modern organisation theory (i.e. humanisation of work) and certain communication theories. An ethnographic approach, which enabled the researcher/participant to conduct participant observation in a real setting, ensured deep understanding of social situations and human actions. The results of this study suggest that upward communication is problematic due to the power settings that exist in organisations. Based on Goffman's theory, it is suggested that employee 'performance' is affected by certain rules and conventions which shape organisational psychology and interpersonal relations. Therefore, the utopian claims of the post-modern organisation theory along with the rather simplistic assumptions of some of the literature on communication need to be re-evaluated and re-defined in the search for a more critical understanding of communication. This thesis concludes that contrary to the utopia of the post-modern organisation, the reality of organisational life and communication reflects the persistence of the modern organisation and the power structures which dominate it.

Keywords: employee behaviour, workplace communication, performance, conventions, power.

1 Introduction

1.1 Research title

Employee reactions to management communication: A study of operations personnel in the oil industry.

1.2 Rationale for study

If one was to briefly describe the current situation in the area of management, it could roughly be said that a significant amount of academic research focuses on the qualities of the leader or on the performance and development of the employees whereas most of the work practices are focused on the selection of new employees or on performance and development targets (e.g. Daft, 2000). Based on this, it appears that much attention has been paid to managers and organisations while at the same time the employees are being rather overlooked; as literature and practice tend to focus on managers' methods, organisational goals and output improvement, the employees are mostly seen only in terms of the positive or negative impact they can have in relation to organisational performance (e.g. even humour is seen as something that can be engineered by managers in order to bring about a desired outcome on employees and their performance e.g. Duncan, 1982; Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap, 1990; Lyttle, 2007).

The rationale for this research was to focus on the employee; the employee not as a means to an end (i.e. value-creator or value-destroyer) but as a person who has inherent value and is able to provide a reliable perspective on workplace communication. The researcher was interested in discovering how the 'organisational story' unfolds in front of the eyes of the employees as she believed that it is of vital importance to hear the story not from the rather usual/dominant perspective (i.e. managerial perspective) but from the 'other side' (i.e. employee perspective) which is equally valuable. In detail, the main interest of the researcher was to examine how management communication is interpreted by employees, how employees react to this communication and what is the organisational culture and power setting that encourage/trigger these reactions.

Consequently, with this research the researcher hopes not only to add material to the existing literature regarding communication, employee reactions, organisational culture and power but also to shed some light to certain issues which have not been adequately covered in the literature and possibly to discover new aspects of employee behaviour which should be taken into consideration. As far as the expected research outcomes are concerned, apart from the general contribution to the existing Human Resource Management theory (and possibly to the existing Organisational Psychology theory) and the practice of management communication, this study will address managerial issues which have not been adequately covered by the existing theory of management.

1.3 Research aim

This intense small scale study observes a small team of operations personnel who work in a telecommunications company within the oil industry in order to analyse their reactions to communication from their management. The subjects are observed in their normal daily working environment, where their reactions are recorded after they receive communication from the management team.

The aim of the research is to observe the behaviour of the 'ZEUS' operations personnel from an interactionist, interpretive and critical perspective and try to analyse and explain their behaviour in the light of modern and post-modern theories and practices of management and communication theories. In detail, behaviour is viewed as a constant and complex interaction between personal and situational characteristics (Terborg, 1981) and the individual is viewed as presenting him/herself to others in a certain way in order to convey certain meanings to them (Goffman, 1975) and fit into the societal norms/expectations (ibid: 1966, 1981, 2005, 2010). Nevertheless, at the same time 'taken-for-granted assumptions about contemporary social reality and the models for the satisfaction of human needs and wants' are questioned (Alvesson and Willmott, 1992: 11).

Even though the interpretive and the critical perspective differ (as they can be classified as forming or being part of different theories, symbolic interpretivism and postmodernism respectively (Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006), there is no reason why a combined perspective should not exist; this is due to the fact not only because ideas 'do not fit neatly into the modern, symbolic or postmodern perspective' (ibid: 325) but also because a perspective that takes into account different theories is more liberating (e.g. it does not have to follow a certain theory and it is not subjected to any restrictions in terms of theory) and thus,

promises open-minded results. As such, the researcher perceives organisations as 'socially constructed realities' (ibid: 14) where knowledge is gained through 'meaning and interpretation' (ibid: 56) but at the same time it is also accepted that reality is 'constantly shifting' (ibid) and that organisations are 'sites for enacting power relations' (ibid: 14).

In short, the researcher's perspective cannot be easily categorised in a rationalistic modernist way as it is an amalgam of different elements which create a unique viewpoint. The main objective of this research is to use the interpretive perspective in order to critically examine the relation of the post-modern organisation theory claims (i.e. humanisation of work) to reality.

1.4 Research questions

The specific research questions to be addressed are:

- 1) Do individual employee reactions to management communication stem mostly from narrow personality traits (e.g. trait anger theory as described by Wilkowski and Robinson, 2007) or from a combination of personal and situational characteristics (e.g. explanation of behaviour by Terborg, 1981; anger theories by Bøddeker and Stemmler, 2000 and Kuppens et al, 2007)?
- 2) Does the element of performance and the social norm which obliges participants to 'fit in' in a situation (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) result in specific re-occurring inter- and intra-personal and overall employee behaviour patterns?
- 3) Do certain styles of management discourage 'open and honest two-way communication' (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004: 374) and 'critical upward communication' (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 711)?
- 4) Does the element of power which resides in social organisation and sets the desired levels of conformity (Foucault, 1977) shape employee responses?

1.5 Academic background

Organisational behaviour analysis requires not only employee observation but also knowledge of the wider organisational setting as behaviour is a constant and complex interaction between personal and situational characteristics (Terborg, 1981); as such, it is assumed that employee behaviour is affected by the workplace situation. Contemporary

organisational environments are characterised by complexity (e.g. Morgan 1997) and change (e.g. Daft, 2000) and require flexible and adaptive cultures (e.g. Gabriel, 2008). The post-modern organisation (and post-modern organisational theory) has evolved but whether this has improved conditions for the employees is still debatable among researchers (e.g. Boje and Winsor, 1993).

In detail, in the industrial age the modern organisation (and supporting organisation theories which emphasised rationality, positivistic measurements and objectivity) was based on standardisation, bureaucracy and formalisation and required employees to be 'obedient' and perform their best in order to maximise organisational profits (e.g. Daft, 2000). However, since the post-industrial age when labour has become less manual, the post-modern organisation and post-modern organisation theory have emerged (e.g. Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006); post-modern practices and theories seem to emphasise flexibility, decentralisation, open communication and ideal information flows as well as employee empowerment and participation (e.g. Daft, 2000). In short, post-modern organisation theory claims that contrary to the ideas of the modern organisation, the post-modern organisation not only has humanised work but also has given priority to the employee and his/her welfare.

At the same time, several communication theories emphasise the importance of 'effective' or 'good' managerial communication (e.g. Mayfield and Mayfield, 2002; De Ridder, 2004) where managers succeed in not only passing the meaning of the communicated message to the employees but also affecting them positively (e.g. creation of trust), which in turn has the potential to yield better organisational outcomes (e.g. better performance). Nevertheless, in practice, communication seems to flow mostly down the hierarchical ladder and employees usually try to avoid open confrontation and either conform (e.g. by keeping silent) or express their disapproval subtly (Tourish and Robson, 2006). Undeniably, conformity and resistance cannot be easily distinguished as it often depends on the perspective (and the position) of the observer. For example, cynicism from a managerial viewpoint could be seen as mere resistance to management (e.g. Contu, 2008 sees it as a form of mild/safe resistance) whereas from an employee perspective it could be seen as a mechanism which protects individuals by letting them dis-identify themselves (Fleming and Spicer, 2003) from the paradoxical reality of organisational life (i.e. the fact that reality and the claims of the post-modern organisation theory are often mutually exclusive or, in the best case, simply contradictory) (e.g. Willmott, 1993; Faÿ, 2008). On rather similar grounds, from a managerial perspective, successful communication can be a one-way process as long as it yields the desired results (Faÿ, 2008) whereas from an

employee viewpoint, successful communication is a two-way democratic process (Holtzhausen, 2002) where each employee is encouraged to offer feedback to his/her manager(s) (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004). Therefore, the challenge is to discover whether communication is 'effective' or 'good' and if so, whether it empowers the employee exactly as the post-modern organisation theory has 'promised' him/her.

Current theory and practice suggest that managers care for their human resources (e.g. Daft, 2000) but there is suspicion that they are ultimately interested in workforce control and performance (e.g. Boje and Winsor, 1993; Willmott, 1993); as a result, employees tend to show superficial commitment and hide their true emotions (Hewlin, 2003) or even perform certain roles (Goffman, 1975) in order to safeguard their positions and their incomes. Therefore, this research, which will interpret organisational behaviour within the wider socio-cultural context in which it occurs, aims to link managerial communication with employee behaviour in order to examine whether the claims of the post-modern organisation theory about employee empowerment and ideal communication make sense and whether theory and practice in the organisational communication literature coincide.

1.6 Overview

The thesis is organised into five main chapters:

The Literature Review chapter (Chapter 2) reflects the academic background which is relevant to this study and is divided into five sections which are spread over two chapters. The first introduces management, management theories as well as the organisation and its external and internal settings. The second introduces the theories of communication and the concepts and approaches that are relevant to this study. The third introduces behaviour in social and organisational context. The fourth introduces authority and resistance in organisations. The fifth provides a summary of the previous sub-chapters.

The Methodology chapter (Chapter 3) explains the choice of method, the design of the study, the approach which was followed, the value of the study, the steps that were followed as well as the practical and background aspects of the study.

The Analysis and Discussion chapter (Chapter 4) portrays the analysis of the researcher's material and her findings in the light of the existing literature and is divided into six sub-chapters. The first focuses on the interaction of managers and employees based on

Goffman's (1975) element of performance. The second focuses on the quality of managerial communication. The third focuses on managers' and employees' behaviour as it occurs at work. The fourth focuses on sensemaking in organisations. The fifth focuses on the element of power and resistance as they unfold in organisations. The sixth focuses on humour as it occurs in organisational settings.

The Conclusions, Implications and Reflections chapter (Chapter 5) summarises the findings, addresses the research questions, examines the implications of the study and serves as a critical reflection.

2 Literature review

2.1 Part I: Management, communication and organisational relations

2.1.1 Management, organisational context and culture

2.1.1.1 Management, Modern and Post-Modern organisation in practice

'Like the theory of the firm, organization theory means different things to different people' (Cyert and March, 1992: 16) and 'the firm is well understood neither by practitioners nor by social scientists' (ibid: 238). Many people seem to understand the meaning of the word management as managers can be found all over the world; they are usually seen as people who give orders or directions (depending on the perspective one views the matter) to employees; but, what managers actually do and what actually constitutes management is not so easy to define as dictionary definitions are not enough for this purpose since they cannot capture all the different aspects and features of managerial life.

According to Daft, "Management is the attainment of organizational goals in an effective and efficient manner through planning, organizing, leading, and controlling organizational resources."(2000: 7). Management is portrayed as a complicated task which requires "conceptual, human, and technical" skills as managers have the ability to view the firm not only as a whole but also as a set of interrelated parts, work and communicate with and through other people and have a lot of specialised knowledge (ibid: 12). Based on texts like this, managers seem to emerge as the modern age heroes who are charismatic, hard-working and succeed in their mission against all odds by leading and inspiring the employees and ideally communicating with them. Nevertheless, this view is open to criticism not only because it does not take into account the 'other side' (i.e. the perspective of the employees) but also because it seems to reflect some of the 'old' management ideals (e.g. the powerful manager in opposition to the powerless employees) even though this period is claimed to have been surpassed.

In detail, even though management is not a recent concept, the practice of management, and consequently the theory of management equally, have substantially changed within the last century as they have been influenced and shaped by several social, political and economic forces (ibid). The industrial age saw the rise of the 'Fordist' organisation; work output was based on standardisation, procedures were bureaucratic and power was

hierarchically distributed; most organisations were based on the traditional vertical scheme (i.e. several levels of hierarchy) which was characterised by specialisation of work, centralisation, formalisation and autocratic management (ibid). This tendency was also obvious in the theories of management which emphasised a rational approach to management; for example, under Taylorism (which focused on scientifically determined changes in management) workers were subjected to scientific measurements, predictability and control as each task was designed to ensure the maximum output and workers were motivated and monitored to ensure the best possible results (Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006).

Nevertheless, after the industrial age work started becoming non-manual and environments became more varied and unpredictable and so, ideas started to change. The 'post-modern organisation' emerged; a changed paradigm of management appeared and the old paradigm started giving way to the new; the post-modern organisation aimed to humanise work and now communication was at the centre of attention (ibid). Employee behaviour started to be viewed through the lenses of McGregor's theory, which basically stated that employees should be viewed as hard-working value-creators (theory Y) and not as inherently lazy and reluctant to work (theory X); equally, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which stated that individuals have to first satisfy (i.e. achieve and sustain) their basic (lower) needs in order to achieve self-fulfilment also played an important role (Daft, 2000). As firms needed flexible forms in order to be able to respond to change, flat structures (i.e. less levels of hierarchy) which were characterised by employee participation and empowerment, change, teamwork and strong adaptive cultures emerged (ibid).

Therefore, even though in the traditional society authority was exercised by the ruler (e.g. employer) without limits, modernism (which 'arrived' in the 1960s according to Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006) was characterised by rational ideas (Gephart, 1996); laws existed to legalise business whereas there was also a belief that all problems can be solved by utilising a scientific method; soon behavioural science and bureaucracy were at the centre of modernism (ibid). In the later stages of modernism, rationality gave way to social Darwinism where the assumption was that the fittest people are the ones at the top and consequently, soon morality decreased as this allowed for the use or even exploitation of others; rational authority was intertwined with traditional authority (ibid). Then, postmodernism emerged (in the 1990s according to Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006) and was characterised by internationalisation, technological advances and automation, downsizing, fragmentation and the emergence of network organisations (Gephart, 1996).

In short, it is suggested that management tries to share and not hoard power; each employee is valued, considered an important contributor to the company's success and involved in identifying and solving problems and the emphasis is on teamwork and collaboration; personal involvement, self-fulfilment, non-hierarchical power structures and teamwork come into the work equation and thus, the problems of the modern organisation have been overcome (Daft, 2000) or more precisely, are claimed to have been overcome as the matter is still under debate. For example, according to Gephart (1996: 38), in the post-modern organisation there is no rationality but only 'the logic of commodification' where 'senseless communications' (i.e. communications that do not make sense) 'deny the recipient any useful information' (ibid: 40); hence, the myth of human value perishes as individuals become powerless and unable to control the system logic and, in turn, collapses the whole idea of management control, too (ibid).

2.1.1.2 Management, Modern and Post-Modern organisation in theory

Organisation theory developed along with management practice; even though organisation theory 'did not emerge as a recognizable field of study until sometime in the 1960s', many theorists have contributed to its 'prehistory' (i.e. before 1960) (Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006: 26) and have made it what it is today. Nevertheless, 'it would be a mistake to think that newer perspectives have replaced older ones' as 'over time they influence one another' (ibid: 7); this is the reason why management theories 'do not always fit neatly together' (ibid: 5) and cannot be easily categorised.

Excluding the 'prehistory' 'source of inspiration' (ibid: 6) for organisation theory (i.e. the period from 1900 until 1960), it can be said that organisation theory has been influenced by three perspectives: modernism, symbolic interpretivism and postmodernism (ibid). Modernism (recognised in the 1960s and 1970s) is based on the existence of an objective reality where knowledge is gained through 'facts and information' (ibid: 56), the truth can be discovered through measurement, hierarchy is the 'model for human relationships' (ibid) and the goal is to predict and control; as such, organisations are 'real entities' (ibid: 14) which can be governed by rationality. Symbolic interpretivism (recognised in the 1980s) is based on the existence of a subjective reality which has a 'socially constructed diversity' (ibid: 56), where knowledge is based on 'meaning and interpretation' (ibid), the model for relationships is community and the goal is to understand; as such, organisations are 'continually constructed and reconstructed by their members' through interaction (ibid: 14). Postmodernism (recognised in the 1990s) is based on the belief that 'there are no

facts, only interpretations' (ibid) and the existence of a 'constantly shifting and fluid plurality' (ibid: 56) where knowledge is gained through 'exposure and experience' (ibid), the model for relationships is self-determination and the goal is freedom; as such, organisations are seen as 'sites for enacting power relations, oppression, irrationality, communicative distortion- or arenas of fun and playful irony' (ibid: 14).

Willmott (1992: 59) defines modernism as 'a belief in rational, hierarchical authority – typified by bureaucracy and science' and portrays among its features the ideas of 'rational planning, homogenization and standardization'; he writes that postmodernism 'challenges and disrupts' modernism as it values 'diverse rationalities' (ibid). In postmodernism 'Rationality is pluralized ...but it is not extinct; rather, rationality must take its role alongside other human capabilities, such as love, fear, pain, and hope' (Gephart, Thatchenkery and Boje, 1996: 364). Therefore, postmodern management and theory seek to restore 'harmony and balance' in the human species, the institutions, and the theories (ibid). In short, it could be said that postmodernism came 'when humanity discovered it can reinvent itself' (Binzagr and Manning, 1996: 251).

According to the modernist view, an objective truth exists and it can be discovered rationally; whereas, according to the postmodernist view, the truth is always relative to specific circumstances (Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006). As a result, debate and even criticism often occur. For example, Burrell (1994: 16) in his analysis of Habermas' contribution portrays the friction between modernists and postmodernists and concludes that modernism can hardly be escaped as people are either 'systemic modernists' who always seek performativity or 'critical modernists' who seek 'emancipation for' themselves 'and others'. Additionally, Boje, Fitzgibbons and Steingard (1996: 62) define the four radical alternatives to 'orthodox (systemic modernism) organizational theory': critical modernism, epoch postmodernism, epistemological postmodernism, and critical postmodernism. Critical modernists critique modernism (e.g. Habermas), epoch postmodernism is 'a way of looking at reality' (Binzagr and Manning in, 1996: 256), epistemological postmodernism is 'a reality per se' (ibid), whereas critical postmodernism is a 'mid-range position' (ibid: 64) which lies between the three above positions (Boje, Fitzgibbons and Steingard, 1996). It has to be admitted that even though modernism is often seen as 'the forceful imposition of rational administrative procedures into all facets of everyday life' (Hawes, 1992: 39), modernism is not always easily distinguishable as it can sometimes be concealed with the use of postmodernist rhetoric. For example, Boje and Winsor (1993) argue that Total Quality Management (TQM), which claims to be characterised by employee empowerment and workplace democratisation, has a 'hidden agenda'; it aims to create an

overall uniformity where all production systems, organisational cultures, supplier and customer behaviour, as well as educational systems are identical. They view TQM as 'Neo-modern Taylorism' which even though is provided as an alternative to Taylorism, indeed it is a form of it; it claims that it returns control to the worker whereas it ironically introduces a 'self-imposed form of scientific management' where 'employees are seduced into Taylorizing their own jobs' (ibid: 62).

The theoretical disagreement is depicted by Neilsen (1996: 289) when he mentions that 'We may be moving toward a postmodern world, but there is no reason to suggest that the transition will be either smooth or rapid' and acknowledges that there is still a dichotomy between the modern and the postmodern. In fact, it is difficult to define not only the terms 'post-modern' but also the phenomenon itself; for example, 'Post-modernism' usually refers to a 'critical posture' whereas 'Postmodernism' usually indicates a sympathetic attitude towards the phenomenon (Rosenau, 1992: 18 as quoted in Gephart, Boje and Thatchenkery, 1996: 1). Hassard (1996: 59) argues that in literature, postmodernism represents either a historical era or a theoretical perspective; however, he also mentions that currently there is 'no firm consensus on the meaning of the concepts of modernism and postmodernism' as the terms are generic.

Barry and Hazen (1996) support the idea that organisation theories are related and developed according to people's self-images; consequently, when people stop viewing themselves as rational beings (in modernist terms) and instead view themselves as beings with 'fluid boundaries and multiple realities', images and theories of organisation change accordingly (ibid: 153). According to Thatchenkery and Upadhyaya (1996: 309), 'An organization can be understood as multiple discourses operating simultaneously', which in turn are perceived by each participant differently; these discourses are dynamic and can change over time; sometimes they are complementary and other times they are competitive; for example, discourses can be continuous, introduced, cyclical (i.e. causing reflection) or transformed (ibid).

Gergen and Whitney (1996) state that globalisation affects not only organisations but also the individual (as employees are asked to adopt new values and practices) as well as the family and community; however, as expansion occurs, centralised authority deteriorates and power relations descend; top management are not physically near the employees. Interestingly, Woodman (2008) challenges the notion 'old wine in new bottles' and suggests that actually the old thing is the bottle whereas the wine is the new element;

while the idea of organisational development remains, the discourse that surrounds it is constantly changing.

As far as postmodernism is concerned, Weiss (2000) suggests that it is a critical stance, which as a relativist philosophy has always challenged established views but has not offered alternative solutions; nevertheless, he also believes that it should not be entirely rejected. In fact, it could be argued that the importance of the postmodernist view stems from the fact that it reflects the complexity of organisational life in the contemporary workplace while at the same time it explores the claims of the post-modern organisation theory (e.g. humanisation of work, employee empowerment).

2.1.1.3 Organisational environment

It is assumed that individuals interact or at least are affected by the environment they work in as behaviour is a constant and complex interaction between personal and situational characteristics (Terborg, 1981). Consequently, in order to understand employee behaviour, one has to understand the organisational environment.

According to Watson (1994), organisations are sets of ongoing human relationships utilizing various technologies in which people co-operate to achieve tasks. As people differ from each other not only physically but also in behaviourally, difference exists in all organisations -especially in those which operate on a global scale- and cannot be ignored (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000). These differences between people (whether they are individual or cultural differences) can create frustration, misunderstandings and can often lead to conflict (Watson, 1994). However, conflict and co-operation do not need to be viewed as opposed to each other; in fact, they can be seen as the two sides of the same coin and each of them has to be evaluated according to the circumstances i.e. co-operation with a murderer is bad whereas conflict with a rapist is good (Watson, 1995).

In addition to individual and cultural differences, comes the difference of power which also exists in organisations. Although nowadays organisations tend to become flatter (or at least try to become flatter) and managers and leaders do not rely on hierarchical power as much as they did in the past but rely more on creating powerful cultures, still conflict between employers and employees is sometimes unavoidable (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000). Apart from differences in human nature, the basic reason behind conflicts is the existence of different goals as both employers and employees alike seek to achieve

different things (Watson, 1994). In brief, conflicts can occur among employees or between employers and employees due to individual, cultural or power differences. As a result, feelings of anger, sadness or frustration are often experienced by an individual within the workplace. Nevertheless, these feelings are not always expressed, depending on the individual or the situation (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000).

As most organisations operate in highly-competitive and usually international environments, chaos and risk-taking are part of their agenda (Daft, 2000). According to Thietart and Forgues (1995: 20), chaos theory can be used in order to explain organisations; as organisations are open systems which are affected by several forces, many existing managerial practices are 'neither universal nor time-relevant' as they usually apply to a specific organisation and they usually are not durable; so, they are neither adaptable/transferable nor lasting. Organisations are influenced both by the forces of stability and order (e.g. planning, controlling) and by the forces of instability and disorder (e.g. innovation, experimentation); the coupling of the above forces can create a chaotic organisation, where even a small change of a variable can have a large and unpredictable effect on the system ('butterfly effect') (ibid). As such, organisations have the potential to be chaotic and forecasting is not possible; organisations are always in one of three states (stable equilibrium, periodic equilibrium, chaos) but there are no simple solutions as the same actions taken by different organisations during chaos never had the same result (ibid).

On the same grounds, Dolan, Garcia and Auerbach (2003: 26) say that 'turbulent environments are a rule in this world, not an exception'; thus, companies should not go against chaos by trying to exercise control over it but they should try to understand it and follow its flow. Chaos cannot be controlled but can be guided; the challenge is 'to know how to guide chaotic dynamics to achieve the desire objectives' (ibid: 26). They mention that four needs/trends are increasing in power: 'quality and customer orientation', 'professional autonomy and responsibility', 'transformational leaders instead of "bosses"' and 'flatter, more agile organisation structures' (ibid: 27-28). Consequently, past tools cannot be used to handle the present turbulent environment in organisations; the values of an organisation are what holds it together in times of chaos and change (ibid).

Svyantek and DeShon (1993) agree that organisations can adapt. They use evolutionary theory and suggest that organisations can also be said to consist of two systems: the adaptive (Adaptive Information or AI) system and the configurational (Configurational Information or CI) system; the AI system permits gradual change whereas the CI usually

remains stable (ibid). Thus, the AI system allows a company to compete against other companies whereas the CI defines a company's identity; the AI stands for environmental adaptation and the CI stands for basic organisational reproduction; the CI system is the organisational culture (ibid). Consequently, change occurs by altering the AI element within the limits of the CI; the AI system can adapt whereas the CI can adapt only 'under extreme economic distress' (ibid: 350).

Therefore, success in the business arena involves not only surviving turbulent conditions but also profiting from them. In fact, success depends on embracing change and taking risks rather than avoiding them (Mandel, 1996 as quoted in Nelson, 2003). In order to succeed, businesses have to be flexible and constantly adapt to new circumstances (Gabriel, 2008). Nevertheless, at this point it is worth noting that an organisation's environment cannot be easily described or analysed because it is a concept that not only has changed across time but also is perceived and explained differently by different management theories (e.g. Daft, 2000; Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006).

2.1.1.4 Organisational culture

Organisational culture can be described as 'The pattern of beliefs, values and learned ways of coping with experience that have developed during the course of an organisation's history, and which tend to be manifested in its material arrangements and in the behaviours of its members' (Brown, 1998: 9). It consists of visible elements such as artefacts (e.g. mission statement), language (e.g. stories) and behaviour (e.g. rituals) but also of invisible elements such as values, beliefs, attitudes and basic assumptions (Daft, 2000). Organisational culture be seen either as a metaphor which helps in understanding organisations (e.g. Morgan, 1997) or as a property of organisations (i.e. an objective entity) (Brown, 1998).

The most important sources of organisational culture according to Brown (ibid) are the 'societal and national culture' (ibid: 43), leadership, and the nature of the business. Culture is perpetuated by transmission and it occurs in three stages; at the preselection stage the potential newcomers learn about the culture (and usually are positively predisposed towards it before their job interview), at the socialisation phase the employees are inside the organisation, and then follows the incorporation or the rejection phase where those who do not fit in get rejected; however, this stage seems an 'uncertain process' as socialisation is an on-going process (ibid: 59).

Even though different classifications of culture exist, culture homogeneity rarely occurs as subcultures always exist (ibid). For example, Martin and Siehl (1983: 53) distinguish three types of subculture which coexist with the dominant corporate culture: 'enhancing, orthogonal and countercultural'. The enhancing one entails the same values with the dominant culture values but involves more fervent adherence; the orthogonal one accepts the dominant values but also additional (separate and unconflicting) ones; the counterculture directly challenges the dominant values and so, the dominant culture and the counterculture 'exist in an uneasy symbiosis' (ibid: 54).

Organisational culture is claimed to be an asset as it offers advantages to a company such as reduction of conflicts and uncertainty and increased control, motivation and competitive advantage (Brown, 1998; Daft, 2000). Cultures can and do change (e.g. as a response to a crisis) through a process of relearning guided by effective leadership (ibid). In fact, research suggests that 'strong, appropriate, adaptable cultures which value stakeholders and leadership, and which have a strong sense of mission, are likely to be associated with high performance over sustained periods of time' (Brown, 1998: 245). 'Organisational cultures are complex and dynamic entities' and they are very important as through them, employees make sense of organisational life (ibid: 293) as culture influences organisational sensemaking (Harris, 1994).

However, the claims about the value and the benefits of organisational culture are not free of criticism. First of all, the 'espoused culture', which represents a 'desired state' (i.e. what management desires it to be), differs from the actual culture, the 'culture-in-practice' (Brown, 1998: 31); as such, the culture that managers believe to exist is often not a reality or at least is often viewed differently from an employee perspective. Moreover, from a postmodernist perspective, as truth and reality are not absolute terms organisational culture can be also seen as an episode which will sometime end, as a device used to legitimate, inform, persuade, or even as a means of giving a subjective insight into old ideas (ibid).

Studying the claims of the 'Corporate Culture' literature (Willmott, 1993: 515) entails taking it 'seriously, with the associated risk of lending it undue credibility' (ibid: 516). The academic view on 'corporate culturism' (ibid: 516) has been divided to those who accept its basic assumptions and to those who consider it superficial. In practice, the 'gurus of excellence' (ibid: 515) promote the importance of a strong corporate culture and stress the importance of the human element of the workforce whereas in fact the maximisation of organisational performance involves simultaneously respecting and exploiting 'the

capacity of self-determination' (ibid: 525). Consequently, as Willmott (1993) believes, 'corporate culturism' (ibid: 516) has a morally ambiguous standing which 'upon further reflection, is de-moralizing' (ibid: 529) as it offers a totalitarian approach which aims to manage employee sense-making. However, the paradox is that while employees are treated as a 'disposable commodity' in the labour market, they are considered to be 'a valid human resource' in the corporate culture (ibid: 531). Employees are expected to accept the corporate values and homogenisation is the aim; as a result, the morality of the values of 'corporate culturism' (ibid: 516) are questionable as they aim to eliminate pluralism (ibid). Hence, equally questionable are also the claims about ideal communication between managers and employees (e.g. Daft, 2000) as an environment which favours homogeneity does not seem likely to coincide with an environment which encourages complete freedom of speech.

2.1.2 Communication

2.1.2.1 Managerial communication theories

Communication can be described as 'the process by which information is exchanged and understood by two or more people, usually with the intent to motivate or influence behavior' (Daft, 2000: 567). During communication the sender sends an encoded message through a communication channel (e.g. face-to-face, report, phone call) and the receiver decodes it and gives his/her feedback (i.e. two-way communication); when the feedback is lacking, the communication is one-way (ibid). Communication can be downward (e.g. from managers to the employees), upward (e.g. from the employees to the managers) or horizontal (e.g. between managers or between employees) and the presence of feedback ensures that the receiver understood the message and also allows him/her to give his/her opinion on the matter. As such, in organisational theory and practice, two-way communication is a prerequisite for effective/good communication (i.e. communication which is successful in terms of understanding and purpose); one-way communication is claimed to be overcome in the post-modern organisation as the employees, contrary to the modern organisation era, are empowered and their opinion is valued (e.g. Daft, 2000). Therefore, it can be said that the current use of the word 'communication' is usually associated with two-way communication.

Good managerial communication (i.e. successful two-way communication) is said not only to enhance employee trust of management (Jo and Shim, 2005; De Ridder, 2004) but also

to enhance employee commitment (Mayfield and Mayfield, 2002; De Ridder, 2004). In detail, De Ridder (2004) in his research concluded that the more loyal an employee is, the more he/she will support the company's strategy as well as that the more an employee trusts the management, the more he/she will support the company's strategy; additionally, the higher the task-related information quality, the more the employee commitment and also, the higher the non-task-related information quality, the more the employee trust in management. On the same grounds, Mayfield and Mayfield (2002) argue that effective leader communication (i.e. successful two-way communication) results in employee commitment, which in turn results in improved organisational performance; they also support the idea that competent leadership skills, such as listening, coaching and information-sharing, can be learned.

Gopinath and Becker (2007) suggest that managerial communication (i.e. two-way communication) can 'enhance employees' perceptions of procedural justice, trust, and commitment' and thus, can even 'moderate the negative consequences of divestitures and layoffs by helping employees understand such events' (ibid: 75); at this point it is also worth mentioning that according to Smidts, Pruyn and Van Riel (2001), apart from employee communication, company image also positively affects employee identification with a company. A study by Watson Wyatt Worldwide which was conducted in the US and Canada linked effective communication to better financial performance (Marshall and Heffes, 2006).

A prerequisite of good communication is consistency; as Hoogervorst, Flier and Koopman (2004) point out, there should be consistency between implicit and explicit communication. Implicit communication stems from the organisational context and determines employee behaviour; consequently, 'organisational culture, organisational structures and systems, and management practices' should be 'mutually supportive' (ibid: 301) so as to emit consistent messages. If the three forementioned organisational forces are not in alignment, low commitment or cynicism among employees can occur; in brief, the formal (intentional, explicit) communication should support and not contradict the organisational context (unintentional, implicit communication) so as to avoid problems and/or misunderstanding about organisational intentions (ibid).

When determining the impact of communication on employees, national characteristics have also to be taken into consideration as people vary in their preferences and in their beliefs and practices not only at personal but also at national level and therefore, communication style varies across different cultures (e.g. Hofstede, 1980; Hall and Reed

Hall, 1990; Gudykunst and Kim, 2002; Lewis, 2005; Samovar, Porter and McDaniel, 2009). According to a cross-national survey which was conducted by Kessler, Undy and Heron (2004) and which involved 3500 employees from France, Germany, Italy and the UK, it was concluded that employee 'views do vary by national workforce, although not always in straightforward or simplistic ways' (ibid: 531). As Holtzhausen (2002) admits in her conclusion about her South-African study, 'There are however different change environments in other countries, which are not as apparent but still as far-reaching, such as the level of technological and economic change in the United States and the other developed countries' (ibid: 45).

Another important point that needs to be emphasized is what one means when one refers to 'communication'. Often in work contexts, both employees and management use the word 'communication' to refer interchangeably to any form of communication: face-to-face, phone, email etc. Nevertheless, each form of communication is distinct and considerably different. As Walther (2004: 388) states, face-to-face communication is 'multifaceted and multimodal' as non-verbal behaviour adds equally (or even more) to the meaning of language whereas for example email users communicate without the element of physical appearance.

After analysing the above communication theories, it could be said that even though several researchers support the idea that within the workplace good communication (i.e. communication that is understood, achieves its purpose and involves feedback) has the potential to create a positive effect on employee morale and subsequently on productivity, most attention is paid to downward communication. Additionally, it seems that most of them emphasise 'good communication' but are mostly related to performance, trust and efficiency and tend not only to overlook the fact that communication relates to power but also to rather oversimplify the dynamics of communication itself.

Indeed, communication is vital for organisational success (Cameron, 2000; Holtzhausen, 2002; Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004; Tourish and Hargie, 2009) and managers do play a central role when it comes to organisational communication as 'ineffective communication leads literally to disorganisation' (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004: 33) whereas 'positive communication policies' (Tourish and Hargie, 2009: 25) contribute to a competitive advantage (ibid; Holtzhausen, 2002). However, effective communication extends beyond mere instrumental value, involves participation of all parties involved and extends beyond the verbal element. In detail, managers should 'know how to communicate skilfully and to do so ethically' (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004: 423); 'a

democratic workplace is an ethical and moral imperative' (Holtzhausen, 2002: 46) and democratic communication (i.e. participative communication) not only increases the level of trust and improves the flow of information but also improves face-to-face communication, promotes honest and open communication and improves communication between managers and employees (ibid).

Communication is a skilled performance (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004; Hargie, 2006) which involves 'subtle and complex forms of human interaction' (Hargie, Tourish and Hargie, 1994: 27) and as such, theories which neglect certain parameters of communication (e.g. upward communication/feedback) or oversimplify its complex nature (i.e. emphasise only certain elements of communication such as the verbal aspect) create a distorted reality which often reduces communication to mere talk. As Hargie, Dickson and Tourish (2004) suggest, organisational communication has several dimensions, all of which are equally important; skilled managerial communication requires verbal, non-verbal, writing, telephone and presentation skills as well as the ability to be assertive, negotiate, sell ideas, persuade others, select the right employees, build teams, lead/motivate while at the same time encourage feedback and help others (ibid). In short, as certain theories seem to underestimate the multi-dimensional nature and the intrinsic value of communication, the concept of effective downward communication and its calculable effects on employees and performance dominates the existing organisational discourse.

2.1.2.2 New media and electronic communication

Technology is a central element in existing organisational structures and hence, the introduction of new technology in the workplace can often be judged negatively (by the people whose jobs are affected) as it can often affect severely (or even threaten) certain professions more than others since new technology involves changes which may disadvantage these professions; for example, purchasers who had a certain degree of independence at work were found to feel deskilled after the introduction of new technology (e.g. electronic recording and purchasing) in their company and even felt pressured as the new systems could in the future even replace them (Eriksson-Zetterquist, Lindberg and Styhre, 2009).

In detail, amidst the existing communication problems that reside in organisations (Cameron, 2000; Fay, 2008), the use of electronic communication (e.g. email instead of

face-to-face or phone conversations) is believed to make things even harder for employees as it creates additional problems of meaning (Weick, 1985). Electronic data (i.e. email) is flawed as it is inherently incomplete (e.g. the email does not reveal the feelings of the sender) and so, it handicaps the receiver; as the data appears cryptic, the receiver asks for more data and ends spending more time and effort processing it; more sources of meaning are essential as people in order to make sense 'effectuate', 'triangulate', 'affiliate', 'deliberate' and 'consolidate' (ibid). In detail, as people tend to make things happen, check against different sources, compare views with others, apply reasoning and reach conclusions, and learn within certain contexts, the confinement solely to electronic means makes people act, compare, socialise, pause and consolidate less and events remain unfronted (and hence, inaccurate as triangulation does not occur), social skills atrophy and understanding is problematic (as quick electronic feedback overloads their brain (ibid)). In short, the prevalence of electronic communication over other types of communication is believed to result in ambiguity and misunderstandings as well as undermine the importance of social interaction and critical thought.

Nevertheless, according to Rice and Gattiker (2000), understanding of organisational communication and media is influenced by experiences of pre-existing media and in turn influences the development of new media and structures. Therefore, organisational norms tend to be influenced by past conventions whereas a multi-method approach would yield more desirable results (ibid). Equally, Boczkowski and Orlikowski (2004) argue that existing research tends to focus either in an experimental setting or in a field study which pays little attention to the extra-organisational context. Also, communication media tend to be examined in isolation and based on face-to-face communication basis whereas technological media tend to be analysed in isolation and mostly concentrating on text-based new media (ibid). Therefore, three under-explained areas of new media exist and so, it is required to look at the broader context, to interpret the communication processes with multiple media and the potentials of technology through multiple media (ibid). In short, workplace studies which research how tools and technologies feature in the daily working environment and help one understand their actions and interactions (Heath, Luff and Knoblauch, 2004) are needed; as O'Kane, Palmer and Hargie (2007: 321) suggest, research must examine not only the nature of new media but also their 'socially skilled adaptation' and 'how this varies across multiple levels and functions within the organization'. These studies will take into consideration the communication 'channels' and the 'noise' (Goffman, 1981) that exist in real organisational settings; they will examine communication in the context it occurs and analyse the advantages and disadvantages of

all the different communication media without placing face-to-face communication as a means of comparison or favouring it over other media.

New technologies (such as the email in its time) should be looked through perspectives which are not so influenced by past values as information richness theory is (Markus, 1994) as these 'old perspectives' are usually applicable only for judging the media of their time. According to the information richness theory, rich media (e.g. face-to-face discussion) are preferable as leaner ones (e.g. electronic mail) not only do not have the same 'information carrying capacity' (ibid: 503) but also endanger organisational performance due to miscommunication; 'oral media' (e.g. face-to-face, telephone) are richer than 'written media' (e.g. internal mail) and 'synchronous media' (e.g. telephone) are richer than 'asynchronous media' (e.g. internal mail) (ibid: 505). However, Markus (ibid) challenges the idea that in communication media 'richer is better' and suggests that 'richer media' (e.g. face-to-face discussion) are not necessarily better than 'leaner media' (e.g. electronic mail); leaner media 'can be used for complex communication' as communication is not determined by 'the media per se' but by 'the social processes' that surround them (ibid: 502).

For example, even though according to information richness theory email as written and asynchronous would be expected to be used less by senior managers, in practice senior managers were found to use email heavily (ibid). The managers in the study did not consider the email rich and yet used it as a 'primary medium of internal work-related communication, appropriate for any task that did not involve private social, work-related interpersonal, or personnel matters' (ibid: 519); accordingly, the telephone was used primarily in order to maintain social relationships at work. This indicates either that electronic mail is richer than currently believed or that other factors come into the equation (ibid); either 'the information richness scale may be inaccurate' or 'the scale may be irrelevant' (ibid: 506) because individual behaviour is not determined solely by perceptions of 'media appropriateness as defined by information richness theory' (ibid: 507). In fact, email not only enables 'multiple addressability' but also a 'computer-searchable memory' and thus, it can rival or even exceed the traditional telephone (ibid). Additionally, irrespectively of the information richness scale, it has to be admitted that it is the behaviour of people (i.e. availability and responsiveness) that determine the success of a medium (ibid).

Just because many people use a medium, it does not mean that they all use it well or wisely (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004). The email has unique qualities (e.g. fast

information flow) provided that it is used correctly but when used incorrectly (e.g. 'flame' emails, emails which supplant instead of supplement face-to-face communication), it can create misunderstandings, conflicts and problems (ibid). The email has a polymorphic nature which 'interacts with day-to-day work activities and tasks, stimulating and moving knowledge through improved connections, while also simultaneously introducing disruptive relationships behaviour' (O'Kane, Palmer and Hargie, 2007: 321). For example, on one hand it is fast, reaches great distances, allows multiple addressability, enables use at convenient times, increases contact opportunities, reduces administration whereas on the other hand it can create overload of information, limit discussion, depersonalise the workplace and increase misunderstandings (ibid); the email can be the carrier of both accurate and inaccurate information, can be interpreted both correctly and incorrectly, and can both build and damage relationships (ibid). The email cannot completely replace face-to-face communication (ibid) as it 'supplements rather than supplants' face-to-face communication (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004: 283) but along with other 'computer mediated communication' tools (e.g. instant messaging) (O'Kane, Palmer and Hargie, 2007: 308) it is widely used in the workplace and therefore, needs to be further researched (ibid).

Based on this, new studies have to be conducted (e.g. such as the current study) in order not only to examine the nature and the adaptation of these new media within the organisation (ibid) and to investigate how tools and technologies feature in the daily working environment (Heath, Luff and Knoblauch, 2004), but also to discover whether managers prefer electronic communication because it has more potential (Markus, 1994) or because it minimises the 'threat' of face-to-face communication. Post-modern organisation theory (e.g. Daft, 2000) claims that the managers communicate with employees openly but there is suspicion that electronic communication makes communication impersonal and it disadvantages and disempowers the employees (Weick, 1985); the best way to examine organisational communication and manager-employee interaction is to analyse and understand organisational behaviour in the context they occur.

2.1.3 Organisational psychology and interpersonal relations

2.1.3.1 Commitment

According to Allen and Meyer (1990), three components of organisational commitment exist: the affective, the continuance and the normative. The affective component is the emotional attachment employees feel towards the company, the continuance refers to the commitment associated with the costs of leaving the company, and the normative entails the feelings of obligation employees experience in relation to the company (ibid). Even though all three components are distinctively different, the affective and the normative appear to overlap (ibid).

Grant, Dutton and Rosso (2008: 898) state that employee support programmes increase organisational commitment as employees not only receive but also give (i.e. reciprocity); giving was found to increase affective commitment 'through a prosocial sensemaking process' in which both personal and company actions are viewed by employees as caring (ibid). Equally, good communication from management was found to enhance employee commitment (Mayfield and Mayfield, 2002; De Ridder, 2004; Gopinath and Becker, 2000) whereas inconsistent communication was found to even result in low commitment (Hoogervorst, Flier and Koopman, 2004). Possibly the family of an employee plays an important role in an employee's attitude towards work if one takes into consideration the view of the organisation and the employee family as 'mutually enacted environments' where the best fit between organisational and family needs is achieved with flexibility, negotiation and cooperation (Golden, 2009: 385); families were found to cooperate with organisations and to play an important role on organisational change provided a relationship of trust and reciprocity existed (ibid).

Nevertheless, actual employment termination rates depend on several circumstantial factors apart from commitment. Batt, Colvin and Keefe (2002:589) suggest that trade unions, higher wages, internal opportunities of mobility, as well as 'managerial policies that facilitate voice can significantly reduce exits'; on the contrary, downsizing, cost-cutting, monitoring and low payments increase quite rates (ibid). Also, the discourse which portrays ageing as a decline negatively influences the older worker (Ainsworth and Hardy, 2009) possibly to the point that it may actually be preventing higher quit rates from older workers. Additionally, the distress associated with job searching may be adding to the equation. For example, Song et al (2009) examined the relationship between job searching and distress in China (NE China, 74% female participants) and found that job

searching can be distressing and that the job seeker is trapped in a vicious cycle where 'a high level of distress leads to more job search, and more job search leads to a high level of distress' (ibid: 1188). Nevertheless, they recognise that it is questionable if these results would persist in the long term (i.e. more than two weeks than the study lasted) (ibid).

According to Schneider (1987) though, the characteristics of the people determine organisational behaviour and not the external environment, the technology or the structure of the organisation. He views the organisation as a unit and argues that persons and situations are inseparable and that people choose to enter and stay or leave organisations; differences between organisations are due to their people; people are attracted to and fit within the environment of the organisation they chose; individuals that do not fit in a place, leave (ibid). He presents the ASA (Attraction-Selection-Attrition) perspective which supports the idea that 'the people make the place' (ibid: 450). Brown (1998) seems to prefer the rejection perspective instead of the attraction one; he uses the notion of 'fitting in' a place but suggests that the employees who do not fit in an organisation's culture get rejected (ibid). Therefore, Schneider (1987) sees employees as 'choosing to leave' a place they do not fit in whereas Brown (1998) views them as 'being made to leave', which is more convincing not only because the suggestion is more recent but also because organisational life is not as idyllic as companies and post-modern organisation theory alike tend to portray it.

Pfeffer (1992) presents a more sinister view of organisations; many firms fire employees as a solution to personnel problems and use contractors or temporary workers from agencies; these firms allow others to solve their human resources problems and consequently one wonders 'How can' people 'trust large organizations when they have broken compacts of long-term employment?' (ibid: 30). And here lies the paradox of 'corporate culturism' (Willmott, 1993: 516); even though in theory employees are an invaluable asset, in practice employees can be disposed and replaced like a commodity (ibid).

Admittedly, employee commitment entails a duality. It can accommodate both the notion of merely staying in the job (i.e. not resigning) and the idea of feeling loyal and loving the whole working environment. Consequently, staying in the job, irrespective of whether it happens because there is no other option (e.g. financial reason) or because an employee appreciates that his/her work is viewed as commitment, at least by the management. However, this view does not easily accommodate the case of employees who loathingly work for a company for years just because they have not found a way out.

2.1.3.2 Behaviour and emotion

In behaviour analysis it is of vital importance not only to interpret behaviour in its social and organisational context but also to be able to recognise the fact that understanding individuals is very difficult as observable behaviour often contains elements of emotion masking. For example, Hewlin (2003) argues that employees mask their true selves by creating representations which falsely portray them as embracing organisational values. These 'facades of conformity' are consciously created and occur daily in verbal or nonverbal situations due to the existence of organisational (e.g. reward system, one's position) and individual characteristics (ibid: 633). For the individuals who separate their personal and work identity the result is less likely to be negative whereas for people who tend to integrate the two identities the result will be psychological distress due to the presence of the conflict (ibid).

Human behaviour interests not only psychologists but also scientists from other fields, one of which is management. Gabriel, Fineman and Sims (2000) suggest that 'action' is a suitable word to describe human behaviour since this involves purpose and meaning and not mere physical movement. Consequently, it can be said that an individual's behaviour is communicated or made aware to others through his/her reactions to certain stimuli. Thus, behaviour can be easily observed through the vocal, facial and generally the somatic expressions of an individual; these reactions are triggered out and are intertwined with complex mental procedures, which remain hidden and need to be analysed carefully. Nevertheless, this is a complex task as the behaviour of employees has to be examined together with the environment within it occurs as behaviour is a constant and complex interaction between personal and situational characteristics (Terborg, 1981). Hence, it is assumed that the employees respond to the environment in which they work.

Additionally, another difficulty for the researcher/observer is the element of emotion. According to the Lauka, Juslin and Bresin (2005), the major evidence of emotion can be found in self-reports, expressive behaviour (facial and vocal expression) and physiology. Consequently, attention has to be paid to the vocal expression as well as the facial expression and bodily reactions of each employee. According to Gabriel, Fineman and Sims (2000), feelings are subjective experiences whereas emotions are the outward display of these experiences, a display which sometimes one chooses either to disguise or to fake when in front of others.

In their review, Ashkanasy, Härtel and Daus (2002) identify four trends that have implications for the study of diversity and emotion: globalisation, service economy, increased technology, knowledge work; they also note that diversity extends far beyond gender and race differences and consequently, the literature needs to be enriched with relevant material so as to be applicable within organisational management. They acknowledge that mood is a complex phenomenon when it comes to organisational contexts as it depends on many personal and situational variables and also, they recognise the existence of emotional labour where employees manage their emotions as part of their job and acknowledge its emotional toll (ibid). Moreover, they underline that emotions in the workplace should not be ignored as 'emotions may constitute a critical link between workplace contexts and employee behavior' (ibid: 324). Finally, they point out that transformational leaders are able not only to inspire but also to understand the needs, goals and feelings of others (ibid: 325). However, their claim, which reflects the post-modern organisation theory ideals, is yet to be examined. If managers/leaders really understand employees, why do they treat them as a commodity (e.g. Willmott, 1993) and not appreciate them as the theory says they do (e.g. Daft, 2000); if managers/leaders do not understand employees, why does the theory insist that they do (ibid)?

Finemann (2004: 731) argues about the problematic nature of emotion measurement and acknowledges that psychometric approaches produce convenient formats but he also cautions that this 'excludes or marginalizes other forms of emotion knowing'. He concludes that it is 'possible to research emotion without measuring it' and even though the produced understandings will be 'less precise than the simplifications of measurement', 'they are likely to be abundant in insight, plausibility and texture' (ibid: 736). Emotion is not only a social phenomenon but also a biologically adapted one, which generates identifiable overt behaviour; as such, there is 'some level of universal relation between certain emotions and overt behaviour' and people have the ability to identify emotion by observing behaviour, irrespectively of situational processes and cultural backgrounds (Consedine, Strongman and Magai, 2003: 898).

Behaviour is said to depend on the circumstances where it occurs since the presence of others or the type of audience affect one's responses as humans have the ability to control their facial responses according to certain 'display rules' (Zaalberg, Manstead and Fischer, 2004). People can facilitate (intensify), inhibit (deintensify), neutralise, mask, simulate, qualify (add a comment) their facial behaviour (Ekman, 1992 in Zaalberg, Manstead and Fischer, 2004); as people know which behaviour is appropriate each time, they are willing to control it and are able to control it (Reissland and Harries, 1991 in

Zaalberg, Manstead and Fischer, 2004) and they do this prosocially (in order not to hurt the feelings of others) or for personal gain (Gnepp and Hess, 1986 in Zaalberg, Manstead and Fischer, 2004).

Rubin, Munz and Bommer (2005) explore the concepts of emotion recognition and personality traits and show that both were positively linked to transformational leadership behaviour (i.e. leadership that transforms followers by motivating them). They suggest that 'emotion recognition may be a necessary but insufficient ability involved in the performance of transformational leadership behaviour' but emotion recognition coupled with strong substance and expressiveness may be the differentiating factor (ibid: 854). Dasborough (2006), believes that leaders create both positive and negative emotions but employees usually remember mostly the negative incidents (asymmetry effect). In detail, employees experience positive emotions when their leaders understand, respect, motivate, inspire, empower, reward or communicate effectively with them; on the contrary, negative emotions can be occasionally experienced and they are intense and usually linked to ineffective/inappropriate communication or to the lack of the above elements i.e. when their behaviour was considered inappropriate; these result in anger, annoyance, frustration or even loathing (ibid). However, employees tend to recall more the negative moments than the positive and thus, emotional intelligence is 'a highly valued leadership trait' (ibid: 175).

De Cremer and Van Hiel (2006) support the idea that within organisations the emotions and behaviours of employees towards an authoritative body are shaped by how fairly their colleagues are being treated by that authoritative body, especially when these colleagues had been formerly helpful to these employees.

Interactional Psychology explains behaviour by viewing it as a constant and complex interaction between personal and situational characteristics (Terborg, 1981). Thus, viewing employee behaviour from an interactionist perspective takes into consideration the context in which every action and reaction occurs; after all, it could be argued that understanding the circumstances that surround an event does matter when making judgements (Watson, 1995). However, the explanation of a behaviour can vary considerably depending on the different theory used; for example, if one were to look employees' behaviour from a Freudian-psychoanalytical perspective, he/she would see behaviour as mostly determined by unconscious forces and shaped by their past experiences (Giles, 2005), whereas from the perspective of Goffman, behaviour is shaped by social conventions.

2.1.3.3 The work of Goffman

Goffman's work (1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010), which is based on a variety of settings and materials (Shetland, psychiatric hospitals, casinos, animal studies, etiquette manuals), offers a detailed analysis and deep understanding of human behaviour and the social conventions and agreements which surround it.

According to Goffman (1975), all individuals try to present themselves in everyday life. He uses the term 'performance' to define 'all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants' (ibid: 26) who are his/her 'audience', his/her 'observers', his/her 'co-participants' (ibid: 27); the individual is sometimes sincere but sometimes gives a cynical performance, too. The important parts of the social front are the setting, the appearance and the manners; the person, as a drama actor has to convey to others certain meanings and also the ideal societal values during his/her action; often others are involved (i.e. team) as part of staging this performance and then, 'dramatic action' becomes 'dramatic interaction' (ibid: 96). For example, in the 'make-work' situation, employees appear busy (even if they are not) when the boss is near (ibid: 112). The stage and the backstage are separated and informal attitude occurs only in the backstage; a performer can mock or speak to a team-mate while in front of the audience but this is an out of character performance which is used for joking or even as a warning (ibid). Performance disruption is avoided by 'dramaturgical loyalty' (ibid: 207), 'dramaturgical discipline' (ibid: 210) and 'dramaturgical circumspection' (where foresight and design are used for safeguarding the show) (ibid: 212) between performers; there is always an agreement between the performer(s) and the audience regarding morality. Hence, Goffman believes that people 'make a presentation of' themselves to others (ibid: 244); individuals are viewed both as performers and as characters and the self is a product, a performed character. He acknowledges the fact that characters staged in theatres differ from characters performed by someone but he admits that the techniques of staging false figures are common in theatre and in everyday social situations (ibid).

'Social order' is the 'consequence of any set of moral norms that regulates the way in which persons pursue objectives' (ibid, 1966: 8). Irrespective of the situation, 'the rule of behavior ... is the rule obliging participants to "fit in"' (ibid: 11). The individual sends 'linguistic' and 'expressive messages' (ibid: 13) when he/she interacts with others (i.e. mutuality). During 'unfocused interaction' (ibid: 24), even though the individual does not talk, he/she communicates through 'body idiom' (ibid: 35) and as such, he/she is expected

to convey the right information and engage in an appropriate 'involvement'(ibid: 38) (i.e. act accordingly); for example, 'make-work' (ibid: 56) is considered an appropriate thing to do when employees at work are not so busy and their boss is near. In 'focused interaction' (ibid) (e.g. talking with someone) the individual opens him/herself to 'face-engagement' (ibid: 88) (e.g. eye-to-eye look) and gives 'social recognition' (ibid: 113) to his/her acquaintances (i.e. is open to engagement). In 'accessible engagements' (ibid: 154) (i.e. situations which contain bystanders) and generally in engagements with others individual behaviour 'is guided by social values or norms concerning involvement' (ibid: 193). Situational improprieties which expose the self may be tolerated but only under certain limited circumstances (e.g. inappropriate clothing in disasters); 'when in the presence of others, the individual is guided by a special set of rules ... the situational proprieties' (ibid: 243). 'Just as' jails are filled 'with those who transgress the legal order, so' asylums are partly filled 'with those who act unsuitably' (ibid: 248).

Goffman (1981: 4) claims that 'deeply incorporated into the nature of talk are the fundamental requirements of theatricality'. In conversational dialogue, one encounters the 'ratified participants' (ibid: 9) (those who are addressed and those who are not) and those who overhear (accidentally, due to circumstances or intentionally). In public, self-talk involves the talker 'in a situationally inappropriate way' (ibid: 85) unless it is justified by the circumstances; for example, if one trips, he/she may choose to self-talk or even use the response cry 'oops' in order to defend his/her harmed self-respect. Certain 'public arrangements oblige and induce' people to remain silent, others oblige them to talk and others to 'open up' their 'thoughts and feelings and' themselves 'through sound to' those present (ibid: 121).

Maintaining face is important for a person as this provides confidence whereas 'showing a wrong face or no face' (Goffman, 2005: 8) (e.g. as happens in pranks) causes shame to the individual not only because of the inconvenience of the event and the threat to one's 'reputation as a participant' (ibid) but also because the image of him/herself he/she likes is threatened. Each person creates a 'self-image expressed through face' and is expected to 'live up to it' (ibid: 9). During encounters the person tries to maintain his/her face (due to self-respect) but also the face of his/her co-participants (due to consideration for others). The individual engages in avoidance or corrective 'face-work' (ibid: 12) (i.e. avoids problems that threaten face or rectifies them if they occur) in order to protect him/herself from threats (e.g. gaffes, malicious incidents, incidental offenses). The person 'defends his own face and protects the face of the others' (ibid: 29). 'A person's performance of face-work, extended by his tacit agreement to help others perform theirs, represents his

willingness to abide by the ground rules of social interaction' (ibid: 31). The self as both a created image and a 'player in a ritual game' (ibid) abides to the rules of social encounters. When interacting with others, apart from the face-work, an individual has to maintain involvement; he/she has to wear the 'expressive costume that individuals are expected to wear whenever they are in the immediate presence of others' (ibid: 133). Nevertheless, 'socially improper behavior' (ibid: 137) and 'social deviancy' (ibid: 140) are not necessarily 'psychotic behavior' (ibid: 141) and situational improprieties are not necessarily a sign of mental illness (e.g. one can be just intoxicated etc.) (ibid).

The behaviour and the routines and rules that surround it constitute a 'social order' (ibid, 2010: ix). The individual 'as a vehicular unit and a participation unit' (ibid: 5) (i.e. as a single unit and as a participation unit) engages him/herself in 'supportive' and 'remedial interchanges' with others (ibid: 64) (e.g. greetings and apologies). The individual through continuous self work constrains him/herself to sustain the desired values which sustain 'a viable image of him/herself in the eyes of others' (ibid: 185). 'He engages in little performances to actively portray a relationship to such rules' (ibid: 186). Social norms regulate relationships, communities and organisations; when an individual has assumptions about him/herself that the relevant social frame can neither allow nor do much about it, social organisation (public order or workplace) does not seem to forgive (ibid).

Boje, Luhman and Cunliffe (2003) after examining Goffman's perspective suggest that based on Goffman's approach, organisation life is like theatre, whereas, according to Burke's approach, organisational life actually is theatre and they explore a third perspective where theatre is seen as both life and metaphor; combining the two approaches into a more dialectic perspective, they suggest that even if the differences are blurred, they can still be recovered as individuals have the ability to be actors and script editors instead of mere spectators (ibid). Nevertheless, Goffman's approach, where the office can be seen metaphorically as a stage, can be more liberating as metaphors not only help one create mental constructions (Clegg and Gray, 1996) but also encompass both the objective facts and the subjective human experience (Hogler et al, 2008) as they create 'an alternative image of what is taken for granted' (Czarniawska, 1997: 127). Even though Goffman's work, as he admits himself (2010: xxii), includes assertions which are mediated through the intentional use of selective vocabulary (e.g. 'Often', 'in Western society') which in turn does not allow for generalisations, the strength of his work lies in the detailed analysis and deep understanding of human behaviour and the social conventions and agreements which surround it.

The theatre metaphor that underlies Goffman's work (1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) enables one not only to analyse employee behaviour but also to understand the relevant conventions and agreements that exist in the workplace. The concepts of presentation of one's self, performance, actors, audience, role expectations, dramaturgical loyalty, on/off stage, private/public face, mutual enactment and dramatic interaction are all relevant when it comes to the workplace. Successful performances require everyone involved to know the rules and abide by them creating and sustaining a relevant character (ibid; Czarniawska, 1997). The work of Goffman reminds one that there are many points to be taken into consideration when explaining employee behaviour. For example, working involves acting in a way that is determined by certain formal, impersonal and specific rules to which the employee seems to willingly comply with; each company has a culture, to which each employee is expected to fit in gradually (Brown, 1998). In the post-modern organisation learning is seen as crucial in organisational and personal success and is expected in order to fit in a place (e.g. Daft, 2000); when employees enter into the work arena, they are aware that hierarchical power differences exist and they consciously grant their leaders the right to lead as after all they have chosen the place because they fit in (Schneider, 1987). Even though the morality of the notion of fit in or leave/get rejected (i.e. homogenisation) is debatable from a critical perspective (e.g. Willmott, 1993), the above points cannot be neglected in organisational studies. Equally, one cannot neglect the fact that working in a firm involves interaction with others and since individuals differ not only in their job status but also in the way they deal with things, misunderstandings and conflicts are likely to occur (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000).

2.1.3.4 Anger

Anger in the workplace is a common occurrence as when people interact, friction inevitably arises at some point. Domagalski and Steelman (2005) state that unjust treatment and interpersonal incivility result in anger, which in turn is experienced and expressed by each person differently, depending on his/her organisational status and his/her dispositional characteristics (trait anger). Contrary to their expectations, they found that subordinates were more likely to express their anger in front of supervisors whereas supervisors were more likely to suppress their anger when they were with subordinates (ibid). Nevertheless, their expectations about trait anger were confirmed as individuals with high trait anger tend to express their anger outwardly and also tend to have a lower anger threshold (ibid).

On similar grounds, Sloan (2004) argues that occupational characteristics influence the experience and the expression of anger. She suggests that workers who deal extensively with people, 'experience anger more frequently than workers in other types of occupations' (ibid: 66) whereas the expression of anger depends on the interaction with people and also on both occupational and organisational status. In detail, occupations that involve dealing with others have more experiences of work-related anger and at the same time less direct expression of that anger than other occupations; also, workers tend to directly express their anger when they have high occupational status or when they are of higher organisational status than the one of the target of their anger (ibid). However, unexpectedly, two of her hypotheses were not confirmed: workers who deal with people were not found to refrain from directly expressing their anger, and workers who are in esteemed occupations did not seem to experience less anger at work (ibid).

Geddes and Callister (2007), in their model of anger expression, support the idea that when the line is crossed, the outcomes are not always negative; in fact, they can be also positive. They argue that within organisations two thresholds exist: the 'expression threshold' and the 'impropriety threshold' (ibid: 722); the expression threshold is crossed when an employee expresses his/her anger whereas the impropriety threshold is crossed when an employee goes a bit further and reacts inappropriately. Hence, when these two thresholds are not too close to each other, employees can express themselves without fear. Among their points they suggest that silent anger ('quiet and unspoken' (ibid: 725)) harms both the individual and the organisation, muted anger (when the anger/complaint is trusted to non-work individuals) has less negative outcomes for the individual but more for the organisation, expressed anger has the potential to have more positive than negative outcomes, improperly expressed anger will have more negative outcomes than positive, and finally, good companies will 'expand the space between thresholds' (ibid: 738). Thus, when employees are allowed to express their anger, benefits can occur (dialogue, change, learning, respect, understanding among people) (ibid).

Individuals do not express their anger in the same way. As Domagalski and Steelman (2005) suggest, some individuals have a higher level of dispositional trait anger, which in turn leads to more anger experience and consequently, more anger expression. Wilkowski and Robinson (2007: 16) suggest that differences in trait anger among individuals are linked with individual differences related to 'automatic hostile interpretations, ruminative attention, and effortful control'. They clarify that anger 'is an internal feeling' which involves 'increased motivation to hurt others' whereas aggression is 'the actual act of hurting others' (ibid: 4) but they also admit that 'trait anger and trait reactive aggression'

differ only subtly (ibid: 5). In their model, they suggest that individuals with high trait anger are more prone to be biased by hostile interpretations whereas individuals with low trait anger are more prone to control hostile thoughts and they have become used to this control through time; individuals with high trait anger feel anger not only because they are more likely to perceive things with a more hostile interpretation but also because 'they engage in fewer cognitive processes important in self-regulating their hostile thoughts' (ibid: 14); these individuals 'can actively create their own hostile environment by provoking hostility from others' (ibid: 16). Simply, individuals with high trait anger are born with it (genetically predisposed) but in addition to this, they not only develop it through time but also end up shaping likewise their environment, too (ibid).

Nevertheless, apart from individual (e.g. trait anger) and occupational/status characteristics, the experience and expression of anger is also related to other characteristics such as gender for example. Domagalski and Steelman (2007) examined the impact of both gender and status on workplace anger. They discovered that although most groups exercise emotional restraint in order to deal with anger, quite unexpectedly, lower status men tend to express their anger towards higher status employees more than lower status women. Also, Weber and Wiedig-Allison (2007) compared the gender differences among expected and actual anger behaviour; they expected that men would be more aggressive and women more submissive. However, their results defied the social norms/stereotypes/expectations by showing that men tended to react with humour or distance themselves whereas women were not acting submissively and the stereotypes regarding male aggressiveness were only confirmed when it came to extreme anger; under moderate anger circumstances, women reacted more aggressively than men (ibid). Nevertheless, even though the social expectations about aggression were defied, they admit that still, actual behaviour was compatible with the stereotypical idea which holds that men are less emotional and expressive than women (ibid).

Ramírez, Fujihara and Van Goozen (2001) studied a group of multicultural (Japanese, Dutch, Spanish) students in order to compare 'cultural and gender differences in anger and aggression' (ibid: 119) and found that 'anger proneness was not significantly different' (ibid: 120) between cultures (even though 'aggression proneness was significantly higher among the Japanese' (ibid)) and that aggression proneness did not differ among genders apart from the fact that anger was higher among Dutch males than in the females. Additionally, Lobbestael, Arntz and Wiers (2008) compared four anger-inducing lab methods (special film viewing, stress interview, punishment, harassment) and concluded that even though all of them elicit anger, interview and harassment result in the highest

physiological response (followed by punishment and finally film). Consequently, methods that involve personal contact (harassment, interview) lead to higher 'physiological reactivity than methods that did not' (film, computer-punishment) (ibid: 370).

Kuppens et al (2007) in their study of the 'patterns of appraisal and anger experience' (ibid: 689) aimed to examine the role of individual differences and concluded that 'the experience of emotion components and their interrelations is a function of person and situation' (ibid: 710). Also, Bøddeker and Stemmler (2000) suggest that it is the particular and the general situation that influence actual anger response style and not the narrow personality traits.

Tamir, Mitchell and Gross (2008) believe that individuals are willing to get angry in situations where confrontational tasks are involved as anger can improve their performance in such tasks. Thus, under certain circumstances, individuals sacrifice their immediate emotions for the sake of instrumental benefits; simply put, individuals 'can be motivated to experience even unpleasant emotions in the short term, if such emotions offer instrumental benefits' and thus, 'utility can sometimes trump pleasure in motivating emotion regulation' (ibid: 328). However, they caution that even though beneficial under certain circumstances (e.g. competition), anger can be harmful under certain occasions (e.g. cooperation) (ibid).

According to Tjosvold and Su (2007: 260), openly discussing about anger and the incidents that create annoyance strengthens organisational relationships even in collectivist and 'conflict-negative' societies such as China. This 'constructive controversy' (ibid: 264) leads to mutual benefits as the individual manages his/her anger and annoyance and also builds relationships; high constructive controversy (i.e. open discussion of anger and annoyance) is linked with cooperation whereas low constructive controversy is linked with competitiveness. In brief, anger and annoyance cannot only be managed but also lead to organisational benefits (ibid).

Post-modern organisation theory leads people to believe that employees have no reason to be angry with their employers at least in the long-term as misunderstandings are either avoided or solved because managers understand the employees, communication is ideal and the workplace is a happy place (e.g. Daft, 2000). Nevertheless, the case of employees simply creating 'facades of conformity' (Hewlin, 2003:633) or 'performing' (Goffman, 1975) in order to please their managers and safeguard their jobs as employee

disposal is a common practice in the labour market (Willmott, 1993) does not seem to be mentioned much in the theory.

2.1.3.5 Ingratiation theory

Ingratiation can be seen as an attempt to control a superior in order to benefit (Pandey, 1981). In detail, Pandey (ibid) in his investigation of ingratiation within an Indian institution suggests that ingratiation occurs more in subordinates who gain power over their supervisors by ingratiation as this puts them in a favourable light. Bohra and Pandey (1984), in their study of male undergraduates in India, discovered that ingratiation is targeted more towards one's boss than towards one's friends or strangers and that individuals who used ingratiation towards one person were more likely to use ingratiation towards others, too.

Ralston (1985) believes that ingratiation is not only initiated by the individual but also induced by the organisation and can have negative results when excessive. Based on Jones (1964) (in Ralston, 1985), he defines ingratiation as 'a political process to seek one's own self-interest' 'with disregard for the costs to others' and classifies it into three types: 'self-presentation, opinion conformity, and other-enhancement' (ibid: 477). Self-presentation involves behaving in a certain way in order to meet the expectations (or attract the attention) of the target, opinion conformity involves behaving in a certain way in order to show to the target that one agrees with his/her opinion, and other-enhancement involves directly praising the target (ibid). Ingratiation is 'the result of the interaction of individual and situational factors' (ibid: 479) (i.e. high Machiavellianism, internal locus of control, lack of unique skills, autocratic management, task ambiguity, scarcity of resources) (ibid). Consequently, when all six factors exist, the highest probability of ingratiation occurs (whereas the lowest probability exists in the absence of all six factors) (ibid). Nevertheless, he admits that empirical research is needed as these propositions need to be tested (ibid).

Liden and Mitchell (1988: 572) define ingratiation 'as an attempt by individuals to increase their attractiveness in the eyes of others' and mention that ingratiation within organisational settings has not been studied enough. They believe that although related to 'organizational politics, impression management, and upward influence' (ibid: 572) ingratiation is distinctly different. Their definition of ingratiation is lenient as it does not imply deceit or conscious effort; it just accommodates the fact that people want to be

liked. Therefore, the cause of ingratiation can be dispositional as the need to be liked exists in human nature (in different degrees) (ibid). However, ingratiation can also occur under certain temporary or permanent situations (e.g. after criticism or in interdependent tasks respectively); the choice of the suitable ingratiation method is based on risk calculation as under high risks individuals choose more subtle forms of ingratiation whereas under low risks they prefer more aggressive forms of ingratiation (ibid). Ingratiation can be used as a defence (e.g. when one has under-performed) but also proactively (i.e. assertive use) in order to gain future benefits but the susceptibility of the recipient along with the situational characteristics determine the overall risk; this perceived risk will determine whether it is more suitable for the ingratiation to create a favourable image of him/herself or address his/her target directly or indirectly (via communicating the information to a third person); on the other hand, the target him/herself is likely to be more suspicious of a defensive strategy (e.g. repeated apologies after repeated failures) than an assertive one (e.g. flattery, advice requests, sincere and similar attitudes) and generally, ingratiation is successful when it is perceived as sincere (and hence, subtlety is important) (ibid). The success/failure of an ingratiation attempt will impact not only the future use of ingratiation by the ingratiation but also the relationship that will develop with his/her target as well his/her colleagues; for example, a successful attempt will: prompt the ingratiation repeat the strategy, make the target like the ingratiation, but it may lead to feelings of inequity among co-workers, especially in cases of appraisals; accordingly, an unsuccessful attempt can deteriorate the relations between the ingratiation and the target (ibid). Consequently, ingratiation is a dynamic, cyclical process as both the ingratiation's and the target's behaviour are influenced by previous ingratiation situations; they caution though that factors such as the consciousness of the ingratiation, the risk importance calculation, the timing and the influence of ingratiation need to be examined further (ibid).

Eastman (1994: 1380) uses the term 'extrarole behaviors' for 'behaviors not directly required by an employee's job' and with this term he encompasses both ingratiation and citizenship behaviour; although similar but different, both behaviours elicit different responses. As managers often have preconceptions and are biased, often these two extrarole behaviours are mislabelled; hence, employees should be aware that good citizenship could be viewed as ingratiation which is viewed negatively by supervisors whereas good citizenship is viewed positively (ibid).

Shankar, Ansari and Saxena (2001: 642) state that ingratiation, which is an influence strategy, 'has received minimal attention in organizational research'. They studied Indian private and public organisations in order to examine the environments that induce

ingratiation and hypothesised that participative leadership would not trigger ingratiation whereas authoritarian and 'nurturant-task' (ibid: 643) (i.e. when goal achievement is rewarded with nurturance) leadership would prove to be a more fruitful environment for ingratiation and they also thought that this would be moderated by the nature of the organisation (i.e. private to be associated more with ingratiation than public). Their results showed that ingratiation was 'used frequently in the nurturant-task climate in the public sector', was negatively related to authoritarian climates in the public sector; within the private sector ingratiation occurred more frequently in authoritarian climates whereas it did not occur often in the nurturant-task climate (ibid: 646).

Nevertheless, irrespective of the motives behind ingratiation (e.g. whether individuals want to be liked or to gain benefits etc.), whether ingratiation can always be detectable is not sure; not only because the individual strives to be seen in a favourable light by his/her fellow citizens (Goffman 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) but also because of the sensemaking that is involved when making judgements of this type.

2.1.3.6 Sensemaking

Making sense of organisations requires understanding how individuals influence the behaviour of others 'without necessarily having or using formal authority' (Pfeffer, 1992: 44). However, in order to make sense of organisational life, the lessons which were learned at school have to be 'unlearned'; in the workplace not only cooperation is not cheating (as it is essential) but also there is not always a right and a wrong answer; as the consequences of a decision are known after some time and as things are rarely clear-cut, decisions are not important per se since it takes only some time to make a decision and a lot more time to deal with its consequences (ibid).

'Sensemaking emphasizes that people try to make things rationally accountable to themselves and others' (Weick, 1993: 635). 'Organizational sensemaking is sensemaking by individuals in organizations' (Jeong and Brower, 2008: 224) and occurs within a social context and structure (O'Leary and Chia, 2007). So, sensemaking occurs at the individual level but is connected with the 'sociocultural reality of the organization' (Harris, 1994: 310); each member holds 'a repository of cultural knowledge and meanings' (organisational schemes) (ibid: 310) and makes sense based on it; the interaction of this knowledge leads to the creation of individual cultural experience (ibid). Sensemaking is a conscious and continuous cycle which involves noticing, interpretation and action (Jeong

and Brower, 2008: 224) and in the working environment, it is reflected in the conversations of the members (Taylor and Robichaud, 2004). For example, Patriotta (2003: 353) writes that narratives in organisations capture organisational knowledge and are part of the organisational culture and 'turn action into text and text into action' and reflect common-sense and act not only as 'storage devices' (ibid: 354) but also they promote 'knowledge creation and collective remembering' (ibid: 372).

Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld (2005) distinguish the features of sensemaking. 'Sensemaking starts with chaos' (ibid: 411) (flow with many elements) and with noticing (aware of not normal) and involves labelling (categorising); it is retrospective (comparing with past) and presumptuous (from the abstract to the concrete); it is social (influenced by social factors), centred upon action (i.e. what to do next) and involves 'organizing through communication' (ibid: 413). Consequently, sensemaking entails continuous redrafting of a situation in order to become more comprehensive (ibid). Managers need to understand the sensemaking frameworks and the contexts in which they occur (Schwandt, 2005). 'Sensemaking is only reactive and pragmatic, while learning is more reflexive and contemplative' (ibid: 188). As Waterman and Weick (1999) state, practitioners statistise whereas academics theorise.

Allard-Poesi (2005) on the other hand, depicts a paradox. She says that researchers, despite praising the subjectivity and social construction of human experience, aim to objectify it; in doing so, they not only contradict themselves but also undermine the meaning of sensemaking (ibid). In order to bypass this paradox, researchers must either 'engage against' their sensemaking process ('postmodern route') or 'engage in sensemaking' with the organisational members they study ('pragmatist/participative route') (ibid: 190). Hence, she agrees with Weick that using or inventing new tools helps people make sense in different ways (ibid). Pye (2002) also agrees with Weick that sensemaking is the most suitable perspective as words have different meanings and as changes in explanations occur over time.

Nevertheless, Mills and Weatherbee (2006: 277) caution that shared meanings occur only through negotiation as 'different forms of sensemaking might bestow different levels of power'. As Boje (2005) argues, sensemaking and 'senseimposing' can be different sides of the same coin and interplay occurs. In fact, in Mills' study (2002), the concepts of 'working in with others' (collaboration) and 'getting on with others' (social cohesion) (ibid: 294) appeared to take different meanings in different departments. Consequently, the 'routine geosocial environment' (ibid: 307) of each worker influences sensemaking

regarding workplace communication; even though departments share the same language, they do not necessarily share the same meanings as these must be understood within their context (ibid). Therefore, workplace communication is not homogeneous among all departments as meaning (and thus, sensemaking, too) does not merely depend on linguistic terms/conventions but is closely connected with the environment within it occurs (ibid). In fact, it can be argued that not all sense in organisations is shared as even individual differences exist (Brown, Stacey and Nandhakumar, 2008).

By integrating Weick's and Goffman's frameworks, Patriotta and Spedale (2009: 1242) suggest that 'group sensemaking is a social interactions process where individual participants attempt to establish and maintain a coherent image of self through language-based face-to-face exchanges'; therefore, 'As sensemaking encompasses issues of identity and face', a leader's credibility enhances sensemaking in ambiguous situations (ibid: 1244). Sensemaking is believed to enhance organisational success and increase the effectiveness of the communication of changes (Vuuren and Elving, 2008). However, Landau and Drori (2008: 714) suggest that sensemaking 'can serve management's strategic quest for hegemony' and support dissension in situations of conflict. Ye and Mills (2008: 71) suggest that when 'the ordinary and ongoing sensemaking process' fails, individuals are faced with 'existential sensemaking'; consequently, even in extreme cases (e.g. a matter of survival) 'the social context for a revival of the flow of sensemaking exists' within the individual. (ibid: 79). In short, sensemaking in routine situations differs from sensemaking under crises; sensemaking in a crisis situation is more difficult as actions that are essential to understand the problematic situation often intensify it (Weick, 1998).

'Unusual routines are dysfunctional or incomplete processes' (Rice, 2008: 1) which exist within a task, system or process; the consequences can be negative or positive, intended or unintended, short-term or long-term, at the same or different level and with different feedback; these processes are called routines as they persist. However, 'attempting to resolve the unusual routine' creates 'negative subroutines' (ibid: 3) such as extra work or cost, delays, errors, blame culture. These subroutines can be devised, unintentional or embedded in procedures or systems and are caused by factors such as conflicting goals, manipulation and poor feedback (ibid). As a preventive or therapeutic measure against unusual routines he suggests possible solutions, some of which are the following; first, both newcomers and leavers should be encouraged to 'identify problems ... and suggest solutions' (ibid: 16); moreover, systems should enable user learning and allow feedback; furthermore, every member who uses a system should be considered a user and should be involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of this system; finally, systems

should be user-friendly, accurate and informational and also the 'analysts of unusual routines must become inaccessible to reactions of pleasure or anger' (ibid: 17) so as to retain their objectiveness and not to become embedded in the unusual routine (ibid).

A good example of a system that can inhibit or at least delay sensemaking would be electronic communication; emails tend to make sensemaking harder for employees as they create problems of meaning; electronic data is flawed as it is inherently incomplete and so, it handicaps the receiver; as the data appears cryptic, the observer asks for more data and ends spending more time and effort processing it (Weick, 1985: 52). Another example related to sensemaking is cultural stereotyping. Apart from the low-level stereotyping which entail negative comments (e.g. 'The ... are lazy'), is the 'sophisticated stereotyping' which entails reducing complex cultures to a short description 'based on theoretical concepts' (e.g. 'The ... are characterised by high individualism') (Osland and Bird, 2000: 56). Nevertheless, characterisations of other cultures are always guesses as 'cultural myopia and lack of experience' (ibid: 57) lead outsiders to view others from their own perspective. Consequently, often outsiders feel that they are faced with cultural paradoxes (ibid).

It could be assumed that 'paradox' and 'sensemaking' are mutually exclusive as one cannot coexist with the other. However, Lüscher and Lewis (2008: 230) believe that using 'paradox as a lens' sheds a different light to managerial challenges as it aids sensemaking. However, 'working through paradox' (ibid: 221) involves several stages and efforts where sensemaking and 'interventive questioning' (ibid: 227) are intertwined. First, an issue occurs ('mess' stage), then the problem gets defined ('problem' stage), then a choice between options is required ('dilemma' stage), then comes the realisation that there is no choice between the two options ('paradox' stage) and finally the 'workable certainty' stage is reached, where even when a solution is not reached, a 'more manageable mess' is reached (ibid: 230). The questioning that occurs at each stage is different; first of all, 'linear questioning' (i.e. 'encouraging explanation') leads from the mess to the definition of the problem (ibid: 228); then, 'circular questioning' (i.e. 'explaining others' perspectives') leads from the problem to the dilemma (ibid); after, 'reflective questioning' (i.e. 'examining implications') leads from the dilemma to the paradox stage (ibid); finally, 'strategic questioning' (i.e. 'challenging simplistic solutions to motivate ongoing experimentation') creates a workable situation (ibid). Nevertheless, several paradoxes exist in organisations. First of all are the 'paradoxes of performing' (ibid: 230) (e.g. delegating when one believes he/she can solve a problem him/herself); then, come the 'paradoxes of belonging' (ibid) (e.g. building a strong team with diverse members);

finally, come the 'paradoxes of organizing' (ibid) (e.g. how to implement teams in times of turbulence) (ibid).

Faj (2008) presents an example of paradox that exists in organisations. Based on 'the concept of derision as developed by the French Lacanian psychoanalyst Denis Vasse' (ibid: 831), he argues and explains that derision causes a silent suffering. Derision, as a perverted discourse, undermines human nature as on one hand managers seem to encourage every person to be a rational subject whereas on the other hand they contradict themselves and restrict subjectivity and even speech (ibid). 'Homo managerialis appears' to have 'a split ego' (ibid: 839) as unconsciously he/she lies; he/she communicates and supports openness but at the same time he/she follows a managerial rationality. Therefore, first management falsely promise that employees will be treated as subjects and then they contradict themselves and they actually treat employees as mere objects; the realisation of this managerial derision causes suffering to the employees as this isolation makes them not only individualistic and competitive but also lonely and helpless (ibid). 'Homo managerialis' (ibid) assures people that he/she is open to discussion but in fact he/she does not want to be questioned, let alone opposed; employees in turn remain silent and lose faith in life, the life that was violently taken from them by the organisation they work in (ibid). Thus, authority and power are complex phenomena which affect and influence human behaviour in various ways (e.g. Foucault, 1977).

2.2 Part II: Authority and resistance

2.2.1 Authority and resistance

2.2.1.1 Foucault: power, discipline and punishment

For Foucault 'the individual is a product of power' (Townley, 1998: 199) and organisations and their knowledge are 'grounded in power relations' (McKinlay and Starkey, 1998b: 111) as (for Foucault) power resides not in things but in relationships and is invested, transmitted and reproduces by individuals and hence, cannot be escaped (Burrell, 1998). In 'Discipline and Punish' Foucault (1977) examines the element of power, the conditions that led to the current penal system and how punishment 'gradually ceased to be a spectacle' (ibid: 9) and physical torture and public executions disappeared and a new punishing morality emerged.

In detail, the public executions, which were judicial and political rituals and a manifestation of power gave way to punishments that became 'a school rather than a festival; an ever-open book rather than a ceremony' (ibid: 11). 'The theatre of punishment' of the eighteenth century 'was replaced by the great uniform machinery of the prisons' (ibid: 116). The power to punish was organised in three ways; punishment as showing the power of the sovereign (i.e. monarch), as a process which requalifies individuals into the social body or as a coercive technique; of these, the third one prevailed (ibid). The prison aimed not only to deprive liberty but also to transform the individual; the move from the public execution to the prison is the move from 'one art of punishing to another, no less skilful one' (ibid: 257); penal detention is 'a calculated technique for altering individual behaviour' (ibid: 264). Discipline responds to the demand 'in order to obtain an efficient machine' (ibid: 164) through training; 'hierarchical observation, normalizing judgement and their combination' (ibid: 170) (i.e. examination) ensured that through surveillance techniques the individual is measured and hierarchised in comparison to others, the desired conformity is introduced (i.e. what is considered normal) and rules to be followed are set. The individual becomes a case which is subject to a 'binary division and branding (mad/sane; dangerous/harmless; normal/abnormal)' (ibid: 199).

The elements of power, discipline and punishment are evident in Bentham's Panopticon which was an architectural structure which was composed of a circular building in the periphery and a tower in the centre; the peripheral structure has segregated compartments each of which has windows which can be observed from the tower; a supervisor sits in the tower and watches through his/her window the segregates without being seen by them (ibid). Each prisoner in the periphery is seen but cannot see; isolated from the other tenants and constantly exposed to the guard; power is visible (i.e. the inmates can see the tower) but unverifiable (i.e. the inmate cannot see when he/she is watched but may expect that it can be any moment) (ibid). The Panopticon was not only a means of observation but also a laboratory where experiments could be carried out about behaviour altering, training and correction; the 'Panopticon presents a cruel, ingenious cage' (ibid: 205) which unlike the amphitheatre or the stage is a machine which ensures that 'prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons' (ibid: 228).

In short, for Foucault the new punishment (i.e. prison instead of torture/execution) 'inflicted its mark, not on the body, but on the mind'; the new system 'measured, described and normalized the individual'; it 'saved the body, but crushed the soul' (Hopper and Macintosh, 1998: 138). For Foucault, the Panopticon reveals the aspirations of the

disciplinary society (McKinlay and Starkey, 1998a) as he 'believed that organizations such as hospitals, prisons, schools and factories are sites of disciplinary power' where 'the anticipation of control causes people to engage in self-surveillance' (Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006: 275).

Nevertheless, Foucault did not adequately explain the willing involvement of individuals in this system (McKinlay and Starkey, 1998a). His work 'is merely suggestive of alternative ways of approaching problems', his positions 'are not readily feasible' and 'his refusal to retain one position for longer than the period between his last book and the next is certainly problematic' (Burrell, 1998: 15). In 'Discipline and Punish' Bentham's Panopticon 'becomes for Foucault the metaphor for the disciplinary mode of domination' (ibid: 19) but 'there is little ... about subjectivity or identity' (Savage, 1998: 68) and this work 'is not actually one of Foucault's more important books' (ibid: 89); in fact, his later works are more relevant to organisation theory (Starkey and McKinlay, 1998).

Even though Foucauldian analyses are important as they emphasise power and knowledge relations, they are 'limited by their lack of attention to human agency' and subjectivity and thus the work of Foucault in organisational analysis cannot be fully developed within organisational contexts (Findlay and Newton, 1998: 225). Foucault's theory was not inaccurate or inappropriate but merely 'inadequate for fully capturing the rich dynamics of management' (Hoppen and Macintosh, 1998: 148); as he focuses on surveillance and neglects resistance there is a 'gloomy determinism' that 'is present in Foucault's work' (i.e. 'Discipline and Punish') and 'he made only belated and limited attempts to correct' it (McKinlay and Taylor, 1998: 174). However, even though 'Foucault wrote virtually nothing on management', yet he has 'become a theorist of major influence' within this field (Hoskin, 1998: 94). Especially when it comes to the element of surveillance in organisations, Foucault's influence on the field is evident.

2.2.1.2 Surveillance and suppression

Under Taylorism (i.e. scientific management where every aspect of work was analysed and measured), workers were closely measured and controlled whereas the post-modern workplace almost boasts about worker autonomy (e.g. Daft, 2000). However, employing a Foucauldian perspective, it could be argued that surveillance not only exists but in fact thrives as the only difference from the past is that nowadays surveillance is more covert than it used to. In theory the post-modern organisation denounces Taylorist surveillance

but in practice surveillance has increased; even though the boss/supervisor is not watching the employee from a close distance as was the case in the past, post-modern organisations qualify as 'panoptic' as not only surveillance devices are used (e.g. cameras) but also the structure of buildings is such so that areas are open/see-through (e.g. open desk policy).

Sewell and Barker (2006) examine surveillance as a medium of coercion and as a medium of care. In their review, they encounter the radical researchers' view that surveillance is coercion and aims to help capitalism by dominating employees and the liberal researchers' view that surveillance is legitimate authority and seeks to help employees (ibid). In the first case, managers aim to make employees work hard all the time and there is a case of the powerful oppressing and dominating the less powerful (ibid); in the second case, surveillance can be seen as a means of protection of the less powerful from unacceptable social behaviours of the more powerful (ibid). As such, Sewell and Barker (ibid) believe that organisational surveillance is not only ambiguous but also paradoxical; they argue that, like bureaucracy, surveillance is 'theoretically and empirically ambiguous' (ibid: 941) and as a result, it actually allows for the coexistence of two theories (coercion and care) which normally would be mutually exclusive. They also suggest that in practice surveillance entails another paradox as it works in both ways: in the Foucauldian Panopticon everybody watches every one but also everybody is being watched by everyone (ibid).

Sewell and Barker's (ibid) suggestion that surveillance entails everybody watching everyone is debatable as according to Foucault (1977) the Panopticon allows the supervisors to see without being seen whereas according to Gabriel (2008: 314) the current era is indeed the era of the 'glass cage' where transparency sometimes helps people and other times exposes them. Nevertheless, Sewell and Barker's (2006) suggestion about the ambiguous and contradictory status of surveillance raises a point; regardless of its ambiguous purpose (i.e. to observe in order to exploit the employee or in order to protect protect him/her against exploitation), the fact is that surveillance exists (as it existed in Taylorism); hence, this contradicts the Post-Taylorist view that employees are autonomous beings (e.g. Daft, 2000) who do not need and should not be supervised and are trusted to work without supervision as they are capable not only of being independent but also of protecting themselves from harm.

Extending beyond the element of surveillance, the nature of authority itself needs to be examined in order to understand its effect on employees. Mandeville (1960) in his review

of the literature on authority stated that authority can be placed on a person or can be connected with a position or can be granted to a superior or someone by a subordinate; however, he cautioned that the latter view could be criticised as inefficient as it evokes suspicion that another word would be preferable (ibid). Tyler (1997) suggests that people seem to accept and obey the rules and decision of authority groups even in the absence of a reward/punishment scheme; this voluntary acceptance stems from the belief that authorities deserve to be obeyed due to the fact they are legitimate; consequently, legitimacy is the concept that determines the effectiveness of authority. In detail, two theories of legitimacy have been developed; according to the first one, deference depends on the social bond that exists between the authority and the people as people choose to defer to authority when they feel valued; according to the second one, deference is strongly influenced by instrumental motivations (ibid). However, these two theories are not mutually exclusive as the psychology of legitimacy has been proven to involve both relational and instrumental aspects (ibid).

Nevertheless, this theory of legitimacy seems to reduce behaviour to a dichotomous concept (accept and obey / not accept and disobey) and does not seem to take into consideration the complex social conventions and agreements which surround and influence human behaviour (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010). Knights et al (2001) support the idea that even though trust and power/control are seen in a dualistic way where an either/or relationship applies, in fact in the virtual world of today they are interdependent and not polarised. As 'personal interaction is no longer the main or most significant means of trust production' (ibid: 314), reliance upon certain systems comes into the equation as well often trust in specific people (e.g. doctor) and trust in specific institutional mechanisms (e.g. certification and standards of practice) are entangled; therefore, power/control and trust can be seen not as opposed but as symbiotically existing (ibid).

From a socio-cultural perspective, a loss of authority is believed to be occurring on two levels; on the macro level, a decline in public confidence towards authority is observed whereas on the micro level a decline in the desire not only to be bossed but also to be a boss is observed (Heller, 1985). This gradual decline where people do not seem to wish to be leaders or followers can be seen as a double loss (ibid). The fact that the legitimacy of authority (legal, political, religious, managerial) has recently declined (Tyler, 1997) seems to be in alignment with the post-modern organisation theory claims to grant each employee the power to work autonomously (e.g. Daft, 2000). Hence, even though authority patterns differ among firms, depending on several situational factors (the three

patterns that can be identified are: isolated autocracy, managerially coordinated company, cooperative hierarchy) (Whitley, 2003), it is assumed that big companies in the UK would operate under the second or the third scheme, excluding the absolute autocracy styles. Nevertheless, as assumptions need to be tested, the present study is a contribution to the literature that examines the patterns of authority and the employee reactions to it.

From a managerial perspective, authority still seems to be perceived as effective provided that the balance between direction and empowerment is correct; according to Hackman (in Gary, 2002), the ideal outcome occurs when a leader specifies the ends but not the means; employees should be strictly guided towards the right direction but also empowered to choose the means to achieve the desired outcome (ibid). In fact, according to Heifetz (1999), the best results occur when leaders do not generate followers but other leaders, who seek to take responsibility (Heifetz, 1999). Holt (2006) believes that management and morality are not mutually exclusive phenomena and argues that in fact, 'the development of a moral character is integral to good managerial practice' (ibid: 1659). He argues that splitting the private from the public undermines Aristotle's insight that the good life is a life that has to be lead; a good manager has to understand how the organisational procedures are related to the life stories of his/her employees and has to be sensitive to the feelings of his/her employees (ibid). Deetz (2008) admits the complexity of the workplace but believes that companies are not more oppressive than government, religious or even community institutions and all analyses depend on the time that they happen.

In short, even though post-modern organisation theory claims to return to the employees the autonomy which they deserve, in practice certain aspects seem to contradict or at least deviate from theory. First, managers are still prevailing; irrespective of their motives (i.e. to generate followers or other leaders), they still are there to give direction to employees (Gary, 2002); they may allow the employees to choose the means (ibid) and take responsibility (Heifetz, 1999) but the desired outcome is set and followed strictly (Gary, 2002). Second, the issue of surveillance comes into the equation; irrespective of the motive (i.e. coercion or care argument), surveillance does exist. Therefore, it can be said that employee behaviour is not as autonomous as the post-modern organisation theory claims it to be; the fact is that the employees are observed and guided. On one hand, one encounters the arguments which accommodate the situation such as that employees are free beings who consciously make decisions to enter organisations (e.g. Schneider, 1987) and that everything is there to protect the prosperity of employees (e.g. surveillance as a means of care, leaders creating other leaders); on the other hand, one

encounters the argument that employees are suppressed as they try to adapt to the way the organisation works and simply conform (e.g. Hewlin, 2003) and silently suffer (e.g. Faÿ, 2008) without resisting.

2.2.1.3 Resistance

There is no clear line between employee conformity and resistance. On one hand, one encounters employees who conform as they have accepted their everyday situation (Cohen and Taylor, 1976) or employees who appear to conform merely due to the fact that they choose to be silent either because this is a safe option (Tourish and Robson, 2006) or because they have no other option (Faÿ, 2008). On the other hand, one encounters employees who do resist authority in one way or another.

Dissatisfaction with everyday life is not equally experienced and expressed by all; some people go to extremes (e.g. resign from their job and go travelling around the world) whereas others experience this dissatisfaction less intensely and/or express themselves less dramatically (Cohen and Taylor, 1976). Some people unreflectively accommodate their everyday situation (i.e. just accept it without analysing or thinking about it), others exercise self-awareness (i.e. view it as absurd and distance themselves from it), while others self-consciously reinvest in it (i.e. although in the past they felt that it was absurd, after reflection they re-commit themselves to it); in order to resist monotony and add novelty to their life, many people engage in fantasy, hobbies, sports or other activities which promise that will lead people away from society but these end up being just a short absence from reality and not an actual escape from routine and convention (ibid). In short, people choose to ignore, distort or subvert their reality; they shift their consciousness, abandon some aspects of reality or look for substitutes; some create alternative realities by turning their focus inwardly (e.g. fantasy) whereas others by shifting their focus outwardly (e.g. hobbies) (ibid). However, resistance is not equal to escape; even though resisting entails an element of escaping or attempting to escape from a situation, resisting involves not merely escaping from reality but actually opposing reality and often trying to change it.

Equally, resistance is not to be equated with misbehaviour. Misbehaviour is part of organisational life and it is observed when lack of correspondence exists 'between direction and responses' (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999: 12) (i.e. when employees do not behave as they are expected to). Misbehaviour is not a synonym of resistance though as

employees do not necessarily engage in such actions in order to resist the notion of control; for example, absenteeism (i.e. being absent from work when not supposed to) occurs often to add fun or combat boredom within the working environment (ibid). Groups organise themselves in order to achieve autonomy and during this 'self-organisation' (ibid: 53) process misbehaviour occurs; consequently, misbehaviour is linked with the pursuit of employee autonomy. Management define what is acceptable and appropriate in terms of time, work, products, identification with the job and so, 'four directions that misbehaviour can take' (ibid: 25) exist when these goals are in conflict with self-organisation. Employees sometimes are absent from work (absenteeism), take company assets which they do not own (pilferage) or just waste time while at work. Even when managerial control is tight (e.g. traditional schemes), employees still can engage in behaviours which 'exploit any weaknesses of managerial control' (ibid: 96); as a result, management often responds with new regulations and a vicious circle is created and perpetuated (ibid). However, apart from the traditional forms of misbehaviour (e.g. absenteeism, pilfering, sabotage), new forms of misbehaviour occur as time passes and as organisations change; for example, joking and sexual misbehaviour, even though not new concepts at work, seem to be taking prevalence whereas sabotage and other traditional forms of misbehaviour have significantly declined; as times passes, expectations change and so, both organisational behaviour and misbehaviour are changing (ibid). Nevertheless, even though some of their elements overlap, misbehaviour should be seen for what it is and not be equated to resistance (ibid).

Employees engage in various forms of both individual and collective resistance (Ezzamel, Willmott and Worthington, 2001). However, contemporary resistance differs from the traditional forms of resistance employed in the past (Fleming and Sewell, 2002; Gabriel, 2008). As such, resistance is not easily observed (Fleming and Sewell, 2002); for example, even though in the past employees used to go on a strike, today different forms of resistance exist and they are not always obvious (ibid). According to Contu (2008: 374), nowadays resistance is a 'decaf resistance' where people can 'enjoy without the costs and risks involved'; for example, one feels that he/she resists with cynicism but still is at a safe point whereas real resistance is unpredictable and uncontrollable (ibid). People nowadays do not engage in revolutionary resistance as they just have modest and specific goals (Fleming and Spicer, 2008). As Gabriel (2008) suggests, most of the employees 'have lost their collective voice' (i.e. collective resistance) and 'occasionally raise their individual voices' but more often they just resign without even explanations (ibid: 323). Consequently, resistance mirrors consumerism as community-caring 'citizens', who existed in the past, have been replaced by individualistic 'consumers'; citizens had a

'voice' whereas consumers just exit (ibid). Moreover, Gabriel (ibid) believes that the current era is the era of the 'glass cage' where the transparency people seek sometimes helps them and other times it exposes them and perfectly portrays the 'society of spectacle' (ibid: 314).

In fact, the concept of the spectacle can be examined in relation to the element of power; Boje (2001: 431) sees the 'interplay of spectacle and carnival' as 'theatrical constructions' of corporate/state 'power and resistance'. Carnival parodies and resists the global corporate spectacles (i.e. the corporately orchestrated displays which intend to persuade the spectators that global corporations act morally and are to be trusted); 'carnival activism' is a reply to the 'corporate spectacle' (ibid: 431). In fact, 'we are spectators to a global spectacle viewed from a distance' and only some spectators protest through carnival (ibid: 439); the fusion of public interest (moral conduct at work) with the corporate one (profit maximisation through the use of employees), creates loss of voice for the citizens (ibid). Even though both spectacle and carnival are observed, the spectacle seems to prevail; 'coerced discourse and hired mouthpieces' (ibid: 444) hinder independent speech and disempower workers as monitoring appears to promote the employees' voice in a controlled, if not coerced, manner (ibid). As such, carnival resists the notion that only some people talk and only when they are told to do so (ibid). Carnival, as activism, ensures that many people talk but often disordered speech occurs; even though carnival might appear irrational to some, it is resistance and it does ensure that some voices are heard (ibid).

However, when critically examining the effect of power on resistance, Kärreman and Alvesson (2009) offer a useful point that needs to be taken in consideration. They explain how resistance can be neutralised when the impulse to protest becomes countered; in their study, employees seemed not only to exercise 'counter-resistance' (i.e. resist resistance) (ibid: 1141) but also to work more without even reporting it in order to be seen as good, efficient and effective. In fact, the combination of the individuals, the shared norms, teamwork and counter-resistance 'create a context in which compliance is not only desirable' but 'almost irresistible' (ibid: 1141); expectedly, this environment is highly encouraged by managers (ibid).

Nevertheless, 'space for resistance' always exists in the workplace as even when management increase control, at least some employees find opportunities to deviate (Knights and McCabe, 2000: 428). By tightening their control, managers believe that they control employees better and that they secure organisational efficiency (ibid); however,

managers seem to underestimate not only the fact that complete control is unachievable (ibid; Gabriel, 1995; Gabriel, 1999) but also the fact that the subjectivity and skills of the employees are not totally controllable (Knights and McCabe, 2000). Consequently, even in Total Quality Management situations, managers are not in total control of employees; there are cases where some line managers occasionally approve or at least are 'happy to turn a blind eye' (ibid: 432) when employees slightly deviate from the requests of higher management for the sake of convenience (e.g. if a bank employee upon counting the daily transactions on his/her computer screen ends up with five pence more or less, it is often acceptable not to do a recount but just to 'correct' the count on his/her screen so as to appear that the balance is correct and avoid wasting time and extra effort) (ibid).

In short, it seems that management can never control employees completely and that employees have the tendency to resist; as a result, 'even in the most oppressive regimes, there will be spaces and opportunities for escape and perhaps even a bit of misbehaviour' (ibid: 434). Therefore, it could be argued that on one hand, are the employees who conform (happily or unhappily) to a given situation whereas on the other are the employees who do not conform and resist in several direct (e.g. open confrontation) or indirect ways (e.g. irony). Nevertheless, Gabriel (1995) adds a new dimension into the equation as he offers 'fantasy' as a third option; according to Gabriel (ibid), an employee either shows conformity or rebellion or employs his/her fantasy. The 'unmanaged organization' (ibid: 477) is an area within every organisation which can neither be managed nor supervised and where employees engage in spontaneity; in this terrain, the central force is fantasy, which offers a choice of several roles to employees; when employing fantasy (e.g. telling a story or a joke), the creator chooses to be either a hero, or a heroic survivor, or a victim or even an object of love (ibid). Hence, emotion and pleasure temporarily supersede rationality and organisational control; individuals can tell a story as they want and construct their own fantasy; through fantasy, an employee can make his/her colleague laugh, sympathise with him/her and generally construct a different reality (which they present as reality e.g. one can say 'I shouted at the boss' when in fact he/she just questioned him/her in normal tone of voice) (ibid). In fact, storytelling and other demonstrations of fantasy are part of organisational life as a story as a product/conveyor of fantasy evolves through time and often co-exists with other stories and can even reach the managed organisation (as the boundaries between the managed and the unmanaged organisation are not always clear) (ibid).

However, it is worth noting that the emphasis on organisational control, which is a characteristic of the post-modern era, tends to ignore not only the differences between

organisations and individual characteristics but also the differences in control itself (Gabriel, 1999). For example, 'normative' controls involve psychological restraint whereas 'panoptic' controls entail other mechanisms (ibid: 186). Current controls are not only more intense and varied but also novel as surveillance is 'more sophisticated' and the 'implications are more far-reaching' (ibid: 197) and affects each employee differently. Nevertheless, the idea that 'everything is, can be and must be predicted, planned for, and controlled' (ibid: 198) could be seen as hubristic self-delusion which exists in the sphere of managerial fantasy as it fails to take into account the complex reality and the instability of organisational life; it creates a narcissistic illusion which exaggerates the power of control and neglects to see the person as capable of both 'controlling and being controlled' as well as 'losing control and escaping control' and generally through struggle, interaction, feeling, thoughts and suffering defines and redefines the notion of control (ibid). Power and resistance are intertwined and are manifestations of an ongoing 'process of struggle' (Fleming and Spicer, 2008: 305) where resistance and control are 'mutually constitutive' (Mumby, 2005: 20) elements of organisational environments.

Therefore, currently the interpretation of the terms is not sufficient as it 'draws a strict contrast between the diabolic world of power and the liberating world of resistance' (Fleming and Spicer, 2008: 304); studies which emphasise managerial control regard employee resistance as ineffective whereas studies which emphasise resistance seem to romanticise the effort (Mumby, 2005) when in practice things are more complex (ibid; Gabriel, 1999, Fleming and Spicer, 2008); managers can be seen breaking the rules and also employees can be seen managing others and often power and resistance are indistinguishable (Fleming and Spicer, 2008). Research on resistance and control implies a duality of the two when in fact one has to be more dialectic when trying to understand power dynamics as control and resistance are 'mutually implicative and coproductive' (Mumby, 2005: 21); resistance and power/control are intertwined and create complex dynamics (ibid; Gabriel, 1999, Fleming and Spicer, 2008). Therefore, the struggle between the two elements (Gabriel, 1999, Mumby, 2005, Fleming and Spicer, 2008) which in turn shapes organisational life (Mumby, 2005) should not be underestimated. In short, the dichotomous perception of resistance and control should be transcended and situations should be viewed as complex ongoing discourses which contain several and often contradictory elements (ibid).

2.2.1.4 Irony and cynicism

According to Hoyle and Wallace (2008), when mutually exclusive elements co-exist, paradox occurs and 'an ironic disposition denotes the capacity to hold contrary positions simultaneously' (ibid: 1430). In detail, within organisational settings irony has two faces: an endemic and a pragmatic; 'endemic irony' exists in all parts of social life (and thus, in organisations, too) whereas 'pragmatic irony' exists in organisations as members use it in order to cope with the problems that endemic irony creates (ibid: 1427). Endemic irony derives from the fact that formal goals are not always achievable and so, 'The roots of endemic irony lie in the limits to rationality, the ambiguities that are generated as a result of these limits, and the dilemmas which ambiguities generate for individuals and groups in organizations' (ibid: 1431); for example, even though technology has developed, organisational life is usually characterised by incompatibility between theory and practice, uncertainty in many domains, unsolved dilemmas, tolerance of hypocrisy and unintended side-effects (ibid). Additionally, there is a 'contingent irony' which is an 'aggravated irony' (ibid: 1434); this mostly stems from the existing market situation (e.g. globalisation) but is also further aggravated by managerialism, organisational accountability and change of management theory (ibid). Even though managerialism cannot be easily distinguished from management as opinions vary not only between managers and subordinates but also between different managers, its ideology seems to be that 'not only can everything be managed but everything should be managed' and hence, 'everything that matters can be measured and what can be measured can be managed' (ibid: 1435); as a result, people become ironic when management instead of solving problems creates them (and even tries to find problems when none exist). Finally, there is 'pragmatic irony' (ibid: 1436) which is the ironic employee response which occurs in order to cope with both endemic and contingent irony; this response is benign as it not only has a positive impact on organisational goals (i.e. employees still do what is requested) but also acts as a mechanism which defends employees from stress and overload. In short, irony is seen as a prophylaxis 'against the excesses of managerialism' and not as resistance (ibid: 1442) and thus, ironic responses are acceptable as long as they do not result in cynicism (ibid).

Ironists are seen as sceptics and not necessarily cynics; although difficult to distinguish from irony, cynicism refers to negative, disruptive, continuous and excessive self-interested behaviour (ibid). Cynicism in the workplace can occur when the managers emit inconsistent messages (Hoogervorst, Flier and Koopman, 2004) and is also positively related to low trustworthiness or incompetency of top managers (Kim et al, 2009); in detail, low trustworthiness of top managers is linked with all types of employee cynicism

whereas incompetence of top managers is connected only with affective cynicism; affective cynicism is connected with the negative feelings about management, cognitive cynicism is linked with the belief that top management lack integrity whereas behavioural cynicism involves making harmful, critical or complaining statements (ibid).

According to Hoyle and Wallace (2008), irony is a means of expression which protects the individual from the paradoxes of managerialism and is not considered resistance whereas cynicism is a negative attitude. However, Fleming and Spicer (2003: 157) support the idea that 'cynicism is a process through which employees dis-identify with cultural prescriptions, yet often still perform them'. Distancing themselves from the managerialist view of cynicism as a problem that needs to be resolved and from the radical humanist view of cynicism as a defence mechanism, they consider cynicism as a 'success of corporate power relations, rather than their failure' (ibid: 160) as cynicism allows employees to feel that they dis-identify themselves from power even though they are actually performing what a manager/organisation requests (ibid). In fact, Geddes and Callister (2007) propose that employees who are more cynical are less likely to express anger in the workplace and more likely to suppress their anger. Fleming (2005a), in his assessment of cynicism as a 'defence of self' (ibid: 49) and as a 'distancing of self' (ibid: 50), suggests that both metaphors 'involve assumptions that may also limit' the 'analysis of the complex ways self, power, and resistance intersect' (ibid: 51) whereas he sees 'cynicism as the production of subjectivity' (ibid: 58).

According to Contu (2008: 374), cynicism is an example of the 'decaf resistance' that exists nowadays where employees can 'enjoy without the costs and risks involved'. Even though the costs of resistance cannot be determined as real resistance is unpredictable and uncontrollable (ibid), the risks associated with resistance in the workplace involve an employee's situation and can range from being seen in an unfavourable light from managers to even job loss. Hence, the lack of real resistance can be attributed to the fact that employees, recognising that they are disposable (Willmott, 1993) and that managers do not appreciate pluralism (ibid; Boje and Winsor, 1993), simply do not want to jeopardise their job status. Nevertheless, it could also be argued that the reason why employees do not engage in revolutionary resistance is that they have modest goals (Fleming and Spicer, 2008) as they resemble individualistic consumers who do not care so much about the community as people did in the past (Gabriel, 2008).

2.2.1.5 Humour and mockery

Humour is often used at work (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999) and can be seen from different perspectives and can serve a variety of purposes. Humour in an organisational setting can provide an insight into the organisational culture by revealing the behavioural schemes that exist (Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap, 1990), the paradox and ambiguity that exist in organisations (Hatch and Elrich, 1993) as well as the existing change processes (Hatch, 1997). Although humour alone cannot help one interpret the organisational situation, it enriches organisation studies and it reflects the 'contradictions, inconsistencies and incoherence of social organization' (Hatch and Elrich, 1993: 524) and reveals the organisational complexity (Hatch, 1997).

Apart from what humour reveals about a company, humour can also be seen for what it represents for the person who employs it. For instance, according to Rodrigues and Collinson (1995), humour may be used in order to express employee dissatisfaction especially when open disagreement is not a possibility; in the study that they conducted in a Brazilian firm, they discovered that humour (in the form of comic anthropomorphic or symbolic cartoons in the firm newspaper) was deployed by employees in an attempt to portray the managerial inconsistency between rhetoric and action; humour and metaphors were used in order to express employee disapproval and resistance and thus, humour in this case is a medium through which resistance is expressed. Nevertheless, they recognise the fact that whether humour acts as a safety valve, a re-affirmation of the status quo or a satirical critique is still debatable; humour can be used in complex ways so even when it expresses resistance to managerial control at the same time it acknowledges it (ibid). Hence, humour can be seen 'as a form of organizational resistance' and has the potential 'to enact change (Lynch and Schaefer, 2009: 517).

Humour can be used not only as a means of resistance but also as a means of conformity and control even among employees; for example, apart from resistance to 'boredom, the organizational status system and managerial control' (Collinson, 1988: 197) humour also embodies the pressure to conform to certain attitudes (e.g. retain working class masculinity among employees in the shop floor by telling or laughing with certain types of jokes) and can be used as a means to control colleagues who were not acting as expected (ibid). In fact, Cooper (2005) views humour as an ingratiation behaviour; she believes that while at work, individuals intentionally use humour in order to amuse others and consequently, improve their relationship. Humour may be more effective due to the fact that it does not seem manipulative and carries less risk than other methods or tactics

(e.g. doing favours) for effective socialising and hence, humour can be used in order to strengthen relationships either between colleagues or between managers and subordinates (ibid). As a middle way between resistance and ingratiation, humour can be seen as a simple means of communication. McIlheran (2006) supports the idea that humour at work enhances the understanding of messages as it provides clarity; provided the sender of the message knows his/her audience, the message will be well-received and also well-understood.

However, even though humour is an important element of organisational life, apart from positive results it can also have negative consequences if not used correctly (Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap, 1990). When humour is used offensively, intensively or inappropriately (e.g. harassment, discrimination), it can even lead to legal action; when used appropriately, humour cannot only be used as a relief to conflicts but also as a medium against boredom (ibid). In fact, humour has the potential to be used as a 'tool for organizational development' (ibid: 275). Duncan (1982) provides a list of comments and guidelines so as to ensure the successful use of humour as a managerial tool. He points out that humour appreciation is related to individual differences (culture, gender) and at the same time it affects certain group factors (cohesiveness, power relations, information transfer); humour should match both the individual and the group characteristics as well as be suitable for the situation that it occurs in (ibid). Among his guidelines, he advises managers against offensive or aggressive humour and stresses the importance of reciprocity (ibid).

According to Romero and Cruthirds (2006: 58), humour can be used in order to 'reduce stress', 'enhance leadership, group cohesiveness, communication, creativity, and organizational culture'; its five styles (affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, mild aggressive, self-defeating) can be employed during different situations. However, they caution that humour must be appropriate to the occasion not only so that it is understood but also so that it does not have undesirable outcomes; individual differences such as ethnicity or gender should be taken into consideration before deploying humour (ibid). Affiliative and self-enhancing humour are believed to be the most appropriate styles under most occasions (ibid) as they are neither offensive towards others nor expose a person in the eyes of others. Hence, the initiator should first select the organisational outcome that he/she wants to enhance, then choose the appropriate humour style, then deliver the message and finally receive a feedback (ibid).

As Lyttle (2007) suggests, humour should be used and managed judiciously in the workplace as it can offer not only benefits but also problems. He provides four categories of benefits of humour: physical (e.g. laughter as a health benefit), psychological (e.g. coping with pressure), social (e.g. 'social lubricant' *ibid*: 240), cognitive (e.g. creativity) but warns that humour could cause offence or erode a manager's air of authority (or credibility) or even simply distract employees from work and thus, managers can use humour freely but responsibly (*ibid*). On similar grounds, Romero and Pescosolido (2008) propose that successful humour within organisations has the potential to positively affect a group and contribute to its overall effectiveness; nowadays, as employees seek creative and interesting jobs, work groups are commonplace and fun at work is expected and can in fact be created by incorporating humour at work. Humour, in order to be successful, needs to have the right amount of novelty and content and at the same time it needs to be understood by its audience (individually and as a group); successful organisational humour increases productivity, development and viability of the group as it promotes group communication, enables leaders to manage better, encourages strong performance-oriented cultures, leads to higher consensus, creates psychological safety, increases affection and group cohesion as well as reduces employee turnover (*ibid*).

Nevertheless, it could be argued that the notion of successful humour (*ibid*) and its consequent analysis is ambiguous as it fails to clarify whether success refers to the reception of the humour, the results it yields and whether this success is from a managerial or employee viewpoint. Additionally, the idea that humour can be used as a managerial tool (Duncan, 1982; Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap, 1990; Lyttle, 2007) in order to yield the desired results is debatable. First of all, it undermines employees as it implies they are ignorant puppets who are not capable to understand what is happening. Secondly, it fails to take into account the spontaneous nature of humour and turns it into an engineered managerial act. Thirdly, it overemphasises the notion of control and glorifies the belief that everything in organisations can and should be managed (Gabriel, 2008; Hoyle and Wallace, 2008) which is hubristic and delusional (Gabriel, 2008). As Fleming (2005b) suggests, although it is difficult to draw exact boundaries between 'work and nonwork' (*ibid*: 289), it is rather easier to identify a boundary between them; as such, it is evident that many organisations try to 'build cultures of fun' (*ibid*: 289) by displacing this boundary and encouraging employees to have fun while at work with the aim to increase organisational prosperity. However, in practice, this 'symbolic blurring of traditional boundaries' (*ibid*: 285) often results in employee cynicism; consequently, fun has not only to be appropriate for the work situation but also in order to be authentic, it has to be free of managerial control and authority (*ibid*).

From an employee perspective, humour has three categories: 'clowning, teasing and satire' (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999: 106); the first two 'express an anti-managerial subculture' whereas satire is a new form which is a 'more serious and sustained critical intellectual element' which can be more corrosive and represents a 'counter-culture' which is in opposition with a company's culture (ibid: 106). In detail, clowning occurs when an individual is making fool of him/herself so that others are amused, teasing involves mocking at somebody else's expense and sometimes it can be aggressive and lead to demoralisation, whereas satire involves systematic cynicism which conveys messages effectively and openly expresses scepticism (ibid). Ironic humour is built on contradiction and can be interpreted in an ironic but also in a non-ironic way, depending on the interpreters (Hatch, 1997). Geddes and Callister (2007) propose that employees who are more cynical are less likely to express anger in the workplace and more likely to suppress their anger. In short, even though it is debatable whether humour acts like a safety valve, a re-affirmation of the status quo or a satirical critique as humour can be used in complex ways, one of which is to express dissatisfaction especially when open disagreement is not a possibility (Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995).

2.2.1.6 Critical upward communication and silence

Managers communicate messages to the employees (downward communication), who in turn have the opportunity to express their opinion on the matter (feedback/upward communication). Feedback involves 'open and honest two-way communication between managers and staff' (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004: 374) which not only helps in the resolution of misunderstandings but also enables both parties to discuss their expectations, which in turn improves relationships, creates organisational cohesion and leads to business success (ibid). The lack of feedback 'is a recipe for communication breakdown and organisational dysfunction' (ibid: 403).

The employees have a choice of support or dissent towards their managers' messages. A 'supportive voice' (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 713) is a low risk, high reward option, which is encouraged by managers; therefore, this voice has a strong flow but it also gives a misperception to management as it often can be ingratulatory (ibid). On the other hand, a 'dissentive voice' (ibid: 713) is a high risk, low reward option which can even be penalised; consequently, this voice has a weak flow as it is either mildly expressed or completely silenced; and in fact silence in this case has the same effect as ingratiation or a supportive voice (ibid). The absence of 'critical upward communication' (ibid: 711) creates problems

as the lack of realistic feedback leads managers to an unrealistic, distorted view of their organisation; often managers tend to be unaware of the fact either that 'critical upward communication' (ibid) is minimal or that they create communication barriers and they are prone to ingratiation tactics. On the other hand, employees try to maintain the status quo and wash their hands of their responsibility in the situation (ibid).

Robson and Tourish (2005), in their study of a major European healthcare organisation discovered that communication problems existed as practises appeared to be inconsistent with employee needs or the code of good practice. They provide as a possible explanation the fact that managers do not devote enough time to create systems of effective communication or the fact that they become disassociated with internal communication (ibid). Although the excessive workload of the senior management was recognised by most staff, they were seen as unable to communicate effectively; senior managers were overworked and under-communicating due to the absence of free time or due to the blindness by 'the absence of adequate upward communication' (ibid: 220).

Tourish et al (2004) examined the communication issues during workforce reduction within a psychiatric hospital; they studied different level employees and also both 'survivors and victims of downsizing' (ibid: 491) (i.e. the ones who were not made redundant and the ones who were). Senior managers reported receiving more information than middle managers or non managers (even though often they actually knew less than their subordinates assumed) but both middle managers and non managers received the same amount of information, which they considered inadequate and made them felt under-informed; both survivors and victims seemed to receive a similar amount of information regarding the situation, reported equally high uncertainty levels and had low trust in senior managers but downsizing appeared to damage not only the relations with managers but also with other employees (ibid). Consequently, downsizing generates special communication issues and affects many employees psychologically, regardless of their position and regardless of the fact whether they are being made redundant or not (ibid). Nevertheless, even though it is obvious that 'enormous attention to communication processes is still required to minimize' these harmful consequences 'whether downsizing can ever be communicated in such a way' so as these harmful consequences are completely avoided can be doubtful (ibid: 510).

The absence of 'critical upward communication' (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 711) is not to be perceived as absence of upward communication in general. In fact, Kassing (2009) examined the case of employee dissent towards management and discovered that

employees do repeat themselves during upward communication; initially employees rely on less risky tactics (more competent) but as repetition progresses (e.g. when supervisors delay responding), they choose riskier options. In short, it could be said that the employees do speak to their managers when they require something; as Gabriel (2008) suggests, the employee occasionally raises his/her individual voice but as a consumer, he/she has lost his/her collective voice. In the post-modern organisation theory, employees are empowered and their opinion is valued (Daft, 2000); in practice, regardless of the reason, there is evidence that most employees do not critically challenge their managers and the ones who do are seen as troublemakers. If this is indeed the case, the post-modern organisation has not kept the promises it has made to employees, to society and even to itself (Wilson Shaef and Fassel, 1988). Therefore, from a theoretical perspective, the current study seeks to shed further light into the matter of employee feedback whereas from a practical perspective, this study stresses the importance of analysing communication in organisations (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004; Tourish and Hargie, 2009).

2.2.2 Summary of main points of literature review

2.2.2.1 Management, organisational context and culture

It can be said that 'Management is the attainment of organizational goals in an effective and efficient manner through planning, organizing, leading, and controlling organizational resources' (Daft, 2000: 7) and that managers are charismatic and hard-working individuals who succeed in their mission against all odds by leading and inspiring the employees (ibid). Nevertheless, this position is open to criticism not only because it does not take into account the 'other side' (i.e. the perspective of the employees) but also because it seems to reflect some of the 'old' management ideals (e.g. the powerful manager in opposition to the powerless employees) even though this period is claimed to be surpassed. In detail, the industrial age saw the rise of the 'modern organisation' where work output was based on standardisation, bureaucratic procedures and hierarchically distributed power whereas after the industrial age, the 'post-modern organisation' emerged which aimed to humanise work (ibid). As such, management tries to share and not hoard power, each employee is valued and involved in identifying and solving problems and the emphasis is on teamwork and collaboration; personal involvement, self-fulfilment, non-hierarchical power structures and teamwork come into the work equation

and thus, the problems of the modern organisation have been overcome (ibid) or better to say, are claimed to have been overcome as the matter is still under debate.

Even though organisation theory 'did not emerge as a recognizable field of study until sometime in the 1960s', many theorists have contributed to its 'prehistory' (i.e. before 1960) (Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006: 26) and have made it what it is today. Excluding the 'prehistory' 'source of inspiration' (ibid: 6), organisation theory has been influenced by three perspectives: modernism, symbolic interpretivism and postmodernism (ibid). Modernism is based on the existence of an objective reality where knowledge and truth are gained through information and measurement, hierarchy is the ideal and prediction and control are the goals; as such, organisations can be governed by rationality. Symbolic interpretivism is based on the existence of a subjective reality which has been constructed socially, community is the model, knowledge is based on interpretation and the goal is to understand; as such, organisations are constructed through interaction of their members. Postmodernism is based on the belief that 'there are no facts, only interpretations' (ibid: 14) and the existence of a 'constantly shifting and fluid plurality' (ibid: 56) where knowledge is gained through 'exposure and experience' (ibid), the model for relationships is self-determination and the goal is freedom; as such, organisations are seen as 'sites for enacting power relations, oppression, irrationality, communicative distortion- or arenas of fun and playful irony' (ibid: 14).

In order to understand employee behaviour, one has to understand the organisational environment as behaviour is a constant and complex interaction between personal and situational characteristics (Terborg, 1981). As most organisations operate in highly-competitive environments where chaos (Thietart and Forgues, 1995), risk-taking (Daft, 2000) and turbulence (Dolan, Garcia and Auerbach, 2003) are part of the agenda, success depends on embracing change and taking risks rather than avoiding them (Mandel, 1996 as quoted in Nelson, 2003) as businesses have to be flexible and constantly adapt to new circumstances (Gabriel, 2008). An organisation's environment cannot be easily described or analysed because it is a concept that not only has changed across time but also is perceived and explained differently by different management theories (e.g. Daft, 2000; Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006).

Additionally, in order to understand employee behaviour, awareness of the context in which it occurs is necessary. Organisational culture, which can be described as 'The pattern of beliefs, values and learned ways of coping with experience' (Brown, 1998: 9), is claimed to be an asset as it offers advantages to a company such as reduction of conflicts

and uncertainty and increased control, motivation and competitive advantage (Brown, 1998; Daft, 2000). However, the claims about the value and the benefits of organisational culture raise questions not only because the 'espoused culture', which represents a 'desired state' (i.e. what management desires it to be), differs from the actual culture, the 'culture-in-practice' (Brown, 1998: 31) but also because according to some (e.g. Willmott, 1993) corporate culture has a morally ambiguous standing: on one hand it considers employees a valid resource and on the other homogenisation is the aim and employees can simply be disposed like a commodity (ibid).

2.2.2.2 Communication

In organisational theory and practice two-way communication is considered a prerequisite for effective/good communication (i.e. communication which is successful in terms of understanding and purpose and involves feedback) whereas one-way communication is claimed to be overcome in the post-modern organisation as the employees, contrary to the modern organisation era, are empowered and their opinion is valued (e.g. Daft, 2000). Good managerial communication (i.e. successful two-way communication) not only enhances employee trust to management (Holtzhausen, 2002; De Ridder, 2004; Jo and Shim, 2005; Gopinath and Becker, 2007) but also enhances employee commitment (Mayfield and Mayfield, 2002; De Ridder, 2004) which in turn can have a positive effect on productivity (Marshall and Heffes, 2006). Nevertheless, after looking into the relevant communication theories, it could be said that most attention is paid to downward communication and that most of them seem to emphasise 'good communication' in terms of performance, trust and efficiency and tend to not only overlook the fact that communication is a more complex process which relates to power but also oversimplify the dynamics of communication (e.g. by failing to underline the importance of feedback or other aspects of communication). Communication is a multidimensional performance (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004) which involves feedback and has an intrinsic value (ibid; Holtzhausen, 2002) and yet, the current discourse is dominated by the concept of effective downward communication and its calculable effects on employees and performance.

New technology involves changes which may disadvantage certain professions (Eriksson-Zetterquist, Lindberg and Styhre, 2009) and create further issues amidst the existing communication problems that reside in organisations (Cameron, 2000; Fay, 2008). For example, some believe that the use of electronic communication creates additional

problems of meaning for the employees (Weick, 1985) whereas others believe that it is the behaviour of people (i.e. availability and responsiveness) that determines the success of a medium (Markus, 1994). The email has unique qualities as long as it does not completely substitute face-to-face communication (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004) and as long as it is used correctly (ibid; Markus, 1994). The polymorphic nature of email can both improve and disrupt certain aspects of work (O'Kane, Palmer and Hargie, 2007). However, as the understanding of organisational communication and media is influenced by experiences of pre-existing media (Rice and Gattiker, 2000), new perspectives which are not so influenced by past values as information richness theory is are required (Markus, 1994). New studies have to be conducted in order to understand how tools and technologies feature in the daily working environment (Heath, Luff and Knoblauch, 2004), to determine the nature and 'socially skilled adaptation' of the new media within the organisation (O'Kane, Palmer and Hargie, 2007: 321) as well as to examine whether managers prefer electronic communication because it has more potential (Markus, 1994) or because it minimises the 'threat' of face-to-face communication.

2.2.2.3 Organisational psychology and interpersonal relations

Organisational commitment is associated with the emotional attachment the employees feel towards a company, the feelings of obligation they experience (these two elements appear to overlap) or even the costs of leaving a company (Allen and Meyer, 1990). According to Schneider (1987), people choose to enter and stay or leave organisations; people are attracted to and fit within the environment of the organisation they chose whereas individuals that do not fit in a place, leave (ibid). Nevertheless, Brown (1998) seems to prefer the element of rejection instead of the attraction one; he uses the notion of 'fitting in' a place but suggests that the employees who do not fit in an organisation's culture get rejected (ibid). Therefore, one view sees employees as 'choosing to leave' a place they do not fit in (Schneider, 1987) whereas the other sees them as 'being made to leave' (Brown, 1998) since organisations tend to fire employees (Pfeffer, 1992) and dispose them like commodities (Willmott, 1993). In an environment like this, employee commitment accommodates both the notion of merely staying in the job (i.e. not resigning) and the idea of feeling loyal and loving the whole working environment. However, post-modern theory does not seem to accommodate the case of employees who loathingly work for a company for years just because they have not found a way out.

Understanding individuals is difficult as behaviour is a purposeful and meaningful action (Gabriel, 2000) which should be viewed as a constant and complex interaction between personal and situational characteristics (Terborg, 1981). Even though behaviour often contains elements of emotion masking (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000; Hewlin, 2003) and involves deep cultural understanding (Geertz, 1973), people have the ability to identify emotion by observing behaviour, irrespectively of situational processes and cultural backgrounds (Consedine, Strongman and Magai, 2003). In fact, charismatic leaders are said to be able to understand the feelings of employees (Ashkanasy, Härtel and Daus, 2002; Rubin, Munz and Bommer, 2005) and emotional intelligence is 'a highly valued leadership trait' (Dasborough, 2006: 175). However, these claims need to be examined as a possible discrepancy between theory and practice exists; thus, it is to be examined whether managers/leaders understand employees yet treat them as a commodity (e.g. Willmott, 1993) or managers/leaders do not understand employees yet the post-modern organisation theory claims that they do (ibid; Daft, 2000).

Goffman's work (1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) offers a detailed analysis and deep understanding of human behaviour and the social conventions and agreements which surround it; the theatre metaphor that underlies his work (ibid) enables one not only to analyse employee behaviour but also to understand the relevant conventions and agreements that exist in the workplace. According to Goffman (1975), all individuals try to present themselves in everyday life in order to convey certain meanings to others; the self is a product, a performed character; even though different from a character staged in a theatre, the techniques of staging false figures are common in theatre and in everyday social situations (ibid). Irrespectively of the situation, individual behaviour 'is guided by social values or norms concerning involvement' (ibid, 1966: 193) and obliges 'participants to 'fit in'' (ibid: 11). 'When in the presence of others, the individual is guided by a special set of rules ... the situational proprieties' (ibid: 243); situational improprieties which expose the self may be tolerated only under certain limited circumstances. Each person creates a 'self-image expressed through face' and is expected to 'live up to it' (2005: 9); the self as both a created image and a 'player in a ritual game' (ibid) abides to the rules of social encounters. The individual through continuous self-work constrains him/herself to sustain the desired values which sustain 'a viable image of' him/herself 'in the eyes of others' (2010: 185); he/she 'engages in little performances to actively portray a relationship to such rules' (ibid: 186). Social norms regulate relationships, communities and organisations; when an individual has assumptions about him/herself that the relevant social frame can neither allow nor do much about it, social organisation (public order or workplace) does not seem to forgive (ibid).

When people interact, friction inevitably arises at some point and misunderstandings and conflicts are likely to occur in the workplace (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000). Anger is believed to be experienced and expressed by each person differently depending on his/her occupational characteristics, his/her disposition and his/her gender (e.g. Sloan, 2004; Domagalski and Steelman, 2005; Domagalski and Steelman, 2007; Weber and Wiedig-Allison, 2007; Wilkowski and Robinson, 2007). Nevertheless, individual characteristics are not the only ones that determine anger as it is the combination of the particular (i.e. person) and general circumstances (i.e. situation) that influence anger experience and expression (Böddeker and Stemmler, 2000; Kuppens et al, 2007).

Ingratiation can be seen as an influence strategy (Shankar, Ansari and Saxena, 2001) which attempts to control a superior (Pandey, 1981; Bohra and Pandey, 1984) in order to gain personal benefits (Pandey, 1981) sometimes without caring for the interests of others (Ralston, 1985) but can also be seen simply 'as an attempt by individuals to increase their attractiveness in the eyes of others' (Liden and Mitchell, 1988: 572) without deceit or conscious effort. Nevertheless, irrespective of the motives behind ingratiation (e.g. whether individuals want to be liked or gain benefits), whether ingratiation can always be detectable is not sure; not only because the individual strives to be seen in a favourable light by his/her fellow citizens (Goffman 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) and to safeguard his/her job in a marketplace where employees are easily fired (Pfeffer, 1992; Willmott, 1993) but also because making judgements of this type involve sensemaking.

'Sensemaking emphasizes that people try to make things rationally accountable to themselves and others' (Weick, 1993: 635) and occurs at the individual level but is connected with the 'sociocultural reality of the organization' (Harris, 1994: 310). Sensemaking is a conscious and continuous cycle which involves noticing, interpretation and action (Jeong and Brower, 2008) and in the working environment, it is reflected in the conversations of the members (Taylor and Robichaud, 2004). Nevertheless, not all sense in organisations is shared due to individual differences (Brown, Stacey and Nandhakumar, 2008) and due to the fact that sensemaking is closely connected with the environment within it occurs (Mills, 2002). Sensemaking is believed to enhance organisational success and increase the effectiveness of the communication of changes (Vuuren and Elving, 2008) but can also be seen as serving 'management's strategic quest for hegemony' and supporting dissension in situations of conflict (Landau and Drori, 2008). Sensemaking can coexist with the paradoxes that exist in organisations (Lüscher and Lewis, 2008) such as when managers assure people that they are open to discussion when in fact they are not (Faÿ, 2008).

2.2.2.4 Authority and resistance

In 'Discipline and Punish' Foucault (1977) examines the element of power, the conditions that led to the current penal system and how punishment 'gradually ceased to be a spectacle' (ibid: 9). The Panopticon, characterised by power that is visible (i.e. the inmates can see the tower) but unverifiable (i.e. the inmate cannot see when he/she is watched but may expect that it can be any moment), is not only a means of observation but also a laboratory where experiments can be carried out about behaviour altering, training and correction; the Panopticon is a machine which ensures that 'prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons' (ibid: 228). Nevertheless, in this work, Foucault did not adequately explain the willing involvement of individuals in this system (McKinlay and Starkey, 1998a) as the element of subjectivity and human agency are not given enough attention (Savage, 1998; Findlay and Newton, 1998); he focuses on surveillance and neglects resistance (Starkey and McKinlay, 1998). Even though Foucault's theory cannot fully capture 'the rich dynamics of management' (Hoppen and Macintosh, 1998), Foucauldian analyses are important as they emphasise power and knowledge relations (Findlay and Newton, 1998) and his major influence in management theory (Hoskin, 1998) is evident, especially when it comes to surveillance issues.

Under Taylorism workers were closely measured and controlled whereas the post-modern workplace almost boasts about worker autonomy (e.g. Daft, 2000). However, employing a Foucauldian perspective, it could be argued that surveillance still exists but in a more covert manner (e.g. cameras, open desk policy). Surveillance is ambiguous and paradoxical as it can be seen both as a medium of coercion and a medium of care depending on the viewpoint (Sewell and Barker, 2006); in fact, it could be argued that unlike the Panopticon described by Foucault (1977), ironically modern surveillance which exists in an environment where control and trust are symbiotically existing (Knights et al, 2001) entails a transparency which sometimes helps individuals and other times exposes them (Gabriel, 2008). Even though authority patterns differ among firms (Whitley, 2003) it is yet to be examined whether absolute autocracy styles (ibid) still prevail. People seem to accept authority based on legitimacy (Tyler, 1997) but there is a general decline in authority (Heller, 1985); however, from a managerial perspective, authority still seems to be perceived as effective provided that the balance between direction and empowerment is correct (Heifetz, 1999; Gary, 2002) and therefore, the claims of the post-modern organisation theory about employee autonomy will need to be examined.

There is no clear line between employee conformity and resistance as one encounters employees who conform as they have accepted their everyday situation (Cohen and Taylor, 1976), employees who appear to conform merely due to the fact that they choose to be silent either because this is a safe option (Tourish and Robson, 2006) or because they have no other option (Faÿ, 2008), employees who employ their fantasy in order to escape (Gabriel, 1995) or employees who do resist authority in one way or another. Resistance, which is not a synonym for mere organisational misbehaviour (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999), can always be found at the workplace (Knights and McCabe, 2000) as complete control is unachievable (ibid; Gabriel, 1995; Gabriel, 1999). Employees engage in various forms of both individual and collective resistance (Ezzamel, Willmott and Worthington, 2001) but resistance nowadays differs from the traditional forms of resistance employed in the past (Fleming and Sewell, 2002; Gabriel, 2008) as new forms of resistance have been adopted by employees lately (Gabriel, 2008). Thus, resistance is not easily observed (Fleming and Sewell, 2002) as it is a 'decaf resistance' where individuals can 'enjoy without the costs and risks involved' (Contu, 2008: 374); employees have modest and specific goals (Fleming and Spicer, 2008) and act like individualistic consumers who just exit instead of using their voice (Gabriel, 2008). Managers seem to encourage and create an environment where the impulse to resist gets countered and 'compliance is not only desirable' but 'almost irresistible' (Kärreman and Alvesson, 2009: 1141) but the idea that everything can and must be controlled (Gabriel, 1999) exaggerates the power of control and fails to see that in practice things are more complex (ibid; Mumby, 2005; Fleming and Spicer, 2008); resistance and power/control are intertwined (ibid) and the struggle between them (ibid) shapes organisational life (Mumby, 2005).

Irony is a means of expression which protects the individual from the paradoxes of managerialism and is not considered resistance whereas cynicism is an attitude which involves negative, disruptive, continuous and excessive self-interested behaviour (Hoyle and Wallace, 2008). However, cynicism in the workplace, which can occur when the managers emit inconsistent messages (Hoogervorst, Flier and Koopman, 2004) or due to low trustworthiness or incompetency of top managers (Kim et al, 2009), can be seen not only as an example of mild, reduced-risk resistance which employees employ (Contu, 2008) but also as 'a process through which employees dis-identify with cultural prescriptions, yet often still perform them' (Fleming and Spicer, 2003: 157).

Humour is often observed at work (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999) and can be seen from different perspectives and serve a variety of purposes. Humour can provide an insight into the organisational culture (Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap, 1990), the paradox and ambiguity

that exist in organisations (Hatch and Elrich, 1993) as well as the existing change processes (Hatch, 1997). Although humour alone cannot help one interpret the organisational situation, it enriches organisation studies and it reflects the 'contradictions, inconsistencies and incoherence of social organization' (Hatch and Elrich, 1993: 524) and reveals the organisational complexity (Hatch, 1997). Humour can be seen as a form of resistance (Lynch and Schaefer, 2009), as a means of conforming to certain attitudes and expectations (Collinson, 1988), as ingratiation behaviour which aims to improve relationships (Cooper, 2005) or as a simple means of communication (McIlheran, 2006). From an employee perspective, humour may be used in order to express employee dissatisfaction especially when open disagreement is not a possibility but whether humour acts as a safety valve, a re-affirmation of the status quo or a satirical critique is still debatable as humour can be used in complex ways and so, even when it expresses resistance to managerial control at the same time it acknowledges it (Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995). From a managerial perspective there is a belief that humour has the potential to be used as a managerial tool (Duncan, 1982; Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap, 1990; Lyttle, 2007) as if used appropriately it can yield several benefits in the workplace (Duncan, 1982; Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap, 1990; Romero and Cruthirds, 2006; Lyttle, 2007; Romero and Pescosolido, 2008). Nevertheless, apart from the fact that this is morally debatable, practice shows that organisations which try to 'build cultures of fun' (Fleming, 2005b: 289) with the aim to increase organisational prosperity end up creating employee cynicism and consequently, fun has not only to be appropriate for the work situation but also to be free of managerial control and authority (ibid).

'Open and honest two-way communication between managers and staff' improves relationships, creates cohesion and promotes organisational success (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004: 374). When managers communicate to employees (downward communication), the employees have a choice of support or dissent towards their managers' messages (feedback, upward communication) but they seem to choose a 'supportive voice' (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 713) as this is a low risk, high reward option, which is encouraged by managers whereas a 'dissentive voice' (ibid: 713) is a high risk, low reward option which can even be penalised; consequently, the latter voice has a weak flow as it is either mildly expressed or completely silenced. The absence of 'critical upward communication' (ibid: 711) creates problems as the lack of realistic feedback leads managers to an unrealistic, distorted view of their organisation; while employees try to maintain the status quo (ibid). Even though in the post-modern organisation theory employees are empowered and their opinion is valued (Daft, 2000), in practice, there is evidence that most employees do not critically challenge their managers and the ones

who do are seen as troublemakers and hence, this study seeks to shed further light into the matter and at the same time it underlines the value of analysing communication in organisations (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004; Tourish and Hargie, 2009).

3 Methodology

3.1 Ethnographic approaches to communication

'Ethnography is the art and science of describing a human group –its institutions, interpersonal behaviors, material productions, and beliefs' (Angrosino, 2007:14). The present study is a prime example of an ethnographic approach to communication as it describes people and their everyday life and aims to define behaviour patterns. The advantage of ethnography over other approaches when it comes to studying 'social issues or behaviors that are not yet clearly understood' or 'when getting the people's own perspective on issues is an important goal' (ibid: 20) stems not only from the fact that it occurs in a natural (for the subjects) environment but also from the fact that it provides a deeper understanding as it examines the wider context that surrounds a situation. Hence, 'ethnographic research can be done whenever people interact in 'natural' group settings' (ibid: 26) (i.e. the ZEUS office in this case) and takes into consideration the context which 'surrounds' a situation (e.g. the relevant background information which is required in order to understand an incident). As understanding and analysing statements requires taking into consideration the context where they occur (Flick, 2006), ethnographic studies such as the current one combine participant observation and researcher participation in order to understand 'social processes of making these events from the inside by participating in the processes' developments' (ibid: 23).

As such, communication analysis in a company like ZEUS requires understanding of the particular context where communication occurs (i.e. organisational setting) as well as the general social conventions and agreements which surround human behaviour (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010). It is believed that we live in a 'communication culture' where most people not only self-consciously communicate but also reflect about it (Cameron, 2000: viii); society promotes the notion of good communication and people seem to value the importance of communication, often equating it with talk that promotes cooperation and avoids conflict (ibid). Consequently, conversations as social processes which occur in the presence of at least two people play an important role in human life and hence, in organisational life, too as organisational talk (i.e. conversations that occur within organisations) offers knowledge about organisations and reflects the sensemaking of their members (Taylor and Robichaud, 2004).

However, communication (and inevitably sensemaking) in organisations extends beyond mere models of conversation as often theories about ideal communication fail to consider the complexity of reality. For example, Mengis and Eppler (2008) propose a conversational framework which is based on six distinct yet interdependent dimensions: message, process, intent, participants' mental models, group dynamics and background; they suggest that the message itself has to be appropriate, the conversational process refers to the element of time and the conversational flow, the conversational intent refers to the intentions of both the speaker and the receiver(s), the mental models stand for the values, assumptions and dispositions of the participants, group dynamics represent the specific social and psychological 'chemistry' that exists in the group and finally, the conversational background stands for the wider organisational context (physical, culture, structure); these dimensions, even though distinct, are still interdependent (ibid). Nevertheless, Goffman (1981: 181) warns that 'Every transmission of signals through a channel is subject to 'noise', namely, transmissions that are not part of the intended signal and reduce its clarity'; every communication is 'a layered composite structure –electronic, physical, biological, and so forth' and 'is vulnerable to noise sources from different layerings in the structure of the system that sustains it' (ibid: 182).

Simply stated, even 'ideal' communication models are not immune to problems. In fact, extending beyond Goffman's (ibid) unintentional yet inevitable 'noise', Faÿ (2008) presents a more sinister background of organisational communication; 'Homo managerialis appears' to have 'a split ego' (ibid: 839) as unconsciously he/she lies; he/she communicates and supports openness but at the same time he/she follows a managerial rationality and not only is he/she not open to discussion but in fact he/she does not even want to be questioned, let alone opposed. In this context, every conversation model is fruitless as communication that is not 'liberating' but 'limitating and oppressive' is clearly a problem (Cameron, 2000: 182). In short, organisational communication is often unintentionally or intentionally affected by several factors and yet, this reality is often misunderstood, underrated or neglected by managers.

Misinterpretations and problems occur not only in the process of organisational communication but also in the academic study and interpretation of communication. Mills (2002) suggests that as workplace communication research focuses on white collar/managerial communication, research needs to be expanded into blue collar communication as vital elements differ among departments. For example, the concepts of 'working in with others' (collaboration) and 'getting on with others' (social cohesion) appeared to take different meanings in different departments (ibid: 294). Consequently,

the 'routine geosocial environment' (ibid: 307) of each worker influences sensemaking regarding workplace communication; even though departments share the same language, they do not necessarily share the same meanings as these must be understood within their context (ibid). Therefore, workplace communication is not homogeneous among all departments as meaning (and thus, sensemaking, too) does not merely depend on linguistic terms/conventions but is closely connected with the environment within it occurs (ibid). Hence, based on this and extending the argument even further, it can be argued that as managers and employees do not share the same backgrounds, it is questionable whether managerial communication satisfies the employee requirements for meaning; thus, it needs to be examined whether managers and employees can actually share the same meaning and understand each other, at least to the point the post-modern organisation theory claims (e.g. Daft, 2000); if the case turns out to be that managers cannot understand the communication needs of employees, it is doubtful whether they can understand the employees' needs and work together in harmony.

Additionally, another point for consideration is the fact that communication varies significantly across different cultures as all cultures do not share the same values or express themselves in a uniform way (e.g. Hofstede, 1980; Hall and Reed Hall, 1990; Gudykunst and Kim, 2002; Lewis, 2005; Samovar, Porter and McDaniel, 2009). For example, Burlenson and Mortenson (2003) explored the cultural differences in the experience and expression of emotion by researching Americans and Chinese and reached the conclusion that cultural differences exist when it comes to the perception of forms of emotional support; Chinese considered a wider range of forms of support as effective and appropriate than Americans (ibid). These differences can be explained due to the difference in values; Chinese are more collectivist-oriented and have goals that focus on the problems and not so much on emotion as Americans (ibid). However, they noted important similarities among the two cultures, too; both cultures found 'highly person-centered comforting messages' the most helpful support and the low person-centred as the least helpful (ibid: 139).

Therefore, in order to understand communication and individual behaviour in general, it has to be recognised that behaviour needs to be understood as embedded in cultures and this is the reason why ethnographic approaches can be helpful. Geertz (1973) uses Ryle's term that ethnography is 'thick description' and it involves cultural understanding. He uses Ryle's example and explains that 'thin description' occurs when one says that a person rapidly contracts his/her eyelid but 'thick description' takes place when one specifies whether that person twitches, winks, parodies someone, rehearses or fakes (ibid). Culture

is a reality and equals to the 'psychological structures by means of which individuals or groups of individuals guide their behavior' (ibid: 11); 'culture is public because meaning is' (ibid: 12); culture is a context which can be thickly (i.e. intelligently) described, a symbolic system and is articulated through social action (e.g. behaviour). Hence, the observer (ethnographer) not only observes and records but also analyses without of course being required to know everything as 'it is not necessary to know everything in order to understand something' (ibid: 20). Geertz believes that culture is intertwined with human nature and even though some things are controlled intrinsically (e.g. breathing) and others culturally (e.g. trust in free market), most behaviour is controlled by both; for example, the ability to speak is intrinsic but to speak English is cultural and thus, ideas, acts and feelings are manufactured cultural products (ibid).

In short, since it is difficult to understand individuals and cultures in general, it is even more difficult to understand groups of individuals which could often be multicultural such as in the case of organisations. Schwartzman (1993) argues that the ethnographer goes to the field in order to learn about a culture from the inside. However, as the 'Hawthorne effect' showed (i.e. that productivity improved not because of the improvement in lighting but simply because the subjects were motivated because of the fact that they were being observed), the observer's task is not always easy as other variables can affect an equation (ibid). Hence, the ethnographer tries not only to represent the view of his/her subjects but also to understand their culture and how they fit in in relation to wider structures (ibid).

3.2 Justification of method

The aim of this research is to observe employees in order to analyse their reactions after managerial communication whereas the specific objectives are to examine individual reactions and recurring behavioural patterns as well as the impact of management style and power on employee responses; as such, a qualitative approach was deemed more suitable than a quantitative one.

Qualitative research is relevant 'to the study of social relations' due to the 'pluralization of life worlds' (Flick, 2006: 11). Qualitative research is characterised by the 'choice of appropriate methods and theories', the 'recognition and analysis of different perspectives', the 'reflexivity of the researcher and the research' and the 'variety of approaches and methods' (ibid: 14). In qualitative research the study field is not an artificial situation which

occurs in a laboratory but reflects 'the practices and interactions of the subjects in everyday life' (ibid: 15) where the viewpoints and the practices differ due to the existence of 'different perspectives and social backgrounds related to them' and the 'subjectivity of the researcher and of those being studied becomes part of the research process' (ibid: 16); qualitative research is not based 'on a unified theoretical and methodological concept' (ibid).

This research was based on qualitative data as the variety of perspectives and interrelations needed to be studied in an attempt to understand the underlying processes and factors that affect people within the chosen environment (i.e. the ZEUS workplace) could not be captured by quantitative analysis as the latter relies heavily on measurement of specific factors only. Even though quantitative analyses enable the 'monitoring' of a large number of subjects and can produce results that can be generalised, in this case a quantitative approach would be less than ideal not only due to the small number of subjects (i.e. three subjects) but mostly due to the fact that it would not allow for the level of interpretation this study required. The task in this research was not only to record employee behaviour but also to observe and interpret behaviour in relation to the wider organisational context. Consequently, in this research, the perspective was to understand employee reactions as culturally embedded and in order to do this, an ethnographic approach was essential.

Ethnography 'has taken over in recent years what was participant observation before' (ibid: 215); it aims to understand the social processes that make an event 'from the inside by participating in the processes' developments' (ibid: 23) and is characterised by an emphasis in exploring particular social phenomena, working with data which has not been coded into categories, investigating only a few cases and interpreting the meanings of human actions without placing major emphasis on quantifying or statistically analysing them (ibid). Ethnography stems from the 'theoretical position of describing social realities and their making' (ibid: 230) and is characterised by 'extended participation' and 'flexible use of different methods' (ibid: 23).

An ethnographic approach was chosen for this study as the combination of participation and observation in an environment enables detailed analysis and deep understanding of social events and human actions. The researcher would be in the field and observe from the inside and, looking back in retrospect, the method was justified; participant observation in a natural environment where the researcher was also a participant enabled

the researcher not only to gather significant details but also to have a better understanding of the situation as she was an integral part of it.

Observation was chosen over interviews and questionnaires because observation is more objective as it involves 'no interaction between the researcher and those he or she is studying' (Angrosino, 2007: 37); unlike the interviewer, the observer 'is usually not demanding that people do anything out of the ordinary' (ibid: 61). Additionally, observation was chosen as it provides a stable methodological error which stems from the researcher whereas interviews/questionnaires involve the presence of different errors which stem from each participant; as each person perceives and expresses his/her situation differently (e.g. Cohen and Taylor, 1976), during interviews/questionnaires individuals can shape and portray their reality accordingly. For example, in interviews/questionnaires it is difficult 'to distinguish between what people say they do and what they actually do' (Moeran, 2009: 147). On the contrary, during observation the researcher perceives 'the activities and interrelationships of people in the field setting' through his/her five senses (Angrosino, 2007: 37) and objectively records the data.

3.3 Study design and single case study approach

'Qualitative research may be described as a sequence of decisions' (Flick, 2006: 136). The researcher has certain goals in mind and designs the study in order to accomplish them (ibid). In this study, the initial design involved three stages of data collection (pilot, phase 1, phase 2), which were going to take place over a period of several months. The plan was that the pilot would last a week and would take place in July 2007, and then the two main collections would follow in September 2007 and November 2007 respectively and would each last a week. Each of these weeks would represent a working week and hence, would start on a Monday and conclude on a Friday. The reason why the length of each data collection stage was decided to be a working week was that it was agreed (i.e. between the supervisor and the researcher) that this time period is representative of the culture and the general situation that exists in a company. The reason why the researcher decided to collect data at three different stages was that this would enable her to distinguish the recurring behavioural patterns from others that were exceptional e.g. an individual behaving differently due to unique personal circumstances.

However, in order to safeguard the success of the collection, the design had to be altered. In detail, as the company signed a new contract, the employees were often away from the

office and also, the company expressed the intention to move all employees to another building but possibly in different offices. Consequently, as the researcher could not risk relying either on a set weekly data collection or in future data collections, she decided to collect as much data as she could: the data collection started on the 11th July 2007 and was successfully completed on the 26th September 2007. Looking in retrospect, this decision proved wise as if the researcher had relied on the initial plan (i.e. a total of 3 weeks of data collection), her material would be neither sufficient (e.g. an employee could be offshore for the duration of a whole week) nor fully comprehensive (i.e. as certain events were based on certain incidents which would have not necessarily coincided with the initial data collection weeks); the altered study design enabled the researcher to gather an abundance of information and understand employee behaviour in the exact context in which it occurred. As such, a lesson learned was that provided the researcher is in a position to do so, at least when it comes to participant observation, the longer the researcher spends in the field and collects data, the better the outcome.

After conceptualising the design of the study, the researcher submitted the relevant form to the Ethics committee of the university and got approval to proceed with the study. Then, the line manager was contacted and gave his written (via email) approval of the study and each individual was given a written document which provided all the important information about the study, some background information (brief literature review) and a consent form (among the information that the participants received was the fact that the name of the company would appear as ZEUS when the final thesis was formally submitted to the university and that pseudonyms would be used instead of their real names).

As far as the approach followed is concerned, a case study approach was chosen as case studies aim to precisely describe or reconstruct a case (e.g. a person, a community or an organisation) (ibid). Undeniably single case studies such as the present one are small in scale and are characterised by specificity, which do not allow for generalisations. However, these limitations are in fact also the advantages of single case studies; single case studies contribute to knowledge in terms of quality and not quantity. As such, the intensity and the depth of small scale studies provide a deeper insight into a phenomenon than large scale studies.

3.4 Participant observation and data collection

Observation of individuals can take many forms as it can be overt or covert, participant or non-participant (i.e. different involvement levels ranging from mere observer to full participant), systematic or unsystematic, can occur in natural or specially selected surroundings and can involve observation of self and/or others (ibid). In this study, participant observation was chosen as the best option due to the existence of several factors such as the small number of subjects, the requirement for insider access, the nature of the examinable component (i.e. observable behaviour), the need for theoretical interpretation and examination of claims (Jorgensen, 1989).

In detail, according to Jorgensen (ibid: 12-13), participant observation is appropriate when: 'little is known about the phenomenon' (e.g. new movement), 'there are important differences between the views of insiders as opposed to outsiders' (e.g. ethnic group), 'the phenomenon is somehow obscured from the view of outsiders' (e.g. private), or 'the phenomenon is hidden from public view' (e.g. crime). Also, participant observation is appropriate when: 'the research problem is concerned with human meanings and interactions viewed from the insiders' perspective', 'the phenomenon of investigation is observable within an everyday life situation or setting', 'the researcher is able to gain access to an appropriate setting', 'the phenomenon is sufficiently limited in size and location to be studied as a case', 'study questions are appropriate for case study', 'the research problem can be addressed by qualitative data gathered by direct observation and other means pertinent to the field setting' (ibid: 13). 'Participant observation is especially appropriate for exploratory studies, descriptive studies, and studies aimed at generating theoretical interpretations'; although 'less useful for testing theories', participant observation findings are 'appropriate for critically examining theories and other claims to knowledge' (ibid: 13). Consequently, the features of participant observation include: an interest in meaning as viewed from insider's viewpoint, an everyday life location, situation and setting, a theory for interpretation of human existence, an 'open-minded, flexible, opportunistic' inquiry (ibid: 14), a qualitative approach, an observer performing a participant role and maintaining relationship with insiders, and information-gathering by direct observation and other methods (ibid).

As far as methodology is concerned, participant observation differs from experiments and surveys, which are ideal for theory testing and the provision of explanations, as the former require a controlled and manipulated research environment whereas the latter rely on a vast data collection (ibid). The researcher can begin his/her study in two ways; either start

with a problem and then define it further through observation or begin observing and then define the problems (ibid). Under this method, even though exact measurement is not required, reliability and ethics are vital (ibid). The researcher has to select the setting, the entry strategy and the type of observation; for example, some settings are visible whereas others are invisible to outsiders, some are more open while others are more closed to outsiders; on the same grounds, the researcher has a choice of overt entry (entering after having sought permission) or covert entry (deceiving, which is unethical unless in cases such as drug-related observations) and of comprehensive or selective observation; as soon as the observer enters the setting, he/she can have varying degree of participation, ranging 'from a complete outsider to a complete insider' (ibid: 55); however, he/she needs not only to develop but also to sustain his/her relationship within this environment as well as overcome obstacles if need be (ibid).

All four individuals of the ZEUS operations team were offered the chance to participate in this study (but only three participated as the fourth one did not wish/ was not able to participate and in fact, left the company shortly after the commencement of this study) and the method used was the complete collection of field data from the period. Some time after the individuals signed the consent form, the study commenced. The researcher/participant/observer did not face any problems upon entering the field as in fact she was already an insider in that field with a clear role (i.e. working as a coordinator in ZEUS in the same room with the three other participants); as she already had access to all relevant material (as due to her role she was involved in all work communications), had visual contact with all the individuals (as she was situated at the back of the room) and was treated as an insider (as she had been working in that team for almost a year), participant observation occurred without any problems.

In this study, the subjects were observed in their normal daily working environment, where their verbal, somatic and psychological reactions were recorded after each reception of oral (face-to-face, phone, teleconference) or written (email, reports), formal or informal, personal or team-oriented communications from the management team. The observer (the researcher) was positioned at her desk which was located at the back of the room and kept a diary of what was happening during each day that was recorded whereas the three participants were sitting at their desks which were located from the middle to the front of the room. The observer was the operations coordinator, which means not only that she was aware of most of the communications and actions that took place as she was the link between management and operations but also that she was considered part of the operations team and had access to the relevant information (e.g. incoming calls were

displayed on everyone's phone screen, conferences were in the common diary, emails and reports were carbon-copied to all).

When in the field collecting data, the researcher needs to be very careful not only when it comes to the actual observation of participants but also when it comes to the data documentation. 'For observations, the most important task is that you document actions and interactions' (Flick, 2006: 283) as data documentation 'is not only a technical step in the research process' but 'has an influence on the quality of the data you can use for interpretations' (ibid: 293). In this study, the observer was recording all the relevant observations in a notebook which was mostly written in specially encoded shorthand [see Appendix A] so as to avoid the exposure of confidential information in the extreme event of theft of the notebook. This diary contained the description of the situations that occurred in the workplace and the reactions of the participants to them. The description of each day started from the morning when the observer and the participants started work and lasted until the close of business where the observer and the participants left [see Appendix E]. Irrelevant incidents were either briefly mentioned or not described whereas personal or confidential information was either not recorded or replaced by a dotted line (depending on the situation). For example, when colleagues from other departments entered the room without interacting with the subjects, this was considered irrelevant to the study; if one of the subjects had lunch while sitting on his desk and either ate or spoke on the phone with his partner, this was considered a private personal moment which was not recorded; when the communications entailed information that was company-specific or related to confidential work situations (e.g. how a problem on a platform was solved), the relevant words or phrases were replaced by dotted lines.

3.5 Validity

Even though qualitative research is not based on unified methodology, a common feature in all qualitative research is that 'Objects are not reduced to single variables, but represented in their entirety in their everyday context' (ibid: 15). Therefore, assessing the quality of qualitative research is a challenge as there is no consensus yet regarding the assessment criteria; traditional criteria (i.e. validity, reliability, objectivity) 'often miss the specific features of qualitative research and data' (ibid: 382) whereas the many suggested alternative criteria do not seem adequate as the 'quality of qualitative research often lies beyond what you can assess by applying criteria' (ibid: 396).

The quality of qualitative research is affected by the use of the appropriate selection and application of methods and theories (ibid). As such, the researcher should have a clear idea in mind regarding generalisation of his/her results (ibid). However, generalisation does not necessarily equate to quantity but to quality as 'Studies with a sensibly limited claim to generalization are ... more meaningful' (ibid: 138). In specific, in this study the researcher avoided 'over-generalisations' or using the 'wrong' theories. First of all, the aim was to explain an employee's behaviour only while at work and not in general; as behaviour analysis was conducted only in a certain context, the researcher was aware that it would be neither relevant nor wise to make generalisations about that person's behaviour in all contexts. Secondly, as far as the choice of theory is concerned, this is a subjective matter and there is no case of right or wrong theory but merely a difference between valid arguments and invalid ones.

In this study, as far as the role of the observer is concerned, objectivity and fairness were achieved with the following: First of all, the observer did not record details that had been entrusted to her by participants confidentially whether of personal or work-related nature. Moreover, the observer did not use her role as a coordinator in order to influence participants' reactions or gain more information than an external observer would. Finally, the observer did record the participants' reactions as objectively as possible. The fact that the observer was part of the company and not an external person had both advantages and disadvantages. On one hand, the fact that the observer was familiar to the employees, made them feel more relaxed and so, they did not try to fake their behaviour but just acted as they would normally do. On the other hand, as they felt comfortable in the presence of the observer, they may have revealed confidential information; however, this did not pose a problem in this piece of research, as mentioned above, since this information was not included in the data.

It has to be taken into consideration that whenever participant observation is concerned, a question of subjectivity exists as each person has the potential to interpret situations differently due to the existence of situational factors (i.e. being an outsider). In detail, the ethnographer goes in the field to learn about a culture from the inside (Schwartzman, 1993); in participant observation insider access is required especially in phenomena which are not open to the public and when the view of the insiders may differ from the one of outsiders (Jorgensen, 1989). As culture influences sensemaking in organisations (Harris, 1994), an increased degree of participation of the observer (Jorgensen, 1989) ensures an enhanced understanding of the situation. The case in this research proved to be ideal as the observer collected the data while being in the position of an insider (work colleague)

but started analysing the data while being in the position of an outsider (no longer working for the company). Consequently, during data collection, the observer interpreted behaviour while knowing all the relevant contextual information about the specific workplace whereas during the analysis she was able to view situations more distantly and hence, even more objectively.

Additionally, as communication varies across cultures (e.g. Hofstede, 1980; Hall and Reed Hall, 1990; Gudykunst and Kim, 2002; Lewis, 2005; Samovar, Porter and McDaniel, 2009) and as behaviour is embedded in culture which in turn makes deep understanding a prerequisite for understanding behaviour (Geertz, 1973), the observer should be in a position not only to merely describe but also to deeply understand behaviour (ibid). As far as this study is concerned it could be argued that the fact that the observer was female, Greek, and had a non-technical role whereas all the subjects were male, British (Scottish), and were engineers could lead to possible misinterpretations of meanings. Nevertheless, apart from the fact that the observer had already been living in Scotland for five years and working in this particular office for a year and the fact that the amount of error would have been stable anyway as all the subjects shared the same socio-cultural characteristics, there is a counter-argument; outsiders tend to pay more attention to details as they do not take things for granted and can be more objective as they are free from bias.

Undeniably, when it comes to measure 'the degree to which an observation actually demonstrates what it appears to demonstrate' (Angrosino, 2007: 58), certain issues need to be clarified. Ethnography 'relies on the ability of a researcher to interact with and observe people as they essentially go about their everyday lives' (ibid: 26) and as a result, 'the 'reality' we perceive as ethnographers is thus always conditional' (ibid: 36). It is true that all individuals 'tend to perceive things through filters' (ibid: 38) and carry preconceptions due to their backgrounds (e.g. social, cultural, gender, age etc.) but it is also true that good ethnographers set aside these factors when in the field (ibid). Even though 'observations are susceptible to bias from subjective interpretations' (ibid: 59), 'the very naturalness of observation' (ibid: 61) provides objectivity as the observer records what occurs without guiding the participants and this is one of the reasons this study did not involve interviews/questionnaires.

Secondly, 'immersion in the field opens up, as well as constrains, new understanding' (Ybema and Kamsteeg, 2009: 104). The insider as a member has unlimited access to a situation while at the same time he/she is in the risk of 'adopting the member's poor awareness of his or her own culture' (ibid: 115) as the familiarity of the surroundings

prevents him/her from seeing the 'strangeness' (ibid). Especially when it comes to cases where the researcher works in the setting, it is advisable for the researcher to maintain a low to moderate involvement (e.g. details events where not directly involved in) in order to balance closeness and distance (Alvesson, 2009). As 'it is difficult to study something one is heavily involved in' (ibid: 156), the 'at-home ethnographer' (ibid: 159) must conduct the research at a time where he/she is familiar but not too familiar with a situation (e.g. employee for twenty years). As such, this study involved the ideal access where an insider (but not too familiar) recorded and then analysed the data away from the field.

Thirdly, comes the issue of practicality. As in every study, the reality is that 'we may have to rely on a convenience sample because that chosen site is what is available' (Fine and Shulman, 2009: 179). As such, the current study design was tailored to the circumstances; even though two observers would have produced a better result, it was practically impossible to do so as not only access was prohibited to outsiders but also an outsider would lack contextual meaning.

Fourthly, comes the issue of the role of the self in observations. The autoethnographer is a full member, is visible in the data and is committed to theoretical analysis (Anderson, 2006). The role is difficult as he/she documents and analyses while at the same time engages in action and reflects. The autoethnographer is motivated while in the field, has insider meaning and data access but at the same time he/she cannot let the research focus fade or even participate heavily (ibid). All ethnography involves a 'degree of personal engagement with the field and with the data' (Atkinson, 2006: 402). 'Ethnographers inevitably affect and interact with the settings they document and are themselves changed in the process' (ibid: 403). This study is an example of involvement where the observer concentrates on others' actions but does not participate heavily unless the situation requires (e.g. pay problem).

Finally, of certain interest in participant observation is the possibility that participants may be 'faking' their behaviours. As people have the ability to 'put on' certain behaviour (e.g. Goffman, 1975; Hewlin, 2003) or at least modify certain elements of behaviour such as showing emotion for example (e.g. Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000), it may be worth wondering how 'real' is the behaviour being described. In this study, behaviour-faking with the intention to 'deceive' or achieve a certain impact in regards with the observer is not an issue not only because the participants knew that this would be quite obvious to the observer but also because the data collection period (a month) was quite lengthy for someone to try to fake his/her behaviour, especially in a fast-paced operations

environment where employees are not obliged to act in a certain way (e.g. as receptionists); as far as ZEUS was concerned, operations employees were not expected to have rules of emotional display (e.g. as a steward/ess) not only due to the nature of their job but also due to the fact that their office was isolated. Nevertheless, behaviour-faking or better to say behaviour-modifying as part of the normal working environment cannot be ruled out from this study not only because social conventions influence behaviour to such extent that behaviour can be seen as performance (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) but most importantly because creating and maintaining a certain face (*ibid*) while at work is one of the elements that this study seeks to examine.

3.6 Data analysis

The method of analysis used in this research is critical incident analysis. Critical incident analysis provides qualitative data for case studies quickly and at the same time it offers access to 'the deeper levels of the social processes' (Angelides, 2001: 440) within a given context. Critical incidents 'are not necessarily sensational events involving a lot of tension' but events whose 'criticality is based on the justification, the significance, and the meaning given to them' (*ibid*: 431). For example, in this study significant critical incidents were events relating to inconsistent and unclear management communication, employee lack of autonomy and employee resignations. The researcher analysed these incidents by examining questions regarding 'whose interests are served or denied', 'what conditions sustain and preserve these actions', 'what power relationships' underpin them and what factors prevents the involved 'from engaging in alternative ways' (*ibid*: 436). Therefore, the analysis of critical incidents is a methodological yet flexible approach of data analysis which saves time and provides a manageable volume and inquiry themes (*ibid*). For example, in this study the main themes were employee behaviour, management communication, management behaviour and relations with the employees, sensemaking, employee empowerment, and workplace humour. Nevertheless, as every method of analysis, critical incident analysis has limitations; in interviews 'the researcher can easily be diverted' from the study purpose, be 'stuck with superficial explanations' or even offend interviewees (*ibid*: 440). Also, often the researcher 'faces an incident with moral dimensions' (*ibid*: 441) where he/she may need to intervene. As far as the present study is concerned, these limitations were not an issue as the researcher did not conduct interviews and was a participant who would have normally intervened if a moral issue of this sort has occurred. As such, this case study provided the ideal situation for critical incident analysis.

In detail, after the observation period ended, the observer/researcher collected the information, coded and labelled it, looked for patterns and categories, and then proceeded to analysis, theorizing and writing up (Jorgensen, 1989). In this study, data analysis involved seven different phases, three of which were the main data analysis. First, the data filtering (1) occurred (September 2008); the data was screened and sorted so as to check for possible problematic parts or for material that was not relevant to the study. Then, the data pre-analysis (2) occurred; all the material was reviewed and reoccurring patterns and thematic entities were established (October and November 2008).

After, the main data analysis occurred (July 2009 – June 2010) where each day was analysed in depth. In detail, the first phase (July – October 2009) focused on the interpretation of observations (3), the second (October 2009 – January 2010), concentrated on the meaning of the events (4), and the third (January – June 2010) focused on the explanations of the situations and behaviours (5). The ‘interpretive phase’ involved the presentation of the behaviour of the participants as it appeared to be at first sight (ethnographic perspective) and hence, what the management (or an external observer in the case of written communication) saw. Nevertheless, this interpretation involved ‘thick description’ and not ‘thin description’ as cultural understanding was involved (Geertz, 1973). Here the broad patterns themes and patterns of behaviour and critical incidents (that had already been generally defined during the pre-analysis) were defined in detail. The ‘meaning phase’ attempted to discover the real feelings and thus, interpret the employees’ behaviour (psychological perspective). Here the focus was on the interpretation of critical incidents and topics; critical incidents/topics in this case where the ones which were important or had a vital impact in the workplace; based on ‘thick description’ (ibid) the researcher provided possible meanings in the light of several theories. The ‘explanation phase’ focused on the factors that affect the behaviour of employees and so, examined the possible reasons why this was happening (critical perspective). This critical perspective was based on the concept that ideas need to be challenged and not accepted without questioning or taken for granted. Here the findings of this research were compared with the existing literature review.

Then, a refining (6) phase occurred (July - October 2010) where all the results from the main analysis were put together and were organised under different main themes. Even though the main analysis focused on the day as a unit, this refining stage focused on each main incident and categorised the material accordingly (e.g. incidents of employee anger). In detail, after the main analysis, the results were categorised according to the day they occurred and so, each day had its own analysis; for example, ‘Day X(number)’ was

analysed as a single unit which contained several incidents and themes (e.g. one joke and one anger expression). However, during the refining phase the focus was placed not on the day but on the incident/theme itself; the unit/category was now the incident (and not the day); for example, 'Cynicism' was analysed as a unit which contained several days (e.g. cynicism occurred on day X and on day Y). In short, the incident and its underlying theme became the main point of interest whereas the day it occurred became of secondary concern (it served only as an example) as importance was placed not on when certain behaviour occurred but on how often it occurred and the circumstances it occurred in. This phase narrowed the focus from the general to the more specific in order to be able to analyse the data efficiently and develop an original perspective. As a result, a critical perspective was adopted in order to examine the validity of the claims of the managerial rhetoric that exists not only in organisations but also in certain pieces of the literature as well. Finally, a review (7) phase occurred (May 2011) where the final corrections took place. During this phase mistakes (grammar, syntax, typing) were corrected, aesthetic improvements were made and most importantly, emphasis on a clear viewpoint was placed so that the meanings were obvious (and not merely inferred) and the arguments were coherent.

Even though this research does not 'fall' into a category and even though the researcher refuses to subject the study of complex phenomena such as the current one into mere division and branding (e.g. Foucault, 1977), it cannot be denied that the perspective of this study is an amalgam of symbolic interpretivism and postmodernism. The combination of Goffman's work (1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) with Foucault's (1977) notion of power creates a strong and valid argument which explains why individuals willingly obey power and which in turn has dynamic implications for management theory and practice.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Research must be conducted in an ethical manner; the researcher should follow the codes of ethics regarding not only to the quality of the research but also the rights and interests of the participants (e.g. consent, avoidance of harm, confidentiality) (Flick, 2006). In this study, the primary ethical issues are connected with the confidentiality of the collected data. As such, confidentiality was achieved by the following:

First of all, the name of the company and the name of the participants are not mentioned and have been replaced by pseudonyms. Moreover, details that have the potential to reveal which company or which employees were involved have been excluded. Furthermore, details of a personal nature have been excluded. Also, details of work practices are not mentioned and have been replaced by dotted lines. Additionally, any information that was obtained by observation of a participant/s was not revealed by the observer to other participants or management personnel. Finally, the diary was written in a coded way so that it could only be understood by the observer in order to ensure that information would never be available to other people in the extreme case that the diary would have been lost/stolen/obtained by others. On the same grounds, information that was considered to be of a personal nature (e.g. family problems of a participant) or to be strictly confidential (e.g. company's work practices) were not recorded and were replaced by a dotted line. Additionally, it has to be mentioned that after the data collection, even though not officially required, a data sample was sent by an informal email to each of the participants and all of them approved of the quality and the content of the material.

3.8 Background information

'ZEUS' is a pseudonym for a telecommunications company that operates within the oil industry. The operations team of ZEUS consists of four male engineers (three of which participated as the fourth one did not wish or was not able to participate and in fact left the company almost immediately after the study commenced) who deal with telecommunication problems that arise either offshore or onshore. They are the first line of contact and work either individually or in unison. Every fault or request has to be dealt with according to the order it arrives in the queue; however, urgent problems are dealt with first. Due to the existence of several computers which constantly monitor and show the telecommunications situation in all the platforms and onshore, and due to the sensitivity and seriousness of the information and the nature of the faults, the operations office is a secure office where only authorised personnel can enter by swiping their cards. Hence, access to this room is restricted only to operations people, their management and few selected individuals.

In order to understand the context of this study, an amount of background information about the 'characters', their roles and the setting need to be provided. In detail, the operations employees are Aristotle, Socrates and Plato. Aristotle is over fifty years old and has worked in the company for many years, Socrates is in his late thirties and has worked

in the company for a few years, Plato is over fifty years old and has worked in the company for many years. The operations co-ordinator (i.e. the researcher) is Nicole who is in her early thirties and has worked in the company for a year.

The managers, in ascending hierarchical power, are John, Mary, Georgia, Martin, Donald, Steven and F.D.. John is the line manager and is based in an office in another part of Scotland but visits Aberdeen monthly (and works in the employee office) and has daily contact with the employees. Mary is the performance manager and is based in another office in Aberdeen (thirty minute drive) but visits the nearby office (five minute walk) often and has daily contact with the employees. Georgia is the area manager and is based in the nearby office (five minute walk) and has daily contact with the employees. Martin is a manager in another department and is not related to the employees (i.e. operations). Donald is the human resource manager and is working from home in another part of Scotland and is only occasionally in contact with the employees. Steven is Donald's manager and is based in an office in London and is only occasionally in contact with the employees. F.D. is responsible for ZEUS all over Europe and is based in an office in London and is never in contact with the employees.

As far as the premises are concerned, the employee office is the place where operations personnel work whereas the nearby room is a room beside the employee office which contains the electronic devices for onshore and offshore telecommunications. The nearby office is located near (five minute walk) the employee office and houses the project teams whereas the other office is the offshore office which is reached only by helicopter (i.e. the office located at each platform). The platforms are manned (where applicable) by offshore personnel who work on a rota and the operations employees often visit these premises at certain times and stay at sea for a week or more, depending on the issue and/or the rota.

As far as communication is concerned, apart from face-to-face communication, the communication media that are used are electronic correspondence (e-mail), phone call, audio call (a phone call that enables more than two people to discuss as the employees either gather around a single telephone device which is put at loudspeaker or each employee uses his/her phone which connects with all the other phones after dialling a certain number provided by the audio conference provider the company uses) and video conference call (which in this case is not applicable as it was never used for operations purposes).

The managers are permanent staff members whereas the employees are contractors. Contractors are employed by an agency and their contracts get renewed but unlike permanent staff, they can get dismissed without notice/compensation at the end of the contract. Contracts usually last for six months or a year but sometimes they could even be monthly ones. As such, employees and managers do not have the same job safety as they have a different type of contract.

4 Analysis and discussion

4.1 Management actions and employee reactions

4.1.1 Introduction

An organisation is a set of ongoing human relationships in which people co-operate to achieve tasks (Watson, 1994) in an environment which is often shaped by non-predictable forces (e.g. Thietart and Forgues, 1995; Daft, 2000; Dolan, Garcia and Auerbach, 2003) and in a culture which is characterised by certain beliefs, values and attitudes (Brown, 1998; Daft, 2000). However, as employees often mask their true selves by creating representations which portray them as embracing organisational values (Hewlin, 2003), it could be argued that organisational life can be seen as theatre (i.e. Burke), as resembling theatre (i.e. Goffman) or as a blend of both (Boje, Luhman and Cunliffe, 2003). The implications differ strikingly; in the first case, life is theatre and hence, the employees have set roles in a spectacle which they cannot change; in the second case, life has similarities with theatre and thus, the employees can be metaphorically seen as actors; in the third case, life is both theatre and a metaphor and therefore, the employees have the ability to change the spectacle in which they are involved in. Nevertheless, even though organisational life (like social life alike) has elements which are reminiscent of theatre due to the fact that individuals daily try to present themselves in a certain way to others (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) a position that holds that theatre and life are one and the same at all times (i.e. Burke) is hyperbolic whereas a position that suggests that life can be both theatre and like theatre (Boje, Luhman and Cunliffe, 2003) is rather unrealistic. On the contrary, Goffman's perspective is not only more realistic but also more liberating; it recognises that differences between life and theatre do exist and accommodates the fact that employees can be seen as actors, as spectators and as script editors; additionally, as metaphors help people create mental constructions (Clegg and Gray, 1996) while at the same time they capture both the objective facts and the subjective human experience (Hogler et al, 2008), the use of a metaphor provides greater understanding of the workplace. Therefore, the ZEUS office can be metaphorically seen as a stage, a place where techniques of staging false figures occur or simply as a place where great effort is put on behalf of all the participants due to the existing conventions and agreements (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010).

4.1.2 The office as a stage

As Goffman (ibid) believes, all individuals try to present themselves to others in everyday life and can be viewed as both performers and characters (ibid, 1975); as drama actors do, they try to convey certain meanings embracing the ideal societal values when they perform in front of others (ibid, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010). Based on Goffman (ibid), the ZEUS office can be seen as resembling a stage where both the employees and their managers perform on a daily basis. Employees and managers alike go to the workplace consciously knowing they have to behave in a way so as to show they 'fit in' (ibid, 1966). As in a theatre, all the people involved, know and accept the relevant conventions of the mutually enacted act and so, as part of staging the performance, 'dramatic action' becomes 'dramatic interaction' (ibid, 1975: 96). For example, when Georgia tells a joke to Nicole (16th July), the rest of the employees are possibly listening to her even if they appear not to and Georgia is possibly aware of it even if she pretends that she is not; as the accepted convention at work seems to be to be busy (e.g. ibid, 1966, 1975), the employees appear to pretend to work (i.e. give a performance of work) or in Goffman's terms 'make-work' when the boss is near (ibid, 1966: 56; ibid, 1975: 112) and the boss cannot question whether they genuinely work or not.

Each party has to constrain itself (ibid, 2010), adhere to a certain 'performance' (ibid, 1975), maintain a certain face (ibid, 2005) and ensure they do not commit any situational improprieties (ibid, 1966) which the social organisation they work in will not forgive (ibid, 2010). On one hand the employees try to satisfy (or at least not to dis-satisfy) their managers; when Donald (senior manager) seems to have neglected to act and the employees will not get paid in time (30th-31st August), most of the employees do not express their dissatisfaction to management openly but only between them; even though Socrates believes that Donald 'is only a guy who runs a company; he is not God', he seems to stick to the accepted convention of not entering into a dispute with Donald. On the other hand, managers seem to receive employee performance as appropriate and do not seem to care whether it is an enacted one; hence, when an employee rushes to help his/her managers, this is not perceived as an ingratulatory attempt; when Plato tells Georgia 'Of course you can [take some of our stationery]! You are the management after all!' (15th August), she simply laughs and when an employee goes to the airport to collect John (e.g. 17th August or 3rd September), John equally accepts this as a normal work procedure. Therefore, the interpretation is that both employees and managers, abiding to the rules of interaction (ibid, 2005) perform and keep up their performance with 'dramaturgical loyalty' (ibid, 1975: 207) and 'dramaturgical discipline' (ibid: 210) and not

only maintain their face but also protect the face of others from harm (ibid, 2005); managers pretend to ignore the fact that employees present themselves as embracing organisational values (Hewlin, 2003) and employees appear to be following the instructions of their managers.

Nevertheless, it has to be noted that the idea of the managers ordering and the employees obeying is not supported; this idea overemphasises managerial control and underestimates employee power; it oversimplifies the situation as it fails not only to take into consideration the varying degrees of power and control but also the notion of the complex struggle which exists in the workplace (Gabriel, 1999; Mumby, 2005; Fleming and Spicer, 2008). For example, if it is argued that on the 16th July (when Georgia enters the office and says jokingly that she gets what she wants) Georgia entered the office as the powerful manager whom the employees had to obey/please/not dissatisfy by pretending to work, it also has to be mentioned that the process of 'make-work' (Goffman, 1966: 56; ibid, 1975: 112) actually empowered the employees over their manager; the manager could not challenge the employees even if she suspected they were not working. In short, both managers and employees stage figures (ibid, 1975) and create a certain face for themselves (ibid, 2005) in order to present themselves in a certain way (ibid, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) but the managers are not always the ones who get the protagonist roles.

4.1.3 Actors and their roles

Even though life differs from theatre, life is like theatre in a way as the techniques of staging false figures are common in theatre and in everyday social situations (Goffman, 1975). Hence, the ZEUS employees and their managers can be seen metaphorically as actors who daily perform their roles based on the social conventions and agreements that underpin behaviour in public places (i.e. where the individual is in the presence of others and not alone at his/her home) such as the workplace (ibid, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010). Their part in the staged play does not involve only acting a single role as apart from performing their own part (whether as a stand-alone act or as an act where other actors are involved), these actors are also spectators. Both the employees and their managers not only act their roles and are being judged according to their performance but also observe the performance of themselves and others and are in a position to judge the outcome but always keep in mind not to spoil the performance (ibid, 1975) by respecting the image of themselves and of others (ibid, 2005). So, when on the 16th July Georgia

jokes with Nicole, she acts but also observes the other employees and equally, the employees act and observe her; Georgia's act is to say the joke whereas the employees' act is to appear that they are working and not listening not only because the joke is not addressed to them but also because they are supposed to be focused on their work. At the same time, the employees are actually listening not only because they are nearby but also because she speaks loudly and she is aware of it and maybe even hoping for it. However, as the expected attitude is that all the participants abide by the rules that the social encounter requires (ibid, 1966) and safeguard the play (ibid, 1975), the 'social order' (ibid, 1966; ibid, 2010: ix) of the workplace requires both employees and managers alike to sustain the desired values and 'actively portray a relationship to such rules' (ibid, 2010: 186).

It is a fact that like in theatre, some roles in life are more taxing for the 'actor' due to the element of difficulty or the content of the role (e.g. if the actor is not comfortable performing the role due to the fact it dissatisfies him/her or clashes with his/her beliefs). For example, a performance which would require extra effort as it involves corrective 'facework' (ibid, 2005) would be when an individual trips while in the presence of others; even though he/she is in a rather embarrassing and compromised situation, he/she still tries to maintain face (ibid) and defend his/her harmed self-respect by engaging in self-talk or even a response cry (e.g. 'ouch') (ibid, 1981). Another example would be when an individual has to show involvement in a situation which he/she would prefer to avoid (e.g. having to talk with an acquaintance at a social gathering when one is in a hurry to leave or having to talk with an 'enemy' who is sat beside him/her at a party in order not to offend the host who planned the sitting arrangements without being aware of the problem) (ibid, 1966).

On equal grounds, some roles are more taxing in the workplace as well. For example, when Mary is friendly towards Plato after his resignation (on the 27th August she says she is sad that he is leaving and that she hopes he comes back and chats with him as she also does on the 29th August), this seems an easy and enjoyable role for both Mary and Plato since their personal feelings do not clash with their act; they have not had an argument or a disagreement with each other and so, being friendly is not only normal but also easy. Equally, when on the 24th September Aristotle speaks about his health problem to Georgia and she shows understanding, both Aristotle and Georgia may be actually expressing their true feelings through their act. However, when on the 25th July John tried to be the mediator between Plato and the upper management (when Plato did not wish to go to the offshore office) with unsuccessful results, both of their performances seemed to

have created an amount of discomfort to both of them as John, did not actually want to be the mediator and Plato did not actually want to go offshore. The same could be argued for the occasions when Donald is ignoring the employees with important consequences for them (e.g. 30th August and 7th September the employees are concerned about the fact that their salary may be delayed) or when Georgia is demanding (instead of politely requesting) something from the employees (24th September). In such cases the enacted role requires great effort from the employee as he/she has to perform a role that he/she disagrees with. Even though the employees and the managers consciously perform and consciously abide to the rules (ibid, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010), some roles are more difficult than others as they require greater effort; especially for individuals who tend to integrate their personal and their work identity the result is psychological distress due to the presence of the conflict (Hewlin, 2003). Hence, when it comes to 'taxing' roles, like in theatre, some actors cope better than others.

4.1.4 Managerial and employee roles

The ZEUS employees and their managers do not share the same roles as each party presents themselves in a different way in order to convey different meanings (Goffman, 1975). On one hand, the managers aim to be seen as powerful, busy and yet democratic, caring and friendly. The characters of the 'powerful manager', the 'busy manager', the 'democratic manager', the 'caring manager' and the 'friendly manager' seem to conveniently coexist in the workplace. For example, Georgia demands things from others (24th September) and reminds them of her power even in a seemingly joking way (16th July); John seems to be so busy that he has not got the chance to read all of his emails (13th August) whereas Donald appears to be ignoring the employees' emails (e.g. Plato's resignation, the payment problem) without an obvious reason. Yet, on other occasions John is seen as the 'democratic manager' who asks the opinion of the employees (e.g. 14th August, 20th August) or the 'friendly manager' who even confesses his disappointment in upper management to an employee (28th August); equally, Mary is seen confessing to an employee her feelings about work (27th August) or many occasions exist where the managers are joking in a friendly way with the employees (e.g. Mary and Georgia on the 29th August and 3rd September).

The most prevailing managerial role seems to be that of the 'caring manager'. For example, John tries to help the employees when they require something from upper management (25th July, 7th September); John, Mary and Georgia say kind words to Plato

after he resigns (13th August, 15th August, 24th August); John and Georgia bring sweets to the employees (3rd September); Georgia shows to deeply care for Aristotle's health and assures him that he should not worry about work as health comes first (24th September). The reason that the 'caring manager' is the preferred managerial choice stems from the post-modern organisation theory; as it claims that employees are a valuable resource (e.g. Willmott, 1993; Daft, 2000), the managers have to live up to the expectations by performing a relevant role (Goffman, 1975) and creating an analogous face (ibid, 2005) and sustain 'a viable image of' themselves 'in the eyes of others' (ibid, 2010: 185). In short, managers have to appear to care about the health and generally the well-being of the employees; otherwise, if they fail to play their character correctly, they risk looking cruel and possibly facing legal charges. A counter argument to this argument could be that managers truly care about the health and the well-being of their employees as it is only human to sympathise with the problems of others; however, as a reply to this, it could also be said that managers actually care about the health of employees as healthy employees are productive employees. Nevertheless, irrespective of the reason behind the care (i.e. they just pretend they care, they care from a humane perspective, they care from a materialistic perspective or from a combination of these) and whether the performed character is in alliance with the actor's character, the fact remains that the 'caring manager' is a role always encountered at the post-modern workplace as an 'uncaring manager' would be seen as a situational impropriety (ibid, 1966) which the post-modern organisation frame could neither allow nor forgive (ibid, 2010).

On the other hand, as the employees (when in the presence of management) aim to be seen as hard-working, helpful and generally in a favourable light, one encounters the characters of the 'hard-working employee', the 'helpful employee' and the 'obedient employee'. The employees are seen most times concentrating on their work or even pretending to do so by 'making work' (ibid, 1966: 56; ibid, 1975: 112) when the need arises; so, even when Georgia says her joke to Nicole loudly (16th July), the employees appear not to pay attention as the 'hard-working employee' is supposed to be concentrating on his work without being easily distracted. One also sees the concept of the 'helpful employee', sometimes as a self-offer (e.g. when on the 15th August Plato tells Georgia to take some of their stationery, when on the 17th August a colleague offers to collect John from the airport) and sometimes as a rather imposed one (on the 3rd September when Plato goes to collect John as John asked to be given a lift).

The dominant employee role seems to be the role of the employee who fulfils his managers' requests even when he does not want to; Socrates, Aristotle and Plato always

do what they are told even when they do not agree with the company's policy or when they are confused (e.g. Mary's order on the 21st August, John's email on the 30th August) and they even jokingly admit it (26th July)[Appendix E]. It could be argued that employees act in such ways so as to secure their jobs because they know that they can be easily fired (e.g. Pfeffer, 1992; Willmott, 1993) and that being jobless and searching for a job is quite distressing (Song et al, 2009) especially when you are older (Ainsworth and Hardy, 2009). Nevertheless, the disempowered 'obedient employee' often decides to take a more active part amidst the power struggle (Gabriel, 1999; Mumby, 2005; Fleming and Spicer, 2008). For example, when Plato resigns, it can hardly be said that his managers are the powerful protagonists; in fact, Plato is the one who is the centre of attention and also the one who influences the actions of the managers (as they have to act and adapt according to his decision). However, even though employees and managers have the ability to abandon their performance, it appears that managers have more flexibility in their roles as only managers are allowed to show a 'wrong face' (Goffman, 2005) and yet return to the play without corrective 'facework' (ibid: 12); for example, Georgia is seen being demanding on the verge of uncaring in one occasion (24th September) but caring in another (e.g. when she brought sweets for the employees).

The fact that Georgia is not seen acting in a democratic way whereas John is not seen acting in a demanding way could infer that some people, whether managers or employees, find it more difficult to enact certain roles; each individual is like an actor but seems to be good only at certain roles. However, a role that seems to be enacted well and often by both managers and employees alike seems to be the 'happy manager' and the 'happy employee' (e.g. jokes occur and are encouraged at all times, even during crises such as on the 3rd September or the 7th August). The post-modern organisation does not seem to have a place for the dissatisfied worker; 'the rule of behavior' that obliges 'participants to 'fit in'' (ibid, 1966: 11) seems to be that unhappiness is a situational impropriety that is tolerated only at limited circumstances (ibid, 1966) such as when Aristotle faced a health problem. Even though in the past the modern organisation coped with the existence of unhappy yet performing employees, the post-modern organisation seems to have placed the bar even higher; apart from performing, both managers and employees have to be seen as enjoying their job and having fun at work (Fleming, 2005b); now the body of the worker is not enough unless it is accompanied by his/her soul.

The post-modern organisation obliges managers and employees alike to embark on different roles and live up to the expectations of the work identity they have created for themselves (Hewlin, 2003) when in the presence of each other. In short, successful

performances require everyone involved to know the rules and abide by them creating and sustaining a relevant character (Czarniawska, 1997). The office can be seen as a theatrical stage where employees and managers stage a play (Goffman, 1975) according to the expectations of the post-modern organisation theory. Even though the norm is that the managers enjoy more flexibility in their roles than the employees, due to the fact that all individuals are capable of both 'controlling and being controlled' as well as 'losing control and escaping control' (Gabriel, 1999: 198), managers and employees alike can choose to assume protagonist roles or even off-stage roles when they decide to do so.

4.1.5 Off-stage roles

Apart from their formal roles, the ZEUS managers and employees often engage in informal roles and this change makes them share similarities with actors who stop their performance and engage in off-stage roles. Under the theatre metaphor which underpins Goffman's work (1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010), managers have more flexibility in their performance as they can perform off-stage roles whenever they choose whereas the employees seem to go off-stage only in the presence of their peers and rarely in the presence of the managers. In detail, when their managers are not present or cannot see them, employees often engage in informal behaviour during which criticism and irony as well as distancing from management are evident. For example, the employees express their dislike for their colleagues who try to please or are sympathetic to the managers (16th July when Aristotle praises Georgia's hard work, 15th August when Plato tells Georgia to take stationery, 17th August when a colleague goes willingly to collect John) but also admit that they have no choice but to fulfil the requests of management (As Socrates says on the 21st and the 30th August respectively: 'This is a grey area but since she said so' and 'He is the person to know', or as Aristotle says on the 21st August 'Okay Mary, I will do that'). They engage in criticism about their managers' actions (e.g. the ambiguous email of the 13th July, the cost-cutting policy announcement of 7th August, the confusing work guidelines of the 14th, 16th and 20th August) but do so only when their managers are not present. When in the presence of their colleagues only, employees can be seen as part of the 'unmanaged organization' where the employee actually chooses to construct a different reality through fantasy (Gabriel, 1995: 477) whereas when in the presence of their managers, employees stay loyal to their performance (Goffman, 1975) and defend and protect their created face (ibid, 2005).

Equally, managers often choose to go off-stage and speak to the employees informally under certain circumstances. For example, Mary and John seem to show their real feelings when they confide certain things to the employees about their own dissatisfaction regarding the way things are (27,28,29th August); also, Georgia on one occasion appears to wait for the other employees to leave and speaks in private to Plato and offers her understanding about his resignation (15th August), on another occasion she shows great concern over Aristotle's health issue (24th September). Therefore, managers daily show and preserve their created public face to their audience (i.e. employees) and try not to allow their private face to be revealed (ibid, 1975; ibid, 2005). For example, Georgia's public face is that of the successful and powerful manager whereas her private one is that of a caring and sensitive person; so, according to the official discourse, she seems unaffected by Plato's resignation but unofficially she is really concerned and understanding. Cynically speaking, even when Georgia appears to show her private face, this is still part of her performance as the 'caring manager' has to appear caring especially in cases such as Aristotle's health issue; she may be the same person who demands things from the employees without caring about the consequences (as stated in a conversation between employees on the 24th September) but on this occasion she cannot risk committing a situational impropriety (ibid, 2005) which the social organisation will neither allow nor forgive (ibid, 2010).

Even though in an office the stage (i.e. formal) and the backstage (i.e. informal) are separated and even though informal attitude occurs only in the backstage (ibid, 1975), the off-stage roles (i.e. informal attitudes) are just another type of performance; the fact that all individuals try to present themselves in everyday life, renders the self a product, a performed character (Goffman, 1975). Society has a tendency to alienate those who deviate significantly from its rules (ibid, 1966, 2005, 2010) but the post-modern organisation has the tendency and the ability to eliminate the ones (e.g. Pfeffer, 1992; Willmott, 1993) who even slightly deviate from its ideals as pluralism seems to be neither appreciated nor tolerated (Willmott, 1993; Boje and Winsor, 1993). Hence, both managers and employees never go off stage but just choose to alter their performance to an extent that it does not jeopardise their role in the play; the current 'society of spectacle' (Gabriel, 2008: 314) is obliging individuals to behave like actors as even in the workplace they are always aware that they are being watched. Even though the post-modern organisation claims that employees have the ability and freedom to present themselves as they wish and still be accepted and appreciated in the workplace (Daft, 2000), in practice there is no choice but to accept certain roles which involve an amount of faking; the societal norm which dictates that a prerequisite for being a participant in a situation (e.g.

member of an organisation) is to show a certain degree of conformity to the relevant conventions and agreements that surround it in order to fit in (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) is intensified, glorified and materialised in the face of the post-modern organisation.

4.1.6 Role acceptance, conformity and fitting in

Viewing the self as a performed character and the workplace as a stage (ibid, 1975), the ZEUS managers and employees alike seem to have accepted their roles in the play which is daily performed at the office. Role acceptance involves continuous self work in order to sustain the desired values (ibid, 2010) and thus, it entails sacrifices from all the 'actors'. During the staging of this 'play', both the managers and the employees seem to behave in a manner that they show they 'fit in' this environment (ibid, 1966); in other words, they appear to have accepted their roles and to willingly conform. Occasionally an 'actor' may decide to leave the 'play' and abandon his/her role and he/she stops maintaining his/her face (ibid, 2005) due to personal reasons, tiredness or simply because he/she does not fit in (or a combination of these). For example, as Plato says to his colleague 'I will resign...Nothing happened but it is personal and after all, I am fed up with them' (13th August), he indicates that he does not want to be a part of this play anymore. If one accepts the view that people choose to leave organisations if they do not fit in and that only employees who fit in tend to stay in a place whereas the others choose to leave (Schneider, 1987), Plato can be seen as the one who simply did not fit in.

Nevertheless, the above explanation oversimplifies the situation as it conveniently brands Plato as the 'odd one out' and fails to see the more sinister face of the organisation. Post-modern organisation in theory claims to have humanised work when compared to the time when Taylorism prevailed (Daft, 2000) and employees are considered to be 'a valid human resource' in the corporate culture but in practice they are treated as a 'disposable commodity' in the labour market (Willmott, 1993: 531); for example, in ZEUS Socrates, Aristotle, Plato are contractors and do not have job security as their contracts may not be renewed or can be terminated without significant notice and without any compensation (whereas the managers are permanent staff where notice periods and compensations apply). In theory the employees are seen as creators of value in organisations (Daft, 2000) but in practice they are expected to accept the corporate values as the aim is homogenisation and elimination of pluralism (ibid; Boje and Winsor, 1993). Thus, the post-modern organisation appears to value neither the employee per se nor his/her opinion if

this exceeds the norm. The organisational norms dictate that an employee will stay in the workplace as long as he/she does not transgress its order which regulates the way in which individuals behave (Goffman, 1966); as long as the employee performs his/her role (ibid, 1975) and maintains his/her face and the face of others (e.g. the managers) (ibid, 2005) and creates 'a viable image of' him/herself 'in the eyes of others' (i.e. his managers) (ibid, 2010: 185), the organisation accepts him/her.

Behaving in a manner that deviates from organisational norms is considered inappropriate as the employee who decides to do so is seen as a person 'showing a wrong face' (ibid, 2005: 8) and hence, being a threat to the whole 'play'. As fitting in is seen as a prerequisite for participation in a situation (ibid, 1966), when an individual fails to behave him/herself according to the expectations, he/she is punished with alienation from the other participants (ibid); as persons who transgress the legal order are put in jails and as persons who transgress the social order are put in asylums (ibid), the post-modern organisation equally punishes the employees who commit situational improprieties (ibid) without the relevant corrective action (ibid, 2010). As such, in the post-modern organisation the individual has no choice; he/she has either to conform and perform his/her 'role' or be rejected by the system (Brown, 1998). However, sometimes employees choose to make a powerful exit before they get rejected. For example, Plato's resignation stands as a theatrical gesture where a secondary character becomes the protagonist of the day before announcing that he will leave the stage for ever. Plato's performance peaks on that day; he experiences strong feelings and makes a powerful impact on others (climax) and then relaxes (catharsis). It could be argued that Plato had already made his decision to leave but he really wanted to be justified; since theories of management claim that employees are important, when employees resign, they expect their managers to prove the employees' importance by going to them and trying to make them stay, as John did. So, when some employees suspect that they are not valued by their managers and are enraged by the managerial silence (e.g. when John did not reply to Plato's resignation email) as it stands as evidence that managers do not care about employees, their resignations often entail revenge as employees may feel that they punish their managers.

Hence, even though most employees create 'facades of conformity' in verbal or nonverbal situations due to the existence of organisational (e.g. reward system, one's position) and individual characteristics (Hewlin, 2003:633) to the point that their performance can be seen as theatrical (Goffman, 1975) and even though employees consciously constrain themselves and modify their behaviour so as to abide to organisational norms, there is no case of actually fitting in; the employees look like they fit in when in practice they do not.

The post-modern organisation, contrary to its claims, has got no tolerance for those who do not fit in and as such, employees are situationally obliged to accept their roles, conform and put on a performance of fitting in.

4.1.7 Summary

According to the findings of this study, the ZEUS office can be metaphorically seen as a stage not only because certain elements of organisational life resemble or at least remind one of theatre but most importantly because the metaphor has explanatory power to explain employee behaviour. The theatre metaphor enables one to see managers and employees as both actors and spectators in a mutually enacted play where they stage certain characters (ibid); as actors in a play, both managers and employees alike are aware that they are being watched and perform according to the relevant behavioural conventions (ibid, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) that exist in the workplace in order to live up to the expectations of the image (ibid) and the work identity they have created for themselves (Hewlin, 2003). Thus, the answer to the second research question is affirmative; the element of performance and the social norm which obliges participants to 'fit in' in a situation (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) does result in specific behaviour patterns. Nevertheless, even though employees seem to consciously accept their roles and conform, on no account can it be argued that they do fit in; due to the cultural expectations most employees have no other solution but force themselves to play certain roles and look as if they fit in in order to safeguard their position in the post-modern organisation. In short, applying Goffman's theatre metaphor and behavioural concepts in the organisational context enables one to see the organisation as part of society (or a micrography of society on its own) where appearances differ strikingly from reality; as such, this research suggests that appearances may conveniently preserve the face of the post-modern organisation as a caring and fair place but are deceptive.

4.2 Consistency and clarity of management communication

4.2.1 Introduction

According to the official discourse, society promotes the importance of communication and people value its importance (Cameron, 2000). Especially within organisations good communication (i.e. when the communicated message is understood, achieves its

purpose and involves feedback) is considered important for personal and organisational success (ibid) as it positively affects the employees (Jo and Shim, 2005; De Ridder, 2004; Gopinath and Becker, 2000; Mayfield and Mayfield, 2002). Communication plays a key role in organisational success (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004; Tourish and Hargie, 2009) and 'positive communication policies' (Tourish and Hargie, 2009: 25) contribute to a competitive advantage (ibid; Holtzhausen, 2002). However, technology which is a central element in recent organisations (Eriksson-Zetterquist, Lindberg and Styhre, 2009), has undoubtedly not only given a new meaning to the understanding of communication but also created a need for new studies as the actions, interactions and adaptations of the new media in the workplace have to be investigated (Heath, Luff and Knoblauch, 2004; O'Kane, Palmer and Hargie, 2007) with a multiple method approach (Boczkowski and Orlikowski, 2004; Rice and Gattiker, 2000) and through a perspective that is not so influenced by past values (Markus, 1994). Therefore, in ZEUS communication has to be investigated in terms of the information richness of the medium used, its frequency, its quantity, its quality, its consistency, its adequacy as well as the feedback it receives and the result it achieves.

4.2.2 Information richness and communication medium

Often in work contexts the word 'communication' is used to refer interchangeably to any form of communication: face-to-face, phone, email, letter et cetera (Walther, 2004). In the ZEUS office managers communicate with the employees mostly via emails and via telephone (simple call to a person / audio meeting with two or more participants) and less frequently in person due to the fact that they are not in the same office with the employees. For example, Georgia works in a nearby office (i.e. a five- or ten-minute-walk), Mary is further away (thirty-minute-drive) whereas John, Donald and Steven are so far away that they would require a flight or a long trip in order to reach the employees in person. When they are in the premises, they make a point and visit the employees. In detail, when John is in Aberdeen, he works in the same office with the employees (e.g. 25th July, 26th July, 17th August, 20th August, 21st August, 24th August, 3rd September) whereas both Georgia and Mary pay them visits occasionally (e.g. 16th July, 1st August, 15th August, 29th August, 30th August, 3rd September, 5th September and 17th July, 27th August, 29th August, 3rd September, 5th September respectively).

Moreover, due to the nature of the work, often even the employees are not in the same office (e.g. the three employees are often seen working in another office i.e. offshore) and

so, meetings (usually audio ones as video conference ones are rarely used) are not always viable. Therefore, as usually the information concerns more than one employee, emails prevail so that everyone gets the information and when required, they are followed-up by audio meetings or simple phone calls to one person (who in turn notifies the others). So, when it comes to formally addressing all the employees simultaneously, email is the main communication medium that ZEUS managers use in order to deliver information whereas the telephone has a supplementary or at least an informal role (i.e. used for less formal announcements and conversations). In detail, in ZEUS one sees emails where tasks are being assigned (e.g. on the 16th July John forwards Georgia's request to the employees, on the 7th and the 16th August John sends a request, on the 21st August Mary sends a request), where task-related updates are offered (e.g. on the 13th July John emails what should be done with a task whereas on the 30th and 31st August he advises them about a procedure), where company-related information is provided (e.g. on the 24th August and the 10th September Georgia announces staff changes), where complaints are expressed (e.g. on the 7th September John mentions to Steven about Donald's lack of action) and even where 'dialogues' are taking place (e.g. on the 13th July Mary replies via email to John's initial email to the employees, whereas on the 7th September John and Steven seem to be exchanging emails regarding a payroll problem).

At first sight, the working conditions in ZEUS seem to justify the managerial preference for email. Each form of communication is distinctively and considerably different (Walther, 2004) and can be used for different purposes; communication can be oral (face-to-face, telephone) or written (internal mail), synchronous (face-to-face, telephone) or asynchronous (internal mail) (Markus, 1994); as such, the email is written and asynchronous but enables 'multiple addressability' and a 'computer-searchable memory' (ibid: 507). However, at second sight, the fact that in ZEUS email prevails and face-to-face communication is limited raises questions as even though an email can be addressed to many people and contain essential information, it is often characterised by brevity and lacks the element of sender-receiver interaction. In detail, according to Weick (1985: 52), electronic communication creates problems of meaning as electronic data is inherently incomplete and so, it handicaps the receiver; as the data appears cryptic, the observer asks for more data and ends spending more time and effort processing it. For example, on the 7th September the time and effort devoted on a communication (when John emails Steven and they end up exchanging emails when in fact they could have easily achieved a better and faster result over the phone) is noticeable. It would have taken them only a minute to speak (whereas now it took them more time to type and to wait to receive each other's answer) and less effort not only due to the lack of typing but also due to the fact

that they would have avoided repeating information that was not required; John already knew that Donald was involved (but did not mention it to Steven at first), Steven replied to John what he already knew, then John replied that he knew this and that the problem persists but then no answer came from Steven as probably he did not have time to reply to another email and so, the 'conversation' via emails never ended and of course the problem persisted (as the employees discovered on the 10th September).

Therefore, the question arises whether there was a reason why John did not actually use the phone. Another example would be the 13th July when Mary's brief email ('We can'tWe have toEvery time.....this.....should be used') is not adequate to support the needs of the complex working procedures; on one hand it seems to simplistically negate the complexity of the working procedure (apart from the fact that it was contradictory to John's email) whereas on the other it never gave a chance to the employees to engage in a dialogue and ask their questions i.e. to ask under which circumstances this should occur. Hence, John's detailed email (which had already raised questions among the employees), accompanied by Mary's contradictory and brief reply, created a lengthy confusion among the employees and the situation was salvaged only when John decided to call the employees in order to clarify matters. In short, only when the managerial emails complicate matters to such an extent, the manager uses the phone to clarify matters.

In ZEUS communication is not strictly restricted to emails as communication via the telephone is also on the daily agenda; for example, John is often seen calling an employee and explaining him what needs to be done (e.g. 11th July, 12th July, 13th July, 16th July, 17th July, 27th July) and the employees are also seen calling John for clarifications (e.g. 17th July, 24th July). Nevertheless, some communication problems still exist even when dialogues take place over the phone; for example, after the audio meeting of the 14th August with John and after the phone call of the 16th August with Georgia, the employees end up rather confused as on both occasions their managers have failed to clarify matters. Hence, communication in person is superior to phone conversations as it allows the people involved to interact and any misunderstandings are immediately clarified; as Walther (2004: 388) states, face-to-face communication is 'multifaceted and multimodal' as non-verbal behaviour adds equally (or even more) to the meaning of language. Thus, the more interpersonal interaction a form of communication entails, the better it is as it creates fewer misunderstandings and also ensures that the people involved are in a position to engage in a dialogue; so, a phone call is better than an email and equally, a discussion in person is better than a phone call.

Admittedly, understanding of organisational communication and media is influenced by past conventions and pre-existing media (Rice and Gattiker, 2000) (e.g. use of phone over computers). As existing research tends to focus in rather narrow organisational contexts and as technological media tend to be examined in isolation, areas of the new media need further explanation; one ought not only to look at the broader context but also to interpret the communication processes and the potentials of technology through multiple media (Boczkowski and Orlikowski, 2004); a multi-method approach would yield more desirable results (Rice and Gattiker, 2000). As Markus (1994) suggests, new technologies (such as the email in its time) should be looked through perspectives which are not so influenced by past values as information richness theory is and she challenges the notion of the information richness theory that 'richer is better' (ibid: 502). For example, the heavy use of emails by senior managers leads one to believe either that the email is richer than recently perceived or that people use emails for reasons that do not have to do with richness; as such, the information richness scale as portrayed by the information richness theory (i.e. that oral media are richer than written and that synchronous ones are richer than asynchronous) is either inaccurate (i.e. the email needs to be re-evaluated and promoted to a richer medium) or irrelevant (i.e. behaviour of the users determine a medium's success) (ibid). In fact, as the managers in her study did not consider the email a rich medium and yet used it as a primary one, it can be said that richer is not necessarily better as communication is not determined by 'the media per se' but by 'the social processes' that surround them (ibid: 502); in this case, leaner media 'can be used for complex communication' as long as they are used appropriately (ibid: 502).

As Hargie, Dickson and Tourish (2004) suggest, the fact that people use a communication medium does not necessarily mean that they use it well or wisely. The email is a medium which can on one hand help managers when used appropriately (e.g. it reaches all employees at the same time) and on the other hand create problems (e.g. misunderstandings) when used incorrectly (e.g. 'flame' emails) (ibid). The polymorphic nature of the email improves certain aspects of working life (e.g. speed of communicated messages) whereas at the same time it can bring disruption to others (e.g. information overload) (O'Kane, Palmer and Hargie, 2007). Therefore, the email as a medium per se is not to be solely blamed for the communication problems in ZEUS; even if the email does not have the full potential of face-to-face communication as its role is to supplement and not to supplant face-to-face communication (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004), its flaws are not the ones who are responsible for the situation in ZEUS. Electronic communication is indeed useful in a fast-paced environment like ZEUS (as it can be addressed to many

people and can also serve as a formal written document) and has the potential not only to be rich enough (i.e. contain all the relevant information in order to be understood) but also to be 'dialogical' as long as the user uses it as such (e.g. email conversations where the manager awaits the employee's reply or instant messaging where the manager and the employee can converse in real time via written texts). Nevertheless, in ZEUS the way email is used as the main medium for communication by the managers is proved to be inferior to other means of communication (i.e. face-to-face, phone call); in the ZEUS case, email not only is not rich enough (i.e. lacks meaning) but also does not allow dialogue; in other words, it seems as if the managers use the email in such a way that they can take full advantage of its weaknesses (i.e. avoid dialogue).

In detail, even though post-modern organisation theory claims that communication flows and the manager should be open to dialogue (e.g. Daft, 2000), in practice managers are not open to discussion (Faÿ, 2008). In ZEUS managers are seen offering only the barely essential information (or sometimes not even the essential), avoiding direct contact (e.g. email over phone call and phone call over face-to-face conversation) with the employees if possible and preferring one-way communication; for example, when Georgia on the 16th July emails John ('Can you please do.....and have it ready by the end of the week. If not, I want to know what the problem is.'). the brevity and the way of writing does not enable the receiver to understand whether she is angry or demanding or simply in a hurry; nevertheless, in her view, her one-way communication is sufficient and appropriate to communicate what she wants. From a managerial perspective, the technical emails that are being sent seem adequate and successful as long as they achieve their purpose (e.g. when on the 16th July, the 7th August, the 16th August and the 31st August John emails the employees, the directions seem fine to them) and are not contradictory (e.g. when on the 30th August John emails the employees, he confuses them as he contradicts the procedures). On the contrary, from an employee perspective, indirect one-way communication is far from ideal; short emails, as opposed to dialogue (face-to-face or phone), ensure that employees just receive instructions without having any opportunity to give feedback or question their managers.

Interestingly enough, irrespective of the advantages and disadvantages of email, the fact that the behaviour of the people (i.e. managers) and the way they use the communication media seems to determine the success/failure of the communication media (Markus, 1994; Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004; O'Kane, Palmer and Hargie, 2007) is supported by the findings; in ZEUS the communication problem does not stem from the use of the wrong media (i.e. email instead of face-to-face) per se or the possible misunderstanding

of the potentials of new media (since problems resulting from face-to-face communication occur as well). An example that shows that the problem does not lie in the medium itself is the fact that when on the 20th August John speaks in person with the employees, even John admits that the matter needs further clarification from management. Therefore, it could be said that in ZEUS the biggest problems occur not due to the lack of informational richness and clarity of the communication media used but mostly due to the behaviour of the managers. Firstly, they often send messages which due to their contradictory content are inherently problematic; even though the language of the managerial message is clear, the actual content of the message is problematic and inappropriate and as such, the conversational framework collapses (Mengis and Eppler, 2008). Secondly, in ZEUS the email is used in such a way so as it disempowers the receiver; managers want to avoid dialogue and email has come as a solution to their problem (e.g. John as a manager admits the contradictory context of the message and hence, exposes his failings but surely this would not have happened if he could have avoided the relevant dialogue with the employees in the first place); even though the email can be rich and synchronous, they manage to make it poor and asynchronous so as to avoid getting employee feedback; even though two-way communication and the importance of dialogue are glorified in the post-modern organisation theory, under-communication and mis-communication exist in practice.

4.2.3 Under-communication and mis-communication

Good communication from management (i.e. communication that is understood, achieves its purpose and involves feedback) not only enhances employee trust to management (Holtzhausen, 2002; Jo and Shim, 2005; De Ridder, 2004; Gopinath and Becker, 2000) but also enhances employee commitment (Gopinath and Becker, 2000; Mayfield and Mayfield, 2002; De Ridder, 2004), which in turn results in improved organisational performance (Mayfield and Mayfield, 2002; Marshall and Heffes, 2006). Therefore, within organisations good communication is considered important for organisational success (Cameron, 2000; Holtzhausen, 2002; Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004; Tourish and Hargie, 2009). In fact, post-modern organisation theory claims that information flows freely and that managers and employees communicate effectively in a two-way communication process where the managers not only speak to the employees but also expect their valuable feedback (Daft, 2000). Nevertheless, in reality there is evidence that managers are neither communicating effectively with the employees (Robson and Tourish, 2005) nor open to discussion with them (Faÿ, 2008).

In the ZEUS office it was observed that communication often created more problems than it solved as practices appeared to be inconsistent with employee needs or even the code of good practice (Robson and Tourish, 2005). In detail, downward communication (i.e. from management to employees) was flawed as employees often ended up confused after their managers spoke to them. For example, on the 13th July John's email confuses the employees as it seems to be contradicting existing work procedures ('But how can this happen when.....What would we do if this.....?') and then, to make matters worse, Mary challenges John's email by saying that this should not be done; so, the employees become confused as they wonder not only how John's request can be materialised but also whether they should follow John's (who is their line manager) or Mary's advice. Similarly, on the 14th August during the audio meeting John advises the employees of something which contradicts the existing practice, on the 16th August a phone call to Georgia does not prove enough to clarify a situation, on the 20th August John seems unable to clarify matters, on the 30th August John's advice contradicts the existing practice. In short, it seems that not only the work-related advice is contradictory, as theory differs from practice, but also that managers often add to that confusion by contradicting each other or simply by being unable to give clear advice. As such, contrary to the claims of the post-modern organisation theory, the notion of the manager who communicates effectively (Daft, 2000) is not evident.

In ZEUS employees often end up confused after management communication. The frequency, the quantity and the quality of the communicated messages are not usually problematic; managers and employees interact daily, the quantity of information they get is usually satisfactory (e.g. John's emails contain all the necessary technical elements) and also the quality of information they usually get is acceptable as the emails, even when they are brief, are clear and precise (e.g. Mary's email on the 13th July states clearly what can and what cannot be done). However, the messages appear to be inconsistent. As Hoogervorst, Flier and Koopman (2004) point out, there should be consistency between implicit and explicit communication; 'management practices' should be 'mutually supportive' so as to emit consistent messages as inconsistency in communication can result in low commitment or cynicism (ibid: 301). Therefore, since work procedures and work practices in ZEUS are neither mutually supportive nor clear, communication can be considered problematic as the managers offer to the employees 'senseless communications' which 'deny the recipient any useful information' (Gephart, 1996: 40). It appears as if the charismatic manager with the many abilities (Daft, 2000) which exists in the post-modern organisation is nowhere to be seen.

Additionally, apart from the inconsistency of the communicated messages, it is also observed that sometimes communication is not adequate as under-communication or at least different levels of communication exist within ZEUS. In detail, the incident that occurred on the 7th August suggests that the company failed to announce the new policy to the employees; nevertheless, the fact that an employee from another department was aware of the change could suggest that some employees ended up receiving more information than others and gives the idea that contrary to the claim that information flows and is available to all (Daft, 2000), the employees actually experienced a situation where they were treated as outsiders whereas another employee was treated as an insider. The fact that the employees did not seem overtly upset about this incident could even suggest that this did not come as a surprise to them. According to the existing claims of the post-modern organisation theory, it would be expected that communication about cost-cutting ought at least to be delivered directly to the employees (and not accidentally by word of mouth) especially since it affects them greatly. In search for a possible explanation it could be said that on one hand, the managers might have forgotten or neglected to inform the employees whereas on the other, the managers decided to do so for a reason; in the first case, managers are either not communicating effectively or showing an uncaring attitude towards the employees, both of which explanations are in contrast with the post-modern organisation theory image of the hard-working, charismatic and caring manager (ibid); in the second case, managers ensure that information is not democratically distributed (i.e. to all) as they want to avoid criticism, confrontation or even simple feedback, which again is in contrast with the post-modern organisation theory claims that the information is accessible to all and that managers expect and encourage employee feedback (ibid). In fact, the second explanation seems more plausible when one considers the managerial rationality that 'Homo managerialis' (Faÿ, 2008: 839) diligently follows in his/her attempt to control everything in the workplace (Gabriel, 1999; Hoyle and Wallace, 2008).

Post-modern organisation theory describes the manager as a capable individual whose job is to communicate effectively (e.g. send clear messages) and ensure that all the communication channels are open (i.e. allow feedback) (Daft, 2000); nevertheless, the problem of the inconsistent messages (i.e. gap between what is said and reality) as well as the incident where vital information was not passed to the employees in ZEUS suggests that managers not only are incapable to communicate clearly (i.e. send consistent messages) but also purposefully cut the communication channels (i.e. do not allow situations where feedback would occur) so as to ensure that they do not face any questioning about their actions. As a result, the ZEUS managers can be seen not only

mis-communicating (e.g. inconsistent emails) but also under-communicating (e.g. intentionally hide vital information from the employees).

Even though the heavy workload can be seen as the reason behind the communication problems (e.g. they have neither time nor energy to submit consistent messages and engage in employee feedback sessions), simply the fact that managers do not devote enough time to create systems of effective communication or the fact that they become disassociated with internal communication (Robson and Tourish, 2005) is a problem in itself as the idea of the ineffective or disassociated manager cannot be supported by the existing theoretical frame that surrounds the post-modern organisation; communication is part of a manager's job (Daft, 2000) and as such, managers who do not succeed in this (due to the fact they are incapacitated by their workload, their inability or a combination of factors) do not fulfil the criteria that the post-modern organisation theory has set. In short, the employees simply expect what has in a way been promised to them by the post-modern organisation theory; they expect to be well-informed, valued, empowered and encouraged to participate (Daft, 2000). In practice, they discover that their managers are incapable of communicating effectively and do not engage in 'open and honest two-way communication' (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004: 374) with them; information does not flow easily, human value turns out to be a myth as individuals become powerless and unable to control the system logic (Gephart, 1996) and 'critical upward communication' is usually absent (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 711).

4.2.4 Critical upward communication

According to recent management theory, employees are believed to be empowered and treated with respect; they are not only seen as hard-working individuals who create value for the organisation but also as individuals who need to achieve self-fulfilment; therefore, managers not only aim to develop information networks so that the information flows but also to build relationships with their employees; the employees are not only encouraged to take part in the decision-making process but also expected to offer critical feedback to their managers (e.g. Daft, 2000). However, in ZEUS even though the employees were observed communicating with their managers and often voicing their opinion, they were not seen actually taking any decisions themselves or even offering often any critical suggestions to their managers.

In ZEUS the managers who interact most often with the employees (John, Georgia, Mary are in frequent contact with them due to their area of responsibility) seem friendly towards

the employees when it comes to daily interaction and approachable in work-related matters. For example, Georgia is seen happily greeting employees (e.g. 15th August, 29th August, 3rd September, 5th September), showing understanding to their personal problems (e.g. on the 15th August regarding Plato's resignation, on the 24th September regarding Aristotle's health issue), being friendly with them (e.g. on the 3rd September bringing sweets from the meeting to them) and discussing with them about work matters (e.g. 16th August phone call, 3rd September in-person discussion, 10th September phone call). Equally, Mary is seen greeting the employees, being friendly with them, being understanding to their problems and discussing work but also non-work matters with them (e.g. 17th July, 27th August, 29th August, 3rd September, 5th September). Additionally, John is also friendly towards the employees (e.g. when he chats with the employees about non-work-related matters) and as a line manager (he is responsible for the operations i.e. the work of the employees) he not only arranges to communicate frequently with the employees regarding work (e.g. he calls them very often) but also asks their opinion about things. For example on the 17th July he asks the employees whether they agree about what should be done regarding a technical matter ('Then, I believe we should.....Don't you think so?'). Similarly he asks their opinion on several work-related occasions (e.g. 31st July, 14th August, 17th August, 20th August).

The employees seem to feel comfortable when talking to John, Mary and Georgia whether about work or non-work related matters. As John is their line manager, most of the interaction occurs between him and the employees; the employees have friendly chats with John and they also do not hesitate to ask him when they have questions (e.g. 16th July, 17th July, 26th July, 4th September). During their conversations, the employees seem to feel free to express their opinion about technical matters not only when he asks them but also when they feel it is appropriate to do so (e.g. 25th July, 17th August, 20th August). Nevertheless, when it comes to the dissatisfaction of the employees due to the fact that they are given contradictory work instructions, the employees are seen getting confused but not voicing their dissatisfaction in front of John. For example, on the 13th July, the employees make comments to each other after both John's and Mary's email but they never say anything to John even when he calls Socrates to clarify the situation; Socrates simply asks a question so at least they know what to do but does not complain to John about anything. On the 7th August the employees do not complain to John about the fact that they had not been informed about the company's change of policy. On the 16th August, the employees discuss between them about the absurdity of the situation but they do not notify John about it. On the 20th August, the employees equally discuss about the same problem and only Socrates in an almost joking way makes John aware of the

situation ('I think this is getting very complex. How can...?!). When the pay problem persists due to Donald's lack of action and when the employees feel that he may even be avoiding them, Socrates notifies John about the problem (7th September) but does not formally complain.

In short, the employees are seen finding the situation complex, 'grey' (i.e. opaque) or absurd but never offering any critical feedback to their line manager. When alone, the employees discuss about the fact that their managers give them conflicting orders; when in front of John, the employees either do not give feedback at all (Plato, Aristotle) or simply make him aware of the problematic situation (Socrates). John seems to be getting some feedback from Socrates (when compared with the silence of Plato and Aristotle) but this feedback does not seem to be very critical. Hence, the question arises regarding why a situation like this occurs in a post-modern organisation and especially amidst a seemingly friendly organisational environment like that of ZEUS.

The absence of 'critical upward communication' (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 711) could be due to the fact that the employees do not want to risk being seen in an unfavourable light by their managers (e.g. facing the wrath of Georgia who 'always gets what she wants' and who can have a 'sharp' behaviour as both Socrates and Aristotle know) especially since they are not permanent staff but contractors whose contracts get extended after managerial decision. After all, a 'supportive voice' is a low risk, high reward option whereas a 'dissentive voice' (ibid: 713) is a high risk, low reward option (which can even be penalised); as such, support tends to have a stronger flow than dissent; hence, upward dissent is either mildly expressed or completely silenced (ibid). As a result, according to Tourish and Robson (ibid), this seems to create a vicious circle; as employees try to maintain the status quo, often managers tend to be unaware of the fact either that 'critical upward communication' is minimal or that they create communication barriers (ibid: 711); the absence of 'critical upward communication' creates problems as the lack of realistic feedback leads managers to an unrealistic, distorted view of their organisation (ibid); senior managers due to the absence of free time or due to the blindness by 'the absence of adequate upward communication' are under-communicating (Robson and Tourish, 2005: 220). Therefore, this gives rise to an image of the manager that post-modern organisation theory cannot harbour; contrary to its claims about the competent, powerful and communicative manager (Daft, 2000), one is faced with the image of the deluded manager who is oblivious to what is happening around him/her unless the employees make him/her aware of his/her surroundings.

Nevertheless, another explanation seems more plausible. Based on the concept that it would be highly unlikely that all the ZEUS managers are totally unaware of the communication problems, a more sinister picture of the manager arises; the manager who consciously avoids receiving critical feedback from the employees. As such, the employees feel that they would simply be wasting their time talking to someone who actually does not want to listen. The employees know that they are powerless when it comes to taking decisions as John (with Georgia holding the reins at the background) takes command; the employees do not seem to be given the chance to take an actual part in the process, let alone make their own decisions (e.g. there is no instance where John says to the employees something along the lines 'Do what you think is best' when it comes to work-related matters). Therefore, the employees feel that any attempt to give critical feedback would be not only risky for their job but also futile.

This explanation can be supported by Faÿ's (2008) presentation of organisations as places where derision causes a silent suffering; on one hand managers seem to encourage discussion whereas on the other they contradict themselves and restrict subjectivity and even speech (ibid). John as a 'Homo managerialis' (ibid: 839) unconsciously lies; he communicates and supports openness but at the same time he follows a managerial rationality where he expects employees to follow his and Georgia's orders. Managers in their attempt to control everything (Gabriel, 1999; Hoyle and Wallace, 2008) treat employees as mere objects and the employees realising this, suffer (Faÿ, 2008). 'Homo managerialis' assures people that he/she is open to discussion but in fact he/she does not want to be questioned, let alone opposed and so, employees in turn remain silent (ibid). This lack of argumentation (i.e. employees not being able to give feedback to their managers) de-skills and dis-empowers employees as it denies them the human ability of assessing a situation and responding or acting accordingly (Cameron, 2000); as the ability to talk empowers the agent only when it entails judgement, choice, identity and freedom (ibid), it follows that in organisations actual communication does not occur as the organisational culture does neither support it nor encourage it. Even though the post-modern organisation theory claims that the employees are involved in decisions and give their feedback to their managers as an essential part of the communication processes (Daft, 2000), in practice the employees are neither involved in the decision-making process nor given any chance to offer critical feedback to their managers as managers do not want to be challenged.

4.2.5 Summary

According to the findings of this study, ZEUS is experiencing communication problems. Even though the managers communicate with the employees on a daily basis via different media and even though the employees seem to comfortably interact with their managers, the employees end up confused and dissatisfied. This occurs because even though downward communication is frequent, sufficient in quantity and quality, the managerial messages are inconsistent with the work practices as they create a gap between what is said and reality. Thus, in ZEUS the communication problem does not stem from the use of the wrong media or simply the lack of information richness of the email; after all, the biggest problems in ZEUS occur not due to the lack of informational richness and clarity of the communication media used but mostly due to the inappropriate use (intentional or unintentional) of these media (Markus, 1994; Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004; O'Kane, Palmer and Hargie, 2007); for example, the contradictory content of the communicated message which in turn makes the conversation collapse (Mengis and Eppler, 2008). Amidst these problems the managers do not engage in 'open and honest two-way communication' with the employees (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004: 374) and the employees do not appear to offer any 'critical upward communication' (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 711) to their managers and seem to prefer to discuss the matter only between themselves. Employees do not challenge their managers not only because being supportive to one's manager is a safer option (ibid) but also because they know their managers are not interested in their opinion. Hence, revisiting the third research question, it could be said that managerial styles which are characterised by inconsistent messages and/or inappropriate use of communication media inhibit employee critical feedback.

The official discourse indicates that people appreciate the value of communication and make a conscious effort to communicate with each other. Nevertheless, even though the advantages of communication are praised in literature and even though the post-modern organisation theory claims that communication occurs, in practice communication is problematic and managers do not give the chance to the employees to offer any critical feedback. Contrary to the claims of the post-modern organisation theory about the abundant flow of information and the empowered employee who is part of the decision-making process (Daft, 2000), information does not flow and employees are not even asked about their opinion; although it is their job to do so, managers seem unable to communicate effectively and they often emit contradictory messages and appear to create working conditions which do not encourage employee feedback (Faÿ, 2008).

Therefore, this research suggests that as meaningful communication perishes along with the myth of human value (Gephart, 1996), the claims of the post-modern organisation theory along with the rather simplistic assumptions of some of the existing literature on communication (e.g. that organisations are 'communication culture[s]' (Cameron, 2000: viii) need to be re-evaluated and re-defined in the search for a more critical understanding of communication; as most emphasis is put on downward communication and its effectiveness in terms of the positive impacts it can have on the employees and on organisational success (e.g. performance, trust, efficiency), the dynamics of communication are underestimated or oversimplified. However, neglecting certain parameters of communication (e.g. feedback) or oversimplifying its complex nature (i.e. emphasising only certain elements) creates a distorted reality since it fails to see the intrinsic value and the actual dimensions of communication which include a broad spectrum of skilled behaviours (which extend far beyond mere talk and even include helping others for its intrinsic and not its instrumental value) (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004). In short, communication not only has many dimensions which cannot be overlooked (*ibid*) but also is a complex process which is related to power. All aspects of behaviour in the workplace are influenced by the existence of certain rules, conventions and agreements (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) which shape organisational psychology and interpersonal relations.

4.3 Organisational psychology and interpersonal relations

4.3.1 Introduction

Organisations are sets of ongoing human relationships where people co-operate to achieve tasks (Watson, 1994). Nevertheless, as individuals differ not only in their job status but also in the way they deal with things, misunderstandings and conflicts are likely to occur (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000). In fact, conflict and co-operation can be seen as the two sides of the same coin as each of them has to be evaluated according to the circumstances where it occurs (Watson, 1995). Human behaviour is a purposeful and meaningful action (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000) which should be seen as a constant and complex interaction between personal and situational characteristics (Terborg, 1981). Hence, after having observed the behaviour of individuals within ZEUS, one can understand certain things not only about the wider organisational setting of the company but also about the relationship that is formed between managers and employees as well as the meaning and the purpose of their actions.

4.3.2 Management-employee relations

Understanding people and their relations is difficult not only because this process involves cultural understanding (Geertz, 1973) but also because human behaviour can entail disguising or faking one's emotions (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000), controlling one's facial behaviour (Zaalberg, Manstead and Fischer, 2004), masking one's true self (Hewlin, 2003) and generally presenting one's self in a certain way in front of others in order to show appropriate conduct in a situation (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010). In ZEUS, where the observer was 'concerned with human meanings and interactions viewed from the insiders' perspective' (Jorgensen, 1989: 13), the findings suggest that even though the managers and the employees seemed to have rather friendly relations, the employee feelings were not that positive.

In detail, the managers and the employees are seen interacting in a friendly way or even discussing non-work related matters on several occasions. For example, the employees and the managers (John and Mary) are seen engaging often in non-work related chats, laughing and seemingly having a nice time (e.g. 17th July, 25th July, 20th August, 21st August, 27th August, 29th August, 5th September). In fact, John offers to have lunch with the employees (25th July, 21st August) and he often brings food/sweets for the employees (21st August, 26th August). Additionally, apart from the cheerful greetings, the discussions, the jokes and the relaxed moments that the employees and the managers share, one also sees more intimate comments being exchanged between them. For example, on the 17th August and the 28th August John and Plato discuss their disappointment in Donald's lack of action regarding Plato's resignation whereas Mary on the 27th August confesses to Plato that 'Everything seems to go wrong lately' in the company. Even though Georgia does not interact so much with the employees as John and Mary do, she cheerfully greets them (e.g. 3rd September, 5th September) when she enters the room and once she (together with John) brought sweets for them (3rd September).

Nevertheless, even though the managers happily greet and talk to the employees about work matters without creating barriers (John, Mary, Georgia), chat and interact with them about non-work matters and seem to entrust them their feelings about certain work-related problems (John, Mary) and even though the employees seem to be enjoying and reciprocating these friendly moments, the employees seem to be dissatisfied with their managers. When their managers are not present, the employees are expressing negative comments about the company's policy (e.g. 7th August discussion about the cost-cutting policy, 30th August discussion regarding the employees who left due to way the company

treated them, Donald's overall behaviour) and their managers in general; they are being critical/concerned/disapproving of the fact that their managers give them conflicting orders (e.g. 13th July, 14th August, 20th August). Their negative feelings seem to stem not from their managers' personal characteristics per se but from the inability of the managers (according to what the employees say) to decide what needs to be done. Moreover, when it comes to Georgia, the employees feel that she can be a bit 'sharp' as both Aristotle and Socrates are aware of (24th September, 26th September) and that she likes to 'get what she wants' (16th July) but still they recognise the fact that she is not a person who would ignore an employee by pretending she did not see him and avoid speaking to him (13th August, 15th August).

Thus, when interacting with their managers, the employees seem to appreciate the company of their managers. However, when they are alone, they calmly discuss between them the problems of the company and they do not seem overly happy with the managerial actions (or lack of actions of their managers). Whereas publicly (i.e. in front of their managers) they seem to accept managerial decisions, privately (i.e. when their managers are not in front) they engage in critical discussions with their colleagues. In fact, employees hide their feelings like actors who are on-stage (Goffman, 1975) as they create representations which portray them as embracing organisational values due to the existence of organisational (e.g. reward system, one's position) and individual characteristics (Hewlin, 2003). Therefore, it could be argued that the employees choose to disguise the outward display of their feelings (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000); as people know which behaviour is appropriate each time, they are controlling it simply in order not to hurt the feelings of others or most probably for personal gain (Zaalberg, Manstead and Fischer, 2004).

This clash between reality and appearance challenges the post-modern organisation and its claims as it appears to be that the gap between managers and employees is still wide and that the 'cultures of fun' (Fleming, 2005b: 289) simply do not improve manager and employee relations; the fun culture is merely an 'espoused culture' which the managers desire whereas the 'culture-in-practice' (Brown, 1998: 31) is the actual culture which is surely not a culture of fun. Nevertheless, even though inconsistent with its claims about bringing the employees and managers closer at work and creating a pleasurable work environment (Daft, 2000), the post-modern organisation has succeeded in bringing managers and employees closer to each other from another perspective; the employees and the managers alike daily perform their characters (Goffman, 1975) and maintain their face according to the image that the post-modern organisation has created for them (ibid,

2005); based on the 'social order' (ibid, 1966: 8; ibid, 2010: ixx) of the organisation, they adhere to the rules and norms that define appropriate behaviour in the workplace (ibid, 1966, 2010); they constrain themselves and sustain the desired values (ibid, 2010) as acting inappropriately is not tolerated and fitting in is required (ibid, 1966).

4.3.3 Public versus private face of managers

According to Goffman (1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010), all individuals try to present themselves in everyday life; they give a 'performance' in an attempt 'to influence in any way any of the other participants' (Goffman, 1975: 26) who are their 'audience', their 'observers', their 'co-participants' (ibid: 27). Therefore, apart from the 'facades of conformity' (Hewlin, 2003: 633) which the employees consciously create in order to mask themselves, managers have the ability to equally construct certain identities for themselves. Characters staged in theatres differ from characters performed by someone in everyday life as life even though containing certain elements of theatricality is not theatre; nevertheless, the techniques of staging false figures are common in theatre and in everyday social situations (Goffman, 1975) and thus, the theatre metaphor enhances understanding when it comes to organisational behaviour analysis as metaphors create 'an alternative image of what is taken for granted' (Czarniawska, 1997: 127).

As in a play, managers perform in order to portray the characters they have created for themselves (Goffman, 1975); they daily preserve their created public face to their audience (i.e. employees) and avoid revealing their private face (ibid) as showing the wrong face in a situation causes not only inconvenience but also threatens their 'reputation as a participant' (ibid, 2005: 8). As post-modern organisation theory presents managers as individuals who have many responsibilities, supervise many people, have a great influence in the organisation and its performance and yet deeply care for the employees (e.g. Daft, 2000), managers are expected to 'live up to' (Goffman, 2005: 9) this image; in order to accommodate the image of a person who acts rationally and cares for material output with the image of a person who acts emotionally and puts people first, on a daily basis managers adhere to their powerful face in public and to their caring one in private. For example, the managers are seen preserving the concept of power (as they instruct employees on what needs to be done after they make the decisions) but at the same time John, Mary and Georgia are often seen being caring towards the employees i.e. greeting them and asking how they are, chatting with them and offering food to them (17th July, 25th July, 20th August, 21st August, 26th August, 27th August, 29th August, 3rd

September, 5th September). John is even trying to help his employees (e.g. on the 25th July negotiating Plato's offshore trip when Plato did not want to go, on the 7th September trying to solve the employees payment problem by emailing Steven). The best examples of management care could be considered the ones that relate to Plato's resignation as well as to Aristotle's health problem. In detail, on the 13th August John asks if the company could do something in order that Plato stays and also offered to speak to management about Plato's wish to leave earlier than his contract notice period stated even though John had an interest in keeping Plato the whole month as the operations were short-staffed at that moment. Similarly, both Georgia and Mary show understanding to Plato and seem to be sorry that he is leaving (15th August and 27th August respectively). Equally, on the 24th September, Georgia assures Aristotle's that his health is the most important and he should not worry about work.

It could be argued that managers actually care about their employees as compassion is a human characteristic but this cannot easily accommodate Georgia's 'sharp' behaviour which is a fact (according to the discussions which occur between employees on the 24th and the 26th September). This 'sharpness' could have been the revelation of Georgia's actual private face whereas her 'caring face' could have been just another public performance as was her 'powerful manager face'. However, Georgia's 'sharper' behaviour or even Donald's seemingly uncaring attitude (which do not represent the rest of the managers as John or Mary are never seen being 'sharp' or uncaring) could be attributed to the absence of 'critical upward communication' as the lack of realistic feedback leads managers to an unrealistic, distorted view of their organisation (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 711) or could be seen as a bad moment. Under this hypothesis, Georgia's public face is that of the successful and powerful yet deluded (i.e. who is unaware of her surroundings) or emotional (i.e. unable to control herself) manager whereas her private one is that of a caring and sensitive person; in this case, Georgia (like Mary and John) could be actually showing her private face to Plato and Aristotle; according to the official discourse, she seems unaffected by Plato's resignation but unofficially she is really concerned and understanding but she does not allow the other employees (Socrates, Aristotle) to see her real face; maybe because she does not want to encourage disloyalty (i.e. by showing that she is easily affected by emotion), maybe because she does not want to stop her performance.

Nevertheless, even when managers appear to show their real/private face, this could still be part of their performance. Given the fact that organisations and situations occurring in them expect participants to abide by their rules and norms and 'fit in' (Goffman, 1966: 11)

and the fact that the individuals who act inappropriately in a situation are in most circumstances not tolerated (ibid, 1966, 2010), the managers never leave the 'stage' but merely change roles which are considered acceptable by the organisational framework. Managers have to appear caring about the wellbeing and health of employees otherwise they risk looking cruel which not only contrasts the post-modern organisation's ideals but also entails the risk of facing legal charges. Cynically speaking, it could also be said that managers actually care about the health of their human resources in materialistic terms as unhealthy employees are unproductive whereas healthy employees are productive.

As the official post-modern organisation discourse is that a good manager has to understand how the organisational procedures affect his/her employees and has to be sensitive to the feelings of his/her employees (e.g. Daft, 2000; Holt, 2006), managers sustain a 'viable image' of themselves 'in the eyes of others' (Goffman, 2010: 185) by actively portraying the desired values (ibid). For example, assuming managers really care for the employees (hypothesis 1), the managers are seen stopping their dramatic play (i.e. the public face of the powerful manager) and showing their real character to the employees (i.e. their caring side). Assuming managers only pretend to care for the employees (hypothesis 2), the managers are never seen stopping their performance but simply engaging in a second public role (i.e. caring) as they either fear the legal consequences or even the decline of their performance. Assuming managers care for the employees but only due to reasons related to organisation performance (hypothesis 3), managers are seen showing their private face but in a distorted way as they hide the real reason behind their care. In hypothesis 1, the managers as caring individuals leave aside their official roles and go 'off-stage'; in hypothesis 2, the managers always perform their role and keep staging the characters they have created for themselves (which does not necessarily contradict their feelings); in hypothesis 3, the managers show their care but hide their motives.

Even though real life differs from theatre, all the above cases suggest the existence of certain elements of performance and the distinction between the public and the private (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010). However, due to the high standards that the post-modern organisation theory has set for managers (e.g. in Daft, 2000 the charismatic, all-knowing, ideally-behaving manager is vividly portrayed), there is reason to believe that hypothesis 2 is more plausible; hypothesis 1 entails accepting that individuals act without caring about social conventions and their consequences whereas hypothesis 3 can be easily accommodated as part of hypothesis 2 (i.e. they pretend to care). Due to the fact that behaviour in public is always affected by the existence of certain rules and

conventions (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010), there is no reason to believe that under normal situations (e.g. at work) individuals stop maintaining face, let alone do something that may harm their self-image (ibid, 2005); participants in a situation are always being observed and judged and as such, their behaviour always involves an element of theatricality which would not exist in private (e.g. when the individual is at his/her home and alone) (ibid, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010); when individuals are in public, they act within certain limits and as such, managers perform roles which mask their selves by creating representations (i.e. the powerful manager role) and portray them as embracing organisational values (Hewlin, 2003). In short, managers have to act in a certain way (e.g. the powerful yet caring manager) in order to live up to the rather unrealistic expectations that the post-modern organisation theory has created for them and therefore, theatricality is an integral part of managerial behaviour.

4.3.4 Managerial care

Unlike the modern organisation in the industrial era, the post-modern organisation claims to focus on the employee's value (e.g. McGregor's theory supports that employees should be viewed from a positive perspective and not as inherently reluctant to work) and his/her needs (e.g. Maslow's hierarchy of needs states that individuals have to first satisfy their basic needs in order to achieve self fulfilment) and claims to humanise work (Daft, 2000). Post-modern management theory reflects the fact that managers not only appreciate the value of the employees in the workplace but also care for their general wellbeing (ibid). In ZEUS it is evident that practice is in alignment with this theory as the managers seem to care for the wellbeing of the workers. For example, John, Georgia and Mary appear to care about Plato's feelings after his resignation (13th, 15th and 27th August respectively), Georgia seems to care for Aristotle's health (24th September), John tries to help Plato when he does not want to do a task (25th July) and generally all the three managers appear friendly and caring towards the employees.

However, some incidents where some managers showed lack of care towards the employees occurred; Georgia has been seen to demand things from the employees even when this has a negative impact on their private life (24th and 26th September) and also, Donald has been seen ignoring or at least not showing care towards the employees (e.g. during Plato's resignation or during the pay problem of the 7th September). Under these instances, managers seemed impersonal and appeared not to care about employees' feelings but only about work output and profit maximisation. This behaviour sharply

contrasted the discourse which says that a good manager has to understand how the organisational procedures are related to the life stories of his/her employees and has to be sensitive to the feelings of his/her employees (Holt, 2006). Therefore, in these cases both Donald and Georgia either are simply bad managers or they under-communicate (i.e. Donald's case) due to the absence of free time and mis-communicate (i.e. Georgia's case) due to the blindness by 'the absence of adequate upward communication' (Robson and Tourish, 2005: 220). Each one of the three possibilities (i.e. they are bad managers, they do not have time to communicate, they emit the wrong messages as the lack of employee feedback makes them unrealistic) lead to the same conclusion: that the managers are not as the post-modern organisation theory describes (e.g. Daft, 2000).

In detail, even though most of the ZEUS managers on most occasions show their care towards the employees, the cases of Georgia and Donald are thought-provoking. As managers are supposed to be caring, capable, effective, efficient and good communicators (ibid), the post-modern organisation appears to have no place for the managers who do not meet these criteria; the uncaring, the over-worked or the oblivious of what is going on around him/her manager destroy the image of the post-modern organisation. The uncaring manager simply does not fit in the humane frame of the post-modern organisation; the over-worked manager brings up the idea of the post-modern organisation either as a place where the managers are incapable of completing their tasks or as a place where all individuals (i.e. employees and managers alike) are being exploited to work at an unrelenting pace; the deluded manager who is unaware of what is happening around him/her brings up the image that the post-modern organisation is guided by individuals who are not in touch with reality. Nevertheless, irrespective of the reason behind Georgia's and Donald's uncaring attitude (i.e. whether they simply do not care, they do not have time to show their care, or they are not aware that they are being uncaring), the fact is that the managerial care towards the employees which the post-modern organisation almost boasts about in the literature is occasionally (i.e. in the case of Georgia) or totally (i.e. in the case of Donald) absent. Since a caring attitude is what the post-modern organisation theory requires, the uncaring managers have acted inappropriately as they failed to preserve the image of the post-modern organisation by performing the role and maintaining the face that was required (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010). As far as the caring cases are concerned (i.e. when managers show care towards the employees), they have succeeded in the eyes of the post-modern organisation; however, whether this performance convinced the employees is debatable as the fact that these managers succeeded in showing their care does not necessarily mean that they actually care.

Managerial care and managerial neglect (i.e. absence of care) are mutually exclusive as they cannot coexist. Nevertheless, even if the ZEUS managers are seen as caring/appearing to care for the employees, the element of neglect or even coercion cannot surely be excluded. For example, the caring Georgia (15th August, 24th September) paradoxically coexists with the coercive one who does not care for the employees' private life (24th September) or who makes sure that employees are aware of the fact that she always gets what she wants (16th July). An additional example which depicts the paradox of the coexistence of care and coercion in organisations in general is the element of surveillance (Sewell and Barker, 2006); it is debatable whether John calls/contacts the employees often because he wants to be supportive to them or because he wants to check on them. Equally debatable would be the managerial silence (e.g. when John delays to reply to Plato about his resignation or when management do not announce to the employees the new cost-cutting policy) as it cannot be sure whether managers simply did not have time to deal with a situation or consciously became silent so as to increase the agony and the fear among the employees in order to make them feel powerless.

The humane, caring and employee-centred character of the post-modern organisation can be challenged at two levels (i.e. as a performance fault and as a reality). When some managers, regardless of their motives, not only seem not to care but also appear not to care to show that they care, post-modern organisation practice seems to be inconsistent with its theory. However, even when managers show care towards the employees, it cannot be determined whether they actually care or merely appear to care as this is the accepted ideal. Additionally, even though managers seem to show that they care for the employees, the element of neglect and even coercion in ZEUS (as in any other current organisation) cannot be ruled out. The workplace is surrounded by different discourses such as the managerial discourse of care versus coercion and the cultural discourse of loyalty and disloyalty; based on these discourses, good managers are expected to be caring and good employees are expected to be loyal. Nevertheless, whether the workplace can ever be completely free from coercion is debatable; appearances can be deceptive as managers and employees try to conform to certain norms in order to assure each other that they belong to the situation (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010); in a mutual agreement (ibid), employees accept the 'caring manager' and managers accept the 'loyal employee' performance.

4.3.5 Ingratiation and employee performance

Ingratiation can be seen as a behaviour which even though 'not directly required by an employee's job' (Eastman, 1994: 1380), is used by employees either as an attempt to influence their managers (Pandey, 1981; Shankar, Ansari and Saxena, 2001) in order to pursue their self interests at any cost (Ralston, 1985) or simply 'as an attempt by individuals to increase their attractiveness in the eyes of others' which does not involve deceit or conscious effort (Liden and Mitchell, 1988: 572). As such, in ZEUS four incidents have been found to involve ingratiation tactics.

In detail, during the first incident (16th July) when Plato explains to Socrates and Aristotle what Georgia had said earlier (i.e. the joke she loudly said where she stated that 'What Georgia Wants Georgia Gets'), Aristotle comments on the literal meaning of this and praises Georgia's hard work whereas Socrates does not comment but only exchanges a disapproving look with Plato. At first sight it is not very clear what exactly they disapprove of; it is not clear whether they disapprove of Georgia's behaviour in general or Georgia's action to tell the joke or Aristotle's opinion about how hard Georgia works or even the fact that Aristotle is defending a manager. Nevertheless, given the fact that they did not express their opinion openly to Aristotle, it is more plausible that Socrates and Plato exchanged looks so as to express their negative feelings towards Aristotle himself who is in fact acting naively and/or sounding like a mouthpiece of management; in this case, even if Aristotle is simply expressing his feelings, in the eyes of his colleagues he is seen as a potential ingratiation, who indirectly praises his managers (Liden and Mitchell, 1988). Similarly when on the 15th August Georgia asks whether she can take some spare stationery and Plato jokingly says 'Of course you can! You are the management after all!' there is a case of potential ingratiation. Even though it cannot be sure whether Plato intended to employ an ingratiation tactic, simply joke or even be ironic about the fact that managers do whatever they like, in the eyes of the employees he is seen as an ingratiation; Socrates and Aristotle are seen exchanging a silent disapproving look. In short, regardless of their motives (i.e. whether they intentionally use ingratiation or not), the employees who praise their managers are seen in a negative light by their peers as they are seen as ingratiation.

Another example which is related to ingratiation would be on the 17th August when Socrates and Plato find out that a colleague will bring John to the office and they comment that surely he will be eager to collect his manager. Even though in this case it equally cannot be said whether the colleague is attempting to put himself in a favourable light in

front of his manager (i.e. actually being an ingratiator), the negative reaction and the feelings of the employees towards ingratiation is obvious. The employees appear to be joking about their colleague's willingness to help management; they are not shocked as they seem to have expected it and they just feel amused. In the employees' eyes, the person who will run to collect his manager is seen as an ingratiator who tries to please management at any cost and hence, he is mocked and not appreciated. However, on the 4th September the employees are faced with a similar situation as John expresses an identical request (i.e. to be picked up from the airport and brought to the office); even though Socrates initially jokes with Plato that John will get a taxi as they will not collect him, Plato almost instantly goes to collect him. Their joke is based on the idea of resistance (Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995) but also expresses conformity (Collinson, 1988) as the employees want to be seen following the 'acceptable' employee norm which expects that employees resist; as such, the employees resisted mildly and safely (Contu, 2008) and dis-identified themselves from the task before actually performing it (Fleming and Spicer, 2003; Fleming, 2005a). So, by joking about it Socrates and Plato show to each other (and to themselves) that they will collect John not because they are ingratiators but because they have to.

Therefore, the findings suggest that ingratiation in organisational settings is difficult to be defined not only because of the unclear motives of the ingratiator (e.g. 16th July, 15th August) but also because of the fact that it may depend on situational characteristics (e.g. 17th August, 4th September); it is not clear whether the ingratiator is consciously ingratiating and if so, whether he/she does so because he/she wants to be accepted or liked (Liden and Mitchell, 1988), because he/she has no choice as his/her boss asked him/her for a favour, because he/she has done something wrong in the past and tries to make it up (*ibid*) or because he/she tries to secure his/her job as companies do not hesitate to fire employees (Pfeffer, 1992; Willmott, 1993) especially when they are contractors as Socrates, Aristotle and Plato. As such, ingratiation is an unavoidable element in organisations as it is not only initiated by the individual but also created by the organisation (Ralston, 1985) as even though employees do not have a duty to help managers in non-work-related tasks, in practice they perform some not strictly work-related duties while at work. However, regardless of the motives of the ingratiator and regardless of the situation, the fact is that employees disapprove of ingratiation and comment negatively about their colleagues whom they see as ingratiators (16th July, 15th August, 17th August). Even though the accepted norm is that an employee masks his/her self by creating representations which portray him/her as embracing organisational values (Hewlin, 2003) and he/she performs a certain role and presents him/herself according to

the expectations that exist in the workplace (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010), over-zealous performances (ibid, 1975), whether intentional or unintentional, are judged negatively by an employee's peers; even though managers accept it and the organisational situation encourages it, ingratiation is judged negatively by an employee's colleagues (Liden and Mitchell, 1988) as it violates the employee norms which define acceptable behaviour (ibid, 1966, 2010).

4.3.6 Employee dissatisfaction

Emotions are the outward display of a person's feelings, which are his/her subjective experiences (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000). Even though a person can choose either to disguise this display when he/she is in front of others (ibid) and even though emotion cannot be actually measured (Finemann, 2004), it can still be researched and understood adequately (ibid) as the major evidence of emotion can be found in self-reports, expressive behaviour (facial and vocal expression) and physiology (Lauka, Juslin and Bresin, 2005). Emotion is not only a social phenomenon but also a biologically adapted one, which generates identifiable overt behaviour (Consedine, Strongman and Magai, 2003). Thus, even though people can control and alter their behaviour (e.g. facial responses according to certain rules of display so as not to hurt the feelings of others or for personal gain) depending on which behaviour they consider appropriate at the time (Zaalberg, Manstead and Fischer, 2004), there is 'some level of universal relation between certain emotions and overt behaviour' (Consedine, Strongman and Magai, 2003: 898); as such, people have the ability to identify emotion by observing behaviour, irrespectively of situational processes and cultural backgrounds (ibid). Therefore, accepting that people have the ability to identify emotion by observing behaviour, the findings of this study suggest that in ZEUS the employees do not seem very satisfied with the actions of their managers and the policy of the company.

In detail, when their managers are not present, the employees seem to be expressing negative comments about the company's policy (e.g. 7th August discussion about the cost-cutting policy, 15th August discussion between Socrates and Aristotle regarding Plato's resignation where they believe he left due to the way he was treated by the company, 30th August discussion regarding the employees who left due to way the company treated them) and their managers in general; they are being critical/concerned/disapproving of the fact that their managers give them conflicting orders (e.g. 13th July, 14th August, 20th August). Their negative feelings seem to stem from their managers' inability (according to

what the employees say) to decide what needs to be done. The combination of the company's policy and the manager's indecision with Georgia's sharp behaviour (e.g. as mentioned on the 24th and 26th September) and Donald's lack of care (e.g. his lack of action regarding Plato's resignation or the payment problem), leads to a built-up in employee dissatisfaction as it affects not only the quality of their working life but also the quality of their personal life (e.g. Georgia does not sometimes respect employees plans after/outside work or when Donald's lack of action results in delay of payment). In fact, since within organisations the emotions and behaviours of employees towards authority are shaped by how fairly their colleagues are being treated by that authoritative body especially when these colleagues had been formerly helpful to these employees (De Cremer and Van Hiel, 2006), the already negative feelings of the employees towards their managers, their decisions and the company's policy are further intensified by the cases of employee mistreatment.

Dissatisfaction with everyday life is not equally experienced and expressed by all (Cohen and Taylor, 1976) and thus, several cases and different levels of employee dissatisfaction are observed in ZEUS. For example, when Plato thinks that John ignored his resignation email, he privately labels him a 'bastard' (13th August) whereas Aristotle is more lenient when judging Georgia's behaviour as 'sharp' (24th September). On similar grounds, when Nicole realises she will not get paid in time, she decides to take matters in her hands (10th September) whereas the others seem to patiently wait for John to act. Equally, on the 13th July, Plato finds the matter with the confusing managerial instructions 'ridiculous' whereas Socrates and Aristotle are calmer. As such, emotions in the workplace should not be ignored as they 'may constitute a critical link between workplace contexts and employee behavior' (Ashkanasy, Härtel and Daus, 2002: 324). For example, on the 13th August, Plato due to his tension mistakenly thought that John ignored his resignation email and that Georgia did not want even to speak to him when this was not the case. In contrast, on the 30th August the tension of the day seems to build up; at first the employees discuss about the employees who left due to the way the company treated them, then they are faced with an imminent pay problem due to Donald's lack of action and finally they all get frustrated due to the fact that they have received conflicting orders from their line manager (and in Plato's case, even his personal plans got changed the next day due to the fact that the managers forgot to notify him).

According to Dasborough (2006), even though leaders create both positive and negative emotions for employees, the employees usually remember mostly the negative incidents other than the positive; the employees experience positive emotions when their leaders

understand, respect, motivate, inspire, empower, reward or communicate effectively with them whereas they occasionally but intensely experience negative emotions which are usually linked to ineffective/inappropriate communication or to the lack of the above elements; as a result they feel anger, annoyance, frustration or even loathing (ibid). In this case, the employees can be seen as unfairly judging their managers and expecting too much from them. Nevertheless, apart from the fact that an employee is justified to experience negative feelings when he realises that understanding, respect, motivation, inspiration, empowerment, reward and effective communication (e.g. Daft, 2000) are not materialised, there is no reason why a good leader should create negative emotions to the employees; the post-modern organisation theory suggests that the new managers are charismatic and exceptional from all aspects (ibid) and so, it is assumed that moments of 'bad behaviour' towards the employees or other mistakes of this sort would simply not occur. Stated in Goffman's (1975) terms, poor performances on behalf of the managers are not expected; managers know their role in the workplace (e.g. that they are supposed to understand, motivate and communicate) and as such, they ought to behave in a way that reflects the values that apply to the situation (ibid, 1966, 1981, 2005, 2010).

4.3.7 Summary

The findings suggest that in ZEUS even though the managers and the employees appear to have rather friendly relations, the employee mood is not very positive. The managers try to establish a 'culture of fun' (Fleming, 2005b: 289) while the employees seem to merely accommodate it. Based on Goffman's (1975) notion of performance and the conventions that surround behaviour (ibid, 1966, 1981, 2005, 2010), managers and employees try to live up to the expectations that the post-modern organisation discourse has created for them (e.g. Daft, 2000); the managers try to appear powerful in public yet understanding in private whereas the employees try to conform in public and complain only in private. Managers appear to show their care for the employees but the element of a staged private face or even the presence of sinister motives cannot be ruled out. The employees seem to conform to their managers' requests yet they distance themselves from ingratiation and comment negatively about potential ingratiators. The findings suggest that the employees are not very satisfied with the actions of their managers and with the policy of the company; therefore, with the second research question in mind, it can be argued that the element of performance and the notion of 'fitting in' (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) result in certain behaviour patterns which promote the appearance of a happy workplace and hide the reality of an unhappy workforce. As a

result, this research suggests that the clash between reality and appearance (e.g. happy-unhappy workforce, public-private performances, care-neglect from managers) harms the image of the post-modern organisation and even brings up questions whether it is real; it not only challenges the post-modern organisation claims about the existence of charismatic managers and understanding, respect, motivation, inspiration, empowerment, reward and effective communication (e.g. Daft, 2000) but also questions whether this image actually exists.

4.4 Making sense in the organisational world

4.4.1 Introduction

'Sensemaking emphasizes that people try to make things rationally accountable to themselves and others' (Weick, 1993: 635). 'Organizational sensemaking', which 'is sensemaking by individuals in organizations' (Jeong and Brower, 2008: 224), is believed to positively affect organisations (Vuuren and Elving, 2008). Even though sensemaking occurs at the individual level, it is connected with the 'sociocultural reality of the organization' (Harris, 1994: 310) as it occurs within a social context and structure (O'Leary and Chia, 2007). Sensemaking is a conscious and continuous cycle which involves noticing, interpretation and action (Jeong and Brower, 2008: 224) and entails continuous redrafting of a situation in order to become more comprehensive (Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld, 2005). In the working environment, sensemaking is reflected in the conversations of the members (Taylor and Robichaud, 2004) and therefore, organisational talk in ZEUS reveals the way the employees are trying to make sense of the various work situations. However, making sense in an organisational setting is not an easy task since situations are complex and since often ambiguity, complexity and paradox are part of the work situation. As the employees make sense of organisational life through culture (Brown, 1998), culture and consequently, the element of 'fitting in' in the organisational culture (Schneider, 1987; *ibid*) comes into the equation.

4.4.2 Complexity, uncertainty, ambiguity and paradox

In ZEUS complexity, uncertainty, ambiguity and paradox seem to be elements of organisational life. Complexity has to do with the nature of the business. First of all, organisations and especially those who operate on a global scale are complex per se as

they are characterised by difference (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000); their members have not only various human differences (e.g. individual or cultural) and work purposes (Watson, 1994) but also power differences (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000). Secondly, organisations can be chaotic as they are open systems which are subject to stability (e.g. planning, controlling) but also instability (e.g. innovation, experimentation) forces (Thietart and Forgues, 1995). As organisations are complex and multifaceted (Morgan, 1997) and operate in 'turbulent environments' (Dolan, Garcia and Auerbach, 2003: 26), success in the business arena involves not only surviving difficult conditions but also profiting from them by embracing change and taking risks rather than avoiding them (Mandel, 1996 as quoted in Nelson, 2003); so, in order to succeed, companies have to be flexible and constantly adapt to new circumstances (Gabriel, 2008). Therefore, it could be said that the coexistence of instability, change, risk-taking, flexibility and adaptation creates a complex working environment where nothing is easy, simple or stable. Finally, the nature of the telecommunication engineering tasks makes things even more difficult as most of the times the employees try to fix a problem from a distance while trying to figure out what the fault is; problems are always complex as many technical parameters need to be considered and often the solution comes after many tries. For example, the employees are seen working together in order to deal with a complex and urgent problem on the 20th August. Equally, on the 3rd September the employees and their managers are seen trying to solve a technical problem which occurred during the weekend. Complexity seems to be an integral part of the employees' jobs as they are expected to solve technical problems whose causes and solutions can be figured out mostly through trial and error.

Apart from complexity, the ZEUS environment is characterised by a certain level of uncertainty. Not only work policies change and are not directly announced to the employees (7th August) but also employees seem to leave the company (willingly or unwillingly) at constant rates (15th August, 24th August, Plato on the 7th September) and the employees expect that the number could increase (as Socrates says to Aristotle on the 30th August, 'It is xx this month...And it may be more'). So, the change of company policy along with the monthly leavers possibly creates fear among the employees as they perceive that their job safety is at risk. Ironically, even though work complexity is part of the job, it cannot be said the same for uncertainty; cynically speaking, there is a chance that managers manipulate this uncertainty so that the employees are in constant fear (i.e. that they risk losing their jobs) and perform at their best on a daily basis in order to safeguard their position.

Additionally, when Socrates says 'I think this is a grey area. Everything is so complex' (16th August), 'I think this is getting very complex' (20th August) or 'This is a grey area' (21st August), another issue comes into the equation; it seems that the already existing complexity has been coupled with ambiguity as the employees do not know what to do not because the problem is complex but because they are being given conflicting instructions. When the instructions that the managers give to the employees are not consistent with the existing work practices, the employees get confused (14th, 16th, 20th, 21st, 30th August). Even more, when the managers contradict each other, the situation becomes even worse (13th July). So, the employees become confused and frustrated as they do not know what to do.

Furthermore, here also come the paradoxes of the working environment. With the word 'paradox', the researcher refers not merely to an inconsistency where something appears to be one thing and is something else but to the coexistence of contradicting elements which normally would be mutually exclusive. Firstly, the paradox regarding the supposed importance of the human element in organisations is worth mentioning. According to the 'Corporate Culture' literature and the 'gurus of excellence', the employees are considered to be 'a valid human resource' when in the labour market the employees are treated as a 'disposable commodity' (Willmott, 1993: 515) and many firms even fire employees as a solution to personnel problems and use contractors or temporary workers from agencies (Pfeffer, 1992). For example, in ZEUS the three operations men (Socrates, Aristotle, Plato) are contractors (employed by an agency) whose contracts are renewed regularly but renewal depends on the company (ZEUS can simply not renew a contract without giving notice or compensation to the employee) whereas the managers (John, Mary, Georgia, Donald, Steven, F.D.) are permanent staff who are paid by ZEUS and they have job security (notice period, compensation, permanence).

Secondly, the paradox of decision-making comes along. Nowadays the employees in most companies are made to believe that their opinion matters (e.g. Daft, 2000) but at ZEUS in practice they do not have an active part in the decision-making process. For example, John often asks the employees their opinion (e.g. 17th July, 31st July, 14th August, 17th August, 20th August) but in practice the employees are expected to do what he (or Mary/ Georgia) has decided to be done and that is why he gives detailed work guidelines (e.g. 13th July, 16th July, 26th July, 17th August) to them. As Faÿ (2008: 839) says, 'Homo managerialis' communicates and supports openness but at the same time he/she follows a managerial rationality; he/she assures people that he/she is open to discussion but in fact he/she does not want to be questioned, let alone opposed (ibid).

Thirdly, the paradox that characterises the ZEUS culture is evident. The employees are expected to wait for managerial instructions and not take work initiatives while at the same time they are not given clear directions but contradictory messages. The managers' guidelines are not compliant with the existing work practices (14th, 16th, 20th, 21st, 30th August) and sometimes the managers even contradict themselves (13th July) or simply appear not to be able to decide what needs to be done (20th August). Hence, it could be argued that in ZEUS one faces the existence of two organisations in one: on one hand, one sees the post-modern organisation where managers discuss work matters with their employees and on the other, one sees the modern organisation where employees are not allowed to act on their own. Even though several paradoxes exist in organisations (e.g. delegating when one believes he/she can solve a problem him/herself, building a strong team with diverse members) and 'working through paradox' (Lüscher and Lewis, 2008: 221) is not unusual in organisations, this ultimate paradox extends far beyond what is considered a 'normal' part of organisational life.

Regardless whether uncertainty, ambiguity and paradox are intentionally created or preserved by the managers or not, the fact is that an unhealthy internal environment exists. In practice, the employees discover that their managers are not so charismatic and that the working environment is far less from ideal (e.g. when compared to the one described by the post-modern organisation theory). Even though the post-modern organisation discourse praises pluralism, at the post-modern workplace pluralism is neither encouraged nor appreciated (Willmott, 1993; Boje and Winsor, 1993) and as such, it is questionable whether true communication can actually happen. Although a leader's credibility is said to enhance sensemaking in ambiguous situations (Patriotta and Spedale, 2009), workplace communication is not homogeneous among all departments as meaning (and thus, sensemaking, too) is closely connected with the environment within it occurs (Mills, 2002). Thus, not only in ZEUS but also in other similar companies, the employees and the managers may never be able to 'speak the same language' because managers neither want to listen to the employees (e.g. Fay, 2008) nor are in a position to do so as managers and employees due to their power differences do not belong to the same environment so as to share the same meanings. This gap between rhetoric and reality is further aggravated by the co-existence of modern and post-modern organisational elements; managers not only do not implement the post-modern organisation theory ideals they seem to promote (e.g. effective two-way communication with employees) but also constantly shift between modern and post-modern ideals (e.g. when not allowing employees to take part in the decision-making process yet involving them in work

discussions) and this inconsistency does not go unnoticed by the employees, who as insiders in the company culture definitely make some sense.

4.4.3 Making sense and fitting in

'Organisational cultures are complex and dynamic entities' through which the employees make sense of organisational life (Brown, 1998: 293). Hence, culture influences organisational sensemaking (Harris, 1994). As expected, the findings suggest that the ZEUS employees engaged in sensemaking, which in turn was reflected in their conversations (Taylor and Robichaud, 2004). The employees were seen going through a conscious and continuous cycle where they notice an incident, interpret it and then act accordingly (Jeong and Brower, 2008). For example, when a colleague tells the employees an update on the company's expenditure scheme (7th August), the employees notice the change, discuss the effect it will have on them and express their disagreement. Sensemaking is not a simple task; as Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld (2005) suggest, sensemaking involves continuous analysing of a situation in order to become more comprehensive. This is why the employees are seen continuously talking about the things that are ambiguous (e.g. Socrates bringing up the 'grey area'); they notice the situation is complex and not normal (i.e. they notice that this is not considered standard practice), they compare with past practices (i.e. what they did in the past in similar problems), try to generalise (e.g. As Plato asks John on the 20th August 'So, every timeshould we....?'), try to communicate and focus on what needs to be done next (as is obvious from the various discussions where the employees try to make sense of a situation) (ibid). In short, on each occasion (e.g. 14th, 16th, 20th, 21st, 30th August) the employees tend to make things happen, check against different sources, compare views with others, apply reasoning and reach conclusions, and learn within certain contexts (Weick, 1985).

Nevertheless, even though employees engage in sensemaking, they do not succeed in making sense or better to say they make sense of the fact that things do not make sense (i.e. they realise that their workplace is characterised by paradox). For example, on the 13th July after Mary's email contradicts John's email which had beforehand contradicted the existing work practices, the employees understand that it is not possible to know what they are supposed to do and therefore, they decide to wait for their managers to decide. The recognition of the fact that things do not make sense is still sensemaking as in this case, sensemaking allows employees to accept living with unresolved paradoxes. After all, using 'paradox as a lens' (Lüscher and Lewis, 2008: 230) and 'working through

paradox' aids sensemaking (ibid: 221). For example, after receiving both John's and Mary's emails (13th July), the employees enter the 'mess stage', then they define the problem, then they are in the 'dilemma stage', then they realise that there is no choice ('paradox' stage) and finally they reach the 'workable certainty' stage, where even when a solution is not reached, a 'more manageable mess' is reached (ibid: 230). In short, sensemaking has the potential to either clarify the mess (e.g. coexistence of the modern and the post-modern ideology in the workplace) or at least make it more manageable. After all, in organisational life there is not always a right and a wrong answer not only because the consequences of a decision are known after some time but also because things are rarely clear-cut as they were in school life situations (Pfeffer, 1992).

As organisational sensemaking occurs within a social context and structure (O'Leary and Chia, 2007), even though sensemaking occurs at the individual level, it is connected with the 'sociocultural reality of the organization' as each member makes sense based on his/her 'repository of cultural knowledge and meanings' (Harris, 1994: 310). Therefore, the employees as insiders to the culture of ZEUS make more sense than an external person would in the same setting as culture influences organisational sensemaking (Harris, 1994; Brown, 1998). For example, a ZEUS employee would understand that the conflicting orders are actually a normal occurrence as their managers usually cannot decide what needs to be done. Equally, only an insider would understand that Georgia can be both caring (e.g. when she brings sweets for the employees) and uncaring (e.g. when she demands things from the employees) or that Donald seems not only to 'forget' to act (e.g. his lack of reaction to Plato's resignation or the pay problem) but also to avoid contact with everyone in ZEUS (e.g. nobody seems to be able to get hold of him or receive a reply from him) and get away with it (e.g. 7th September). As such, insiders seem to be aware of the deeply paradoxical nature of the actual culture when compared with the 'espoused culture' (Brown, 1998: 31).

Based on the fact that a participant in a situation is expected to act according to the routines, rules and norms that surround it (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) and 'fit in' (ibid, 1966: 11), when an employee enters a company, he/she is aware that he/she has agreed to be incorporated in that company's culture; the newcomer gets accepted into the culture and is expected to become a part of it (Brown, 1998). In fact, according to Schneider (1987), people are attracted to and fit within the environment of the organisation they chose; the organisation is a unit where persons and situations are inseparable and thus, people choose to enter and stay or leave organisations (ibid). When employees enter an organisation they are not always incorporated as those who do not fit

in get rejected (Brown, 1998) or decide to leave (Schneider, 1987). In this case, it is of no surprise that Plato, the newest employee who often found things 'ridiculous' (13th July, 16th August), decided to resign (13th August). On the contrary, Socrates and Aristotle even though recognising the disadvantages of working in ZEUS, keep working for it; they recognise that the company does not treat employees well (30th August), that their managers constantly give them conflicting orders (13th July, 14th, 16th, 20th, 21st, 30th August), that Georgia can be demanding (24th and 26th September), that Donald is neglecting them (28th August, 31st August, 7th September, 10th September) and yet they have stayed in ZEUS for years. Hence, in this case Plato chose to leave (ibid) or was made to leave (Brown, 1998) as he did not fit in whereas Socrates and Aristotle stayed as they do fit in ZEUS; in this case these employees either make sense because they fit in or fit in because they make sense; however, this would be the wrong conclusion.

The dichotomy between 'fitting in' and 'not fitting in' a place should not exist as it not only oversimplifies the situation but also fails to shed light on the root of the problem. In detail, the idea of a person fitting in a company as if he/she were a jigsaw piece not only denies the person his/her autonomy but also fails to take into account the complexity of organisational life. After all, who is to say that the socialisation process during which an individual enters a culture (Brown, 1998) is not a manifestation of the struggle between power/control and resistance (Gabriel, 1999; Mumby, 2005; Fleming and Spicer, 2008) which shapes organisational life (Mumby, 2005); failing to take into account the complex reality and the instability of organisation life could be seen as a hubristic self-delusion which exists in the sphere of managerial fantasy (Gabriel, 1999). In fact, it could be argued that this dichotomy seems to accommodate a more sinister picture far beyond managerial illusion; the attempt of the post-modern organisation to achieve homogenisation and eliminate pluralism (Willmott, 1993; Boje and Winsor, 1993). Therefore, under the notion of 'fitting in' two choices exist: to believe that either the post-modern organisation theory fails to understand the complexity and variety of organisational life or that it understands them but tries to eliminate them. In both cases, the element of performance (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) helps employees attain a position which even though supersedes the fit-in/not-fit-in- dichotomy (as it enables them to appear to fit in when in fact they do not), it still perpetuates the dichotomous nature of the managerial discourse of fitting in and consequently, one's understanding of it.

4.4.4 Summary

In ZEUS a work reality which entails complexity, uncertainty, ambiguity and paradox renders employee sensemaking challenging and makes one wonder whether true communication can ever be achieved in practice. Far away from the descriptions of the post-modern organisation theory, the ZEUS workplace seems not only to differ strikingly from the post-modern ideals but also to accommodate the existence of post-modern and modern elements. The employees have to deal with complex problems as part of their jobs and even though their managers give them conflicting instructions, the employees manage to make sense. Based on the concept that the employees who do not fit in an organisational culture get rejected (Brown, 1998) or decide to leave (Schneider, 1987), it could be said that the ZEUS employees seem to be fitting in in the company environment even though it cannot be concluded whether fitting in is a prerequisite for making sense or making sense is a prerequisite for fitting in. Nevertheless, from a critical perspective, the idea of 'fitting in' a place not only fails to take into consideration the individuality of each person but also makes one suspect that the post-modern organisation does not appreciate individuality and pluralism and tries to achieve homogeneity among its workforce (Willmott, 1993; Boje and Winsor, 1993). Thus, addressing the second research question, this research suggests that the element of performance (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) that exists in the workplace results in behaviour patterns which enable employees to appear to fit in the place and consequently, perpetuates the dichotomous perception of the fitting-in discourse which does not seem to take into consideration the complex notion of power struggle (Gabriel, 1999; Mumby, 2005; Fleming and Spicer, 2008) that exists in organisations.

4.5 Power, authority and resistance

4.5.1 Introduction

The practice and the theory of management have substantially changed within the last century. Post-modern organisations are believed to have flatter structures as managers tend to rely less on hierarchical power than in the past (Daft, 2000) in order to respond to 'turbulent environments' (Dolan, Garcia and Auerbach, 2003: 26) as flexibility and adaptation are required for organisational success (Gabriel, 2008) and recent management theories tend to value the employee for his/her vital role into this success (e.g. Daft, 2000). Even though job status differences do exist in all organisations and

sometimes conflict between employers and employees is unavoidable (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000), the post-modern organisation claims to have humanised work as it focuses on the employee who in fact is now empowered (Daft, 2000). Therefore, in order to examine the validity of those claims and the general situation that exists in the current working environment, the case of ZEUS was examined while at the same time attention was paid to the fact that not only authority patterns differ among firms (Whitley, 2003) but also reactions to power and authority differ among employees as people apprehend the world in different ways (Cohen and Taylor, 1976).

4.5.2 Employee empowerment: belief versus reality

The word 'authority' can mean different things to different people (Mandeville, 1960); in the distant past authority was exercised by the ruler without limits (Gephart, 1996) whereas in the post-modern workplace authority is believed to be effective provided that the balance between direction and empowerment is correct; the ideal results occur when the employees are guided towards the right direction but also empowered to choose the means to achieve the desired outcome (Gary, 2002) and generally when leaders generate other leaders instead of followers (Heifetz, 1999). In recent managerial theory organisational cultures are said to be characterised by employee participation and empowerment and employees are believed to be valued and considered important contributors to a company's success (Daft, 2000). However, whether these claims are completely true is debatable (e.g. Willmott, 1993; Boje and Winsor, 1993).

As expected, in ZEUS one notices the absence of an authoritarian ruler in the traditional (i.e. as it happened in society in the distant past) sense (Gephart, 1996) and the existence of a certain form of authority where the employees follow the directions of the local managers (John, Mary, Georgia) who in turn are less powerful than the higher managers (Donald, Stephen). The employees know they have less power than their managers but at the same time they are not afraid of their managers as they do recognise that a manager does not have absolute and unlimited power over them. For example, on the 28th August Socrates tells to Plato (when they are speaking about Donald) 'He is only a guy who runs a company; he is not god'; on the 3rd September Plato is speaking to Mary and he seems to have felt so comfortable that he later wonders whether he overdid it with his joke; equally, Socrates and Plato tease John when his turn to bring the drinks comes (on the 25th July), when he forgets his bag (17th August) or when he brings chocolate to them (on the 21st August). Nevertheless, even if the employees are seen interacting with their

managers informally and often even being seemingly friendly (e.g. 17th July, 25th July, 24th August, 27th August, 29th August, 3rd September, 5th September) and participating in informal work discussions at every instance with their managers (e.g. 25th July) and even attending some formal meetings (31st July, 14th August), they are not seen being empowered. In theory, their opinion matters (As John asks them during the meetings on the 31st July and on the 14th August what they think) but in practice they have to do what their managers decide (as all the very frequent emails, calls and conversations with John indicate).

The employees do not seem to play an active role in the decision-making process; the only success they are seen to achieve in this matter is when they finally convince John (on the 14th August) that the management need to reconsider their decision due to the fact that it is technically problematic. So, in this case they persuade the managers to rethink their decision (but the employees will not take part in the process) whereas in all other cases, employees seem to act in the old-fashioned way...to accept authority without question. Additionally, the employees lack work autonomy as they do not seem to be allowed any freedom of choice when it comes to task accomplishment; John's very frequent emails, calls and conversations state all the details and work procedures that the employees should follow. For example, on the 13th July John emails the employees about a problem they should solve and provides the technical details about the process they should follow. Therefore, democracy, autonomy and empowerment seem to exist in theory only. In practice the employees are still expected to follow the rules and decisions of management and have no freedom to act and no part in decision-making. In fact, on the 7th August the employees found out that the company not only changed its policy but also did not even let them know about it even though it affected them; if they were empowered, they would be taking part in the decision process, or at least be informed about the results formally. Hence, the employees are generally not empowered and on this occasion at least they are not even valued; the managers proved not only that the employees' opinion does not count but also that their feelings do not matter.

This realisation contrasts with post-modern managerial theory which claims that 'everyone is engaged in making decisions and solving problems' (Daft, 2000: 397), that 'managers share rather than hoard power' (ibid: 27) and that 'formal data ... are available to everyone' (ibid: 42) and 'information is widely shared' (ibid: 343). Post-modern management is supposed to be characterised by delegation but in practice the ZEUS managers make most of the decisions themselves, solve most of the problems themselves and keep the important information for themselves. Even though the

employees believe that their managers are not like gods (as Socrates said about Donald), they still 'let them decide' (as Socrates said on the 13th July) either because it is convenient or more likely because they simply know that their opinion does not matter.

Employee empowerment is not a reality in ZEUS. Ironically, the same could apply for the value of the employee in the workplace; in ZEUS the employees are contractors and they can be replaced easily (if they decide to leave or if the company decides to fire them). Paradoxically, the employees are considered to be a valid resource and yet in practice they are neither valued nor empowered; in their attempt to create uniformity among the workforce (Willmott, 1993; Boje and Winsor, 1993) companies not only dis-empower the employees but also treat them as a 'disposable commodity' (Willmott, 1993: 531) and thus, the matter of employee conformity needs to be examined.

4.5.3 Conformity, resistance and fantasy

Organisational commitment entails not only the emotional attachment and the feelings of obligation an employee feels towards a company but also the commitment associated with the costs of leaving the company (Allen and Meyer, 1990). In fact, good managerial communication (i.e. effective two-way communication) is supposed to enhance employee commitment (Gopinath and Becker, 2000; Mayfield and Mayfield, 2002; De Ridder, 2004) whereas inconsistent communication (i.e. when the culture, the structures and the practices do not emit consistent messages) has the potential to result in low employee commitment (Hoogervorst, Flier and Koopman, 2004). Actual employee turnover rates depend on several circumstantial factors apart from commitment; for example, downsizing, cost-cutting, monitoring and low payments increase quit rates whereas trade unions, higher wages, internal opportunities of mobility, as well as 'managerial policies that facilitate voice can significantly reduce exits' (Batt, Colvin and Keefe, 2002: 589). Nevertheless, as human resources can be easily discarded (Willmott, 1993) and as companies often fire employees and use contractors (e.g. as ZEUS does) or temporary workers instead (Pfeffer, 1992), it could be said that neither employees nor managers expect permanence and lifelong devotion.

The findings in ZEUS suggest that the majority of the operations employees (Socrates, Aristotle and Nicole in this occasion) even though not satisfied with the company, stay in their jobs and do not resign (as Plato or employees from other departments did). Even though managerial communication is inconsistent, even though the company has started

cost-cutting, even though the company uses contractors (and hence, there is not any job security) and even though many employees leave (willingly or unwillingly), Socrates and Aristotle seem to continue working in the company, as they have done for several years.

On one hand, it could be argued that Socrates and Aristotle can be seen as the loyal employees who accept the company culture and conform to the company's rules out of choice. Nevertheless, on the other hand, it could be argued that the employees do not have a choice; since a prerequisite for being a participant in a situation involves acting in a way which shows respect to the norms, rules and regulations that surround it (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010), the employees have no choice but to appear that they conform; when they enter into the work arena, they are aware that their behaviour should portray compliance with certain rules and that they should be seen as gradually fitting in the company culture (Brown, 1998). The employees appear to accept their work reality without directly resisting (e.g. they do not complain in front of their managers, challenge them or give them critical feedback); in fact, Plato is seen conforming not only before but also after his resignation. Although in the absence of their managers the employees discuss and express their dissatisfaction or disapproval, when in front of their managers, only Socrates mildly resists by expressing his opinion whereas Aristotle and Plato seem to be silent.

For example, when managers contradict themselves on the 13th July (when Mary sends an email which contradicts John's already contradictory email), Socrates, Aristotle and Plato start a discussion where Socrates finds it 'typical' and waits for the managers to decide ('Let them decide'), Plato finds it 'ridiculous' whereas Aristotle does not express any ironic comments. When John calls Socrates, Socrates merely listens and only asks a question whereas Aristotle and Plato simply wait to hear the news from Socrates after the phone call (and Aristotle jokingly or ironically states 'At least they decided'). Equally, on the 7th August when the employees (i.e. Socrates and Plato) learn from a colleague about a cost-cutting policy which affects them negatively, they discuss it but never complain to their line manager about the policy or the fact that they should have been informed by him about it. The situation slightly changes on the 14th August; during the audio meeting with John, Socrates rather challenges John by asking several questions whereas Plato remains silent; however, in the discussion they have with colleagues after the meeting, both Socrates and Plato make ironic comments about the decisions of the management.

On the 16th August Socrates speaks with Georgia without complaining but later in the discussion with Aristotle and Plato they all express their disapproval; Socrates believes

that 'this is a grey area. Everything is so complex' whereas Plato believes that 'This is ridiculous! This is absolutely ridiculous!'. On the 20th August during the meeting with John, only Plato asks questions whereas Socrates does not; when John leaves, Socrates comments ironically about the indecision of management whereas when John is back, Socrates cautiously points the problem to John ('I think this is getting very complex. How can.....?'). On the 30th August Socrates, Aristotle and Plato are commenting about Donald's actions and expressing their dissatisfaction and disapproval of the fact that he seems to ignore everyone's emails and requests and yet even though the pay problem persists for days after, they do not seem to complain formally about it; Plato simply calls the finance team (30th August), Socrates escalates to John (7th September), Aristotle does not react; in fact, on the 10th September Socrates still patiently waits for the problem to be resolved (while Aristotle is on holiday and Plato has left).

In short, the employees engage in discussions between them where they express their disagreement or dissatisfaction with the management's decisions, but on most occasions the discussion simply stops and everybody returns to work in the same manner as they did before without any change; when in front of their managers (especially their line manager who is their first line of contact), the employees either are silent and do not mention the matter at all or mildly express the problem to their line manager. The employees seem to choose to hide their feelings in front of their managers and so, the 'dissentive voice' is either mildly expressed (e.g. Socrates) or completely silenced (e.g. Plato and Aristotle) (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 713). Socrates and Aristotle (and Plato until his resignation) choose to disguise the outward display of their feelings (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000) and mask their feelings by creating representations which portray them as embracing organisational values (Hewlin, 2003) and hence, perform in order to present themselves in a certain way (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010).

Nevertheless, conformity and appearance of conformity are not identical. Even though the employees put on a performance of conformity when in front of their managers, they do not actually conform. From the above examples it follows that the ZEUS employees do engage in various forms of both individual and collective resistance (Ezzamel, Willmott and Worthington, 2001) as 'space for resistance' always exists in the workplace (Knights and McCabe, 2000: 428). This resistance differs from resistance in the past and so, it is not easily observed (Fleming and Sewell, 2002) as new forms of resistance have been adopted by employees lately (Gabriel, 2008) but it is still a form of resistance; although most of the employees 'have lost their collective voice' and 'occasionally raise their individual voices' (e.g. Socrates), they more often just resign without even explanations

(ibid: 323); resistance mirrors consumerism where community-caring 'citizens', who existed in the past, have been replaced by individualistic 'consumers'; citizens had a 'voice' whereas consumers just exit (ibid: 323). A good example is Plato's case; he seems not to resist to management (even when on the 25th July Mary tells him he has to go offshore when he has already expressed that he does not want to do so) but he resigns almost a month later, stating mostly personal reasons.

Resistance in ZEUS is a 'decaf resistance' where the employees 'enjoy without the costs and risks involved' (Contu, 2008: 374); the employees' humour can be seen as a form of resistance to management where the employees express their dissatisfaction when open disagreement is not a possibility (Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995). For example, the employees often discuss in private and express their disapproval for their managers' decisions (e.g. 13th July, 7th, 14th, 16th, 20th, 30th August); they (mostly Socrates) also make ironic comments. In detail, on the 13th July, Socrates finds it 'Typical' that their managers sent a contradicting email whereas Aristotle says (when the issue gets resolved) 'At least they decided' with a smile. Equally, on the 20th August Socrates and Plato make ironic comments about the indecision of their managers. The term resistance should not be confused with misbehaviour as they are not the same even though some of their elements overlap (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999); every time the employees stop work in order to discuss, they may be misbehaving (in the eyes of their managers) but not necessarily resisting. The ZEUS employees resist with humour and even cynicism as this helps them dis-identify themselves from power even though they are actually performing what a manager/organisation requests (Fleming and Spicer, 2003; Fleming, 2005a). As such, the employees' (mostly Socrates' and Aristotle's) mild resistance (in private) helps them to release the tension without destroying their public performance of conformity.

However, conformity and rebellion are not the only options, as fantasy is another alternative (Gabriel, 1995). In this case, Socrates and Aristotle (and Plato until his resignation) show conformity in public (i.e. in front of their managers) yet construct their own reality in their private discussions, which are part of the 'unmanaged organization' (Gabriel, 1995: 477). For example, even though it is not exactly clear what happened, according to Plato's reconstruction, John wanted to add more work to them and Plato managed to avoid it (4th September). In fact, the theatrical element (Goffman, 1975) that exists in the workplace allows for the co-existence of conformity, rebellion and fantasy; the employees appear to conform and yet they can still engage in resistance and fantasy; the employees have the chance not only to resist mildly (e.g. when Socrates 'speaks up' or when the employees use humour and cynicism in their discussions) but also to resist in

the realm of fantasy (e.g. when Plato describes how he managed to avoid the work that John wanted to assign to them) without jeopardising their performance and consequently their work situation. In a working environment which creates 'a context in which compliance is not only desirable' but 'almost irresistible' the impulse to resist gets countered (Kärreman and Alvesson, 2009: 1141). The employees, realising the sinister face of the post-modern organisation which aims to create homogenisation (Willmott, 1993; Boje and Winsor, 1993), perform the expected role of the good, efficient and effective employee (Kärreman and Alvesson, 2009) who conforms and does not express dissatisfaction or anger towards his/her managers.

4.5.4 Anger

Due to individual, cultural or power differences, feelings of anger are often experienced by an individual within the workplace but these feelings are not always expressed, depending on the individual or the situation (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000; Kuppens et al, 2007). For example, during the observation period Socrates and Plato (and Nicole) are seen mildly expressing their anger at some point (30th August and 7th September, 13th August, 10th September respectively) but Aristotle is never seen expressing anger. Accepting the fact that occupational characteristics influence the experience and the expression of anger (Sloan, 2004), it can be explained why the employees do not express anger often; as they deal daily with operations requests (e.g. phone calls from people experiencing telecommunication problems) and as they daily receive instructions from their managers, the employees have become patient. It is not known whether Aristotle never experienced any anger or simply experienced it but never expressed it due to the fact that anger is experienced and expressed by each person differently, depending on his organisational status and his dispositional characteristics (Domagalski and Steelman, 2005); even though having the same job status with Socrates and Plato, Aristotle's trait anger is not necessarily similar to that of the others.

Nevertheless, agreeing with Bøddeker and Stemmler (2000) who suggest that it is the particular and the general situation that influence actual anger response style and not the narrow personality traits, it appears that all the background information matters when it comes to anger expression. For example, Plato's particular case (i.e. his resignation) and the general managerial situation (i.e. the managers' actions, which in ZEUS are not considered ideal by the employees) greatly influenced his anger response style on the 13th August. In detail, Plato resigned and notified his manager by email; however, when

his manager did not reply to his email, Plato says 'John, you have been a bastard!' rather jokingly as he feels that his manager did not want to reply to that particular email. Equally, when Georgia does not see him, Plato later complains to his colleagues that '...Georgia came and spoke to him and she did not speak to me, she didn't even look at me!'. Even though not visibly angry, it is obvious that Plato is agitated due to the fact that he has just resigned. Thus, even though it cannot be said that Plato has high trait anger, it can be said that on that day he acts as a person with high trait anger probably due to his alertness because of his resignation; he not only is more sensitive than usual but also more suspicious towards management. Therefore, one can possibly see in an indirect way the point that Wilkowski and Robinson (2007) make about trait anger; individuals with high trait anger are more prone to be biased by hostile interpretations and feel anger not only because they are more likely to perceive things with a more hostile interpretation but also because 'they engage in fewer cognitive processes important in self-regulating their hostile thoughts' (ibid: 14). However, it is also worth mentioning that overemphasising trait anger can conveniently point the finger of blame to the individual while at the same time ignore the importance of the surrounding environment. The idea that trait anger regulates anger response allows one to presume that the problem lies with the individual and not with the situation (and as such, the need for improvement falls on the individual and not the situation and the individual is never justified for expressing his/her anger) and clearly this is not the case; even though traits play some role in anger experience and expression, the situation is what triggers anger.

Apart from individual and occupational/status characteristics, the experience and expression of anger is also related to other characteristics such as gender. Domagalski and Steelman (2007) suggest that lower status men tend to express their anger towards higher status employees more than lower status women whereas Weber and Wiedig-Allison (2007) suggest that under moderate anger circumstances, women reacted more aggressively than men as men are less emotional and expressive than women. Therefore, the incident with the payment problem seems to justify the second view and not the first; when the payment problem persisted, even though the situation was the same for all employees and even though Socrates was quite angry with Donald (7th September), only Nicole reacted differently (phoned higher management on the 10th September). However, this incident is not enough to conclude about the role of gender in anger expression not only because it was a single incident but also because Nicole is only one female person and is from another culture (which may or may not play a role in this situation). Even though anger proneness is found to be not significantly different between cultures, there can be differences in aggression proneness between different cultures or genders within

the same culture (Ramírez, Fujihara and Van Goozen, 2001) or in the degree to which a person from a certain culture differs from the stereotypical expectations about angry disposition. In short, this incident is not enough to provide conclusive evidence as it is a single incident that shows the actions of a single person during a certain situation.

Even though anger can improve performance in confrontational/competitive tasks (Tamir, Mitchell and Gross, 2008) and even though openly discussing about anger and the incidents that create annoyance can lead to organisational benefits (Tjosvold and Su, 2007), crossing the line is not something that all employees do. For example, when John on the 30th August gives a technical order that contradicts current practice, Socrates is slightly angry and says 'Till now we were.....but since he said ... He is the person to know' and then merely gets back to work in the same way as before the incident. Equally, on the 7th September Socrates is again angry with Donald's behaviour but manages to stay calm as he does even on the 10th September (when it is almost certain that he will not get paid unless he acts). Socrates notifies John but never complains further as John is his line manager; escalating or speaking further about the matter seems not to be an option for him as it would mean crossing a line that he does not want to cross. Nevertheless, when the line is crossed, the outcomes are not always negative as long as the employees cross only the 'expression threshold' and not the 'impropriety threshold' (Geddes and Callister, 2007: 722). For example, Nicole crossed the barrier (i.e. she phoned F.D. herself even though the employees are supposed to call only their local managers and never F.D.) but because she did not cross the impropriety line (e.g. use offensive language), she benefited from it. On one hand, her action could be seen as rude, annoying or at least discomforting whereas on the other the managers could have sympathised with her. Nicole believed that she had the right to speak to F.D. and did not see any barriers; either she was naïve about the status quo in the company or she decided to cross the communication barriers in an effort to improve communication or even she just did not care as long as she got things done; relying on cultural stereotypes, management could have based their judgement (positive or negative) on the fact that Nicole's behaviour is justified due to her being Greek. As such, it cannot surely be said that crossing the line guarantees benefits for all employees in all companies not only because the evidence is limited but also because the evidence is not necessarily representative; in fact, it is not clear what the managers really thought of this action, how it affected the employee in the future and most importantly, how the managers would have reacted if the 'Greek stereotype' did not exist.

In short, the evidence from ZEUS gives an insight into the anger expression of lower status male employees within a certain workplace, but it is not sufficient to provide conclusions about the benefits of anger expression in the workplace (i.e. for the employees) or conclusions that would allow for mapping gender differences or creating 'sophisticated stereotyping' (Osland and Bird, 2000: 56) about culture differences. Employees were found to get occasionally angry and some of them did get angrier than others but surely this could not be attributed strictly to their personality traits as the particular and the general situation influence one's anger response style (Böddeker and Stemmler, 2000). Anger should not be seen as stemming mostly from the individual (i.e. his/her anger disposition) but from the situation. As such, anger is not a manifestation of an individual's problematic (i.e. troublesome) nature but a condition which manifests itself under certain situational circumstances; the situation is the catalyst which triggers a person's anger disposition (i.e. tendency to get angry) to unfold. In fact, whether the post-modern organisation environment actually causes or at least aggravates employee anger needs to be investigated and a good example would be to analyse the case of employee resignation.

4.5.5 Resignation and its symbolism

According to Gabriel (2008), employees often resign without even explanations; as 'consumers' they just exit instead of expressing their 'voice' (ibid: 323). For example, Plato resigned on the 13th August stating mostly personal reasons and not voicing any complaints towards management. Nevertheless, Socrates and Aristotle seem to believe that he decided to do so probably because the management made him stay more hours in the other office (i.e. offshore); when on the 15th August Socrates says 'Probably the reason he is leaving is that they did not keep their promises to him regarding work....', Aristotle nods in agreement. Even though this is an assumption on Socrates' and Aristotle's behalf, the incident which occurred on the 25th July (where Plato expressed to John that he would prefer not to go offshore but Mary informs him that he has to) indicates that Plato was not overly happy at least on that day. A consumer attitude (i.e. individuals who just exit instead of expressing their opinion or engaging in collective action) does not necessarily mean a selfish one as Plato's motives are not known; there is a case he has already found another job but there is also a case that he was just fed up (as his colleagues believe and as he confesses to Nicole on the day of his resignation) and cannot endure this situation (i.e. the way managers behave) any more. Although Plato may appear as disloyal (e.g. from a managerial view), this is not necessarily the case;

loyalty exists as discourse but in practice it does not seem to exist in firms like ZEUS which 'have broken contracts of long-term employment' and use temporary workers from agencies or contractors (like Socrates, Aristotle, Plato and Nicole) (Pfeffer, 1992: 30) whom they can easily fire at any point. In this case Plato, as a dissatisfied actor, decided to stop his performance and exit from the play (Goffman, 1975).

However, there is always a case of resistance to power. Instead of remaining silent because this is a safe option (Tourish and Robson, 2006) or because he has no other option (Faÿ, 2008) and instead of engaging in 'decaf resistance' (Contu, 2008), Plato has decided not only to escape the system but also to protest against it and set the example for others; he decides to leave the stage only after he has presented his last act (Goffman, 1975). During resignation employees seem to be having the upper hand in the power struggle (Gabriel, 1999, Mumby, 2005, Fleming and Spicer, 2008); as managers threaten and discipline employees with the fear of an underlying firing, so do employees have the ability to threaten and discipline managers with the possibility of a resignation. As such, the idea behind employee resignation is that if all employees found the power to resign, managers might have been treating them differently. In fact, it could be argued that Plato had already made his decision to leave but he really wanted to be justified; since theories of management claim that employees are important (e.g. Daft, 2000), when employees resign, they expect their managers to prove the employees' importance by going to them and trying to make them stay (as John did).

Therefore, when employees suspect that they are not valued by their managers and experience the managerial silence (e.g. when John did not reply immediately to Plato's resignation email), they become enraged as it stands as proof that managers do not care about employees; in this case, resignations often entail revenge as employees feel that they punish their managers. So, the 13th August signifies Plato's day; the theatricality that surrounds his resignation ensures that he is the centre of attention since his managers have to prove to him that he is important in the company; Plato who was made to do things he did not overly like (e.g. the 25th July) is being the receiver of the attention and care of his managers (John, Mary, Georgia) who prove his importance by having to show how sad they are that he is leaving; Plato who was a secondary actor in the play is suddenly not only the protagonist (Goffman, 1975) but also the script editor (Boje, Luhman and Cunliffe, 2003). The theatrical element in this resignation is obvious not only in Plato's act but also in the managers' reactions; like in a play, Plato exits dynamically and the managers safeguard the performance by acting accordingly (Goffman, 1975).

The causes behind resignation are not known but speculations can be made. On one hand, it could be argued that the 'leavers' (Plato and the other employees that left after him) left because they were fed up with being mistreated (i.e. not being appreciated); they left from a bad company where work promises (e.g. offshore periods, payment regularity) are not kept, procedures are chaotic (i.e. managers contradict themselves and cannot decide) and higher management does not care about the employees (i.e. Donald). As free beings with a strong will, these employees righteously and bravely left from work situations that disadvantaged them; as heroes in a play, they courageously escaped from a bad situation. On the other hand, it could also be said that resignation is not about bravery but about surviving in an environment where there is no place for those who do not fit in (Goffman, 1966; Schneider, 1987; Brown, 1998). In this case, Plato and the other leavers simply did not fit in the ZEUS environment and that is why they had to leave (Schneider, 1987) or were made to leave (Brown, 1998) whereas Socrates and Plato choose to stay as they do fit in ZEUS (Schneider, 1987); the leavers represent the weak characters whereas the ones who stay are the heroic survivors who manage to constrain themselves in order to abide by the rules of the situation (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010). Nevertheless, this interpretation apart from oversimplifying the situation, puts the emphasis on the individual and not on the real cause of the problem; if Plato leaves as the odd one out, the real problem lies in the situation; the post-modern organisation, like the modern organisation, seeks homogeneity (Willmott, 1993; Boje and Winsor, 1993). In this case, like in a theatre, only the actors who maintain the desired face (Goffman, 2005) and accept the rules of the play (ibid, 1966; 2010) are welcome to stay on stage and interact with the others (ibid, 1975).

The nature of the resignations that occurred in ZEUS is dubious as especially in the case of the other leavers (i.e. the ones who left after Plato) it is not clear under what conditions they left. In a conversation on the 30th August, Socrates states that he believes the number of the leavers will increase and Aristotle adds that the ones who left were good employees and ZEUS 'shouldn't have done this' (i.e. made the employees unhappy). Hence, there are indications that the leavers might have left not because they decided to leave but because they were made to leave by ZEUS as they did not fit in its culture (Brown, 1998). First of all, in places where people work on contracts, it is not sure whether contractors leave due to their will; if for example, management offer them a less prosperous contract or even delay offering them a new contract, employees are in a way forced to seek employment elsewhere. Moreover, often employees 'sense' a threat and decide to seek a more secure future; for example, if the news circulates that a company has economic difficulty, the employees again are 'forced' to leave so as to protect

themselves and their families. Finally, a more sinister case of resignation arises; companies are trying to make their undesirable employees resign so as they do not fire them and risk facing legal action or compensation. Thus, there is a possibility that ZEUS tried its hardest in order to make certain people leave without actually firing them and receiving fines or even negative comments from the other employees. In short, it is plausible that the individuals who were considered by management that they did not fit in ZEUS (Goffman, 1966; Schneider, 1987; Brown, 1998) may have been rejected by the system (Brown, 1998) and thus, made to leave. However, usually employee turnover rates depend on several circumstantial factors (Batt, Colvin and Keefe, 2002) and so, the resignations that occurred within ZEUS are the result of a variety of factors.

Nevertheless, the expectation that employees must 'fit in' (Goffman, 1966; Schneider, 1987; Brown, 1998) and be incorporated in the company's culture makes one suspect the motives of the post-modern organisation. Post-modern organisation theory claims to celebrate pluralism when in fact it seeks homogeneity (Willmott, 1993; Boje and Winsor, 1993); this situation is not only morally questionable (Willmott, 1993) but also contrary to the claims which assure that the post-modern organisation values the employee (Daft, 2000; Willmott, 1993; Boje and Winsor, 1993). The theatrical element that exists in the workplace may give the impression that the ones who resign do so as they do not fit in (or better to say, as they do not wish to put on a performance which shows that they do fit in) but also sheds light on the power struggle (Gabriel, 1999; Mumby, 2005; Fleming and Spicer, 2008) that occurs among the actors (Goffman, 1975).

4.5.6 Power struggles and panopticism

In ZEUS elements of both control and resistance were found; managers were seen as exercising control whereas employees were seen as reacting to this control by resisting, conforming or even engaging in fantasy (Gabriel, 1995). Nevertheless, the case is not so straightforward; agreeing with Gabriel (1999), Mumby (2005) and Fleming and Spicer (2008), it can be said that the situation is more complex than this as it is in fact a struggle. In detail, power and resistance are manifestations of an ongoing 'process of struggle' and are intertwined and often indistinguishable (Fleming and Spicer, 2008: 305). Resistance and control should be seen as 'mutually constitutive' and not simplistically as mutually exclusive elements of organisational life since not only it is not easy to distinguish between the two but also the complex struggle between these two contradictory elements is what shapes organisational life (Mumby, 2005: 20). The individual should be seen as capable

of both 'controlling and being controlled' as well as 'losing control and escaping control' and generally through struggle, interaction, feeling, thoughts and suffering defines and redefines the notion of control (Gabriel, 1999: 198). Therefore, the idea that 'everything is, can be and must be predicted, planned for, and controlled' can be seen as hubristic self-delusion which exists in the sphere of managerial fantasy as it fails to take into account the complex reality and the instability of organisational life and it creates a narcissistic illusion which exaggerates the power of control and neglects to see the person (ibid).

This struggle between the supposed controller and the supposed controlled can be seen, for example, when Plato indicates that he would prefer not to go offshore unless he really has to (25th July), John knows that he cannot simply force him to go and so, he tries his best to be the mediator between Plato and management. Equally, when during the audio meeting Socrates urges John for some practical answers (14th August) it is obvious that it is John and not Socrates who is feeling uncomfortable and is in the least favourable position; Socrates is calm whereas John appears unsure, often stops or exhales heavily and is also keeping notes. Another good example of this power struggle can be found in Plato's resignation (13th August) where the initially worried and agitated Plato comes in a position not only to decline John's negotiation effort (i.e. if the company can do something for Plato so that he stays) but also to ask him to speak to management so that he does not work his notice period even though the operations are short-staffed at the time; clearly Plato has more power than John in this occasion as he decides to exit at a time he is most needed and John (and the other managers) cannot do much about it. Incidents such as these succeed in destroying a myth; they indicate that the management rhetoric that managers are the powerful ones is just an illusion.

Paradoxically, this power struggle can be also reflected in office surveillance systems where surveillance can work in contrasting ways; as a medium of care it can help employees and managers, as a medium of coercion it can empower managers and as a medium to watch everyone it can empower employees as well (Sewell and Barker, 2006). Ironically, everything involves a form of surveillance as even trust seems to be entangled and symbiotically existing with power and control; often people trust specific individuals (e.g. doctors) not because they trust them as people (e.g. interaction in person) but because they trust the specific institutional mechanisms that monitor/control/have power over them (e.g. certification and standards of practice) (Knights et al, 2001). Along similar lines, even though the ZEUS policy of open desk spaces and carbon-copied emails aims to diminish barriers and allow the free flow of information within the company, it enables the managers to monitor the performance of the employees while at the same time it can

also expose managers in the eyes of the employees as they do not have any privacy. The ZEUS managers and employees know that they are being constantly watched and judged; each person observes the other; the managers watch the employees, the employees watch the managers, the employees watch the other employees and the managers watch the other managers. For example, when on the 7th September John emails Stephen (Donald's boss) in order to point out that Donald has not done what he ought to and he carbon-copies many people (Donald, Georgia and the employees), he in fact not only reports the problem to Donald's superior but also exposes Donald's mistake to the employees who stand lower in the hierarchical order than Donald.

Nevertheless, although the transparency of this 'glass cage' (i.e. open desks and open emails) sometimes helps individuals and other times exposes them (Gabriel, 2008: 314), the managers seem to have an advantage in the power struggle when it comes to surveillance. On most occasions the surveillance systems work in favour of the managers as these measures allow managers not only to monitor employees when they wish to do so but also to control them even in their absence (i.e. when managers are not observing them). Even if the current panopticon differs from the Benthamite Panopticon that Foucault (1977) describes (as now the managers can be seen by the employees), Foucault's (ibid) point is still evident; the 'supervisors' are in a more privileged position than the 'inmates' as the 'tower' represents a visible yet unverifiable power which ensures that the 'inmates' amend their behaviour accordingly (ibid); irrespective of whether they are being actually watched or not, the fact that they can be observed at any time self-disciplines the 'inmates' (ibid). For example, when on the 16th July Georgia enters the office to speak to a single employee, the other employees even though they are not being watched, 'make work' and appear busy (Goffman, 1966: 56; ibid: 1975: 112); the employees discipline themselves in order to avoid being judged negatively by the manager (Georgia) who has the power to negatively affect their already limited job security (as they are contractors).

On one hand, panopticism as a general idea (i.e. a pan-opticon which, unlike the Benthamite/Foucauldian Panopticon, enables the observed to watch the observer as well) has the potential to create the transparency which is sought by the 'society of spectacle' (Gabriel, 2008: 314) where everybody watches everyone and everybody is being watched by everyone (Sewell and Barker, 2006). On the other hand, the panoptic controls which exist in the post-modern organisation disadvantage mostly the employees; surveillance is morally questionable as it entails an element of coercion as the major role of the Panopticon is to alter and correct behaviour according to what is considered desired

(Foucault, 1977). Nevertheless, even though current surveillance is 'more sophisticated' and the 'implications are more far-reaching' (Gabriel, 1999: 197), the idea that 'everything is, can be and must be predicted, planned for, and controlled' (ibid: 198) exaggerates the power of control and neglects to see the person as capable of both 'controlling and being controlled' (ibid) and thus, fails to depict the ongoing power struggle that exists in organisations (ibid; Mumby, 2005; Fleming and Spicer, 2008). Foucault (1977) may have not put enough emphasis on the willingness of individuals to conform (McKinlay and Starkey, 1998a; Findlay and Newton, 1998) and on resistance (McKinlay and Taylor, 1998) and may have not adequately captured 'the rich dynamics of management' (Hoppen and Macintosh, 1998) but his point about the disciplinary power of the Panopticon is vital as it shows how power shapes the individual (Townley, 1998).

4.5.7 Summary

According to the findings, in ZEUS a certain pattern of authority is found to exist; hierarchical power prevails and power differences exist not only between employees and managers but also between managers themselves. Even though ZEUS is characterised by an informal and seemingly friendly work environment where teamwork prevails, elements of the modern organisation are evident as bureaucracy, vertical hierarchy, centralisation seem to exist and the employees are not empowered. Employee conformity and resistance are not easily recognisable not only because it depends on the viewpoint of the beholder but also because the impulse to resist often gets countered (Kärreman and Alvesson, 2009) and is usually hidden under the element of performance (Goffman, 1975). The employees safeguard their already insecure jobs by conforming or, more accurately, by pretending to conform. However, revisiting the first research question, it can be argued that individual reactions stem not from narrow personality traits (e.g. Wilkowski and Robinson, 2007); depending on situational and personal characteristics, employees get angry and some even choose to leave the workplace with a theatrical gesture. Employee resignation can be synonymous with employee power; when an employee decides to exit a company, he/she seems to gain power over his/her employer in the everlasting power struggle that exists between them. Power and resistance should not be simplistically seen as mutually exclusive phenomena but as co-existing in a complex struggle (Gabriel, 1999; Mumby, 2005; Fleming and Spicer, 2008) during which each individual involved should be seen as capable of both 'controlling and being controlled' as well as 'losing control and escaping control' (Gabriel, 1999: 198). Amidst this struggle, the post-modern organisation can be seen as utilising surveillance in order to supervise the

employees and also 'normalise' them by self-discipline (Foucault, 1977); hence, as an answer to the fourth research question it could be said that organisational power shapes employee responses by setting the desired levels of conformity. As such, this research suggests that the post-modern organisation promises more freedom to the employees but at the same time it continuously observes their actions and creates conditions which force the employees to self-discipline themselves (Boje and Winsor, 1993).

4.6 Workplace humour

4.6.1 Introduction

Humour can enrich understanding of an organisation (Hatch and Ehrlich, 1993) as it not only offers an insight into the organisational culture (Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap, 1990) but also provides vital information about the individuals who employ it. Humour can be seen as resistance (Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995; Lynch and Schaefer, 2009), as ingratiation (Cooper, 2005), as conformity (Collinson, 1988) or as a means of communication (McIlheran, 2006) and due to its positive influence on organisational life (Romero and Pescosolido, 2008) it is said that it can even be used as a managerial tool (Romero and Cruthirds, 2006) provided that it is appropriate (Duncan, 1982; Romero and Cruthirds, 2006; Lyttle, 2007; Romero and Pescosolido, 2008). Ironic humour and cynicism can be seen as a low-risk form of employee resistance (Contu, 2008) or a way of dis-identifying with cultural prescriptions and yet still performing them (Fleming and Spicer, 2003). Hence, by analysing humour in ZEUS, one understands not only how things work in the company but also how employees and managers alike react to the situation.

4.6.2 Humour as a reflector of culture

Humour at work can provide an insight into the organisational culture by revealing the behavioural schemes that exist (Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap, 1990). For example, at first sight it cannot be said that in ZEUS a 'culture of fun' exists (Fleming, 2005b: 289) as humour is part of working life and is used by employees and managers alike. The employees joke between themselves (e.g. 11,12,13,17,23,24,25,26,27,31 July; 9,13,14,17,28,30 August; 4,6,24 September) or together with their managers (e.g. 17,24,25,26 July; 7,15,17,21,29 August) on almost a daily basis. The relationship between

the employees and their managers appears informal and friendly; the employees and the managers not only seem to be close to each other but also seem to be enjoying their time together. In fact, even in crisis situations managers and employees do not lose their sense of humour; on the 3rd September Mary arrives and jokes 'Hello, I heard it was all fun and games this weekend' and then when Georgia enters, she also jokes 'How are you doing? What a great day!'; equally, on the 7th August when the employees suddenly learn about a policy change which was not communicated to them even though it negatively affects them, they end up employing humour in the end.

Nevertheless, after close observation, it is evident that even though the culture is informal, it is not really a 'culture of fun' (Fleming, 2005b: 289). Although the managers use humour in an attempt to make the employees feel comfortable, it does not seem to be working as the working environment is far from a happy one; the employees seem to be dissatisfied with their managers and the company as when their managers are not present, they express their negative comments (e.g. 13th July, 7th, 14th, 15th, 20th, 30th August). Therefore, humour in ZEUS reveals that apart from the informal and friendly culture that the ZEUS managers try to promote, a darker reality exists. For example, Georgia's joke to the employees that she gets what she wants (16th July), Plato's joke to his colleagues that they all jump when Georgia says so (26th July) and Plato's joke to Georgia that she can take the stationery as she is management (15th August) suggests that despite the official 'culture of fun' (ibid), Georgia stands above the others in terms of power and that the employees do not want to incur her wrath. Moreover, Plato's joke about the work codes (4th September) reveals not only the company's bureaucracy (i.e. the managers insist that each working hour should be logged with a relevant code so that employees can justify how they spend their day in the office) but also the fact that the employees are supporting managers in ways that are not specified in their work contracts (e.g. collecting John from the airport). Furthermore, when Plato and Socrates joke about Donald's lack of action and Socrates says that Donald 'is only a guy who runs a company... not god' (28th August), this reveals that the employees not only recognise that he is a bad manager but also indicate that they neither respect nor fear him (or at least they wish to be seen as not fearing him). Finally, when the employees joke about the confusion their managers create (e.g. 13th July, 14th August), this reveals a real problem that exists in ZEUS. Also, when Aristotle says 'At least they decided' (13th July) or when Socrates replies to Plato's that one part of the problem is their managers' indecision (20th August), it is apparent that managerial indecision is an important problem in ZEUS.

In short, in ZEUS humour portrays the 'culture of fun' (Fleming, 2005b) that the managers try to promote while at the same time it reveals the contrasting reality that exists. Although managers are on seemingly friendly terms with the employees, power differences are preserved; even though ZEUS represents a post-modern company, employees are not empowered and often bureaucracy and managerial incompetence can be observed. Therefore, humour can indeed enrich organisation studies as it indicates the paradox and ambiguity that exist in organisations by reflecting the 'contradictions, inconsistencies and incoherence of social organization' (Hatch and Ehrlich, 1993: 524).

4.6.3 Employee uses of humour

Apart from what humour reveals about a company, humour can also be seen for what it represents for the person who employs it. First of all, humour can be seen as a form of resistance to management when used by employees (Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995; Lynch and Schaefer, 2009) and may be used in order to express employee dissatisfaction especially when open disagreement is not a possibility (Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995). For example, Aristotle jokes about the indecision of their management (13th July: 'At least they decided'), Socrates and Plato joke about the decisions of management (14th August), Plato jokes about how 'ridiculous' the situation is with the work practices (16th August), Plato jokes about Donald's lack of action (17th August), Socrates jokes about the company's cost cutting and says that surely John wants to be collected from the airport for reasons of economy (3rd September) and Plato jokes about the fact that they do not want to do more work (4th September). In ZEUS the employees express not only their dissatisfaction but also their criticism towards management through jokes; in fact, the employees engage in 'decaf resistance' which they 'enjoy without the costs and risks involved' (Contu, 2008: 374) as these jokes occur only in the absence of their managers. Nevertheless, humour can be also seen as expressing resistance to managerial control while at the same time acknowledging it (Rodrigues and Collinson, 1995); in this case, the employees feel that they dis-identify themselves from the managerial situation (e.g. the incompetence of their managers) even though they are actually performing what their managers request (Fleming and Spicer, 2003).

Humour can also be seen as an effective ingratiation behaviour which aims to amuse others and consequently, strengthen relationships either between managers and subordinates or between colleagues themselves (Cooper, 2005). For example, when the employees joke with their managers (e.g. 17th, 24th, 25th, 26th July; 7th, 15th, 17th, 21st, 29th

August) they not only amuse their managers but also show them that they enjoy their company and the general working environment. On rather similar grounds, it could be argued that when employees joke with their colleagues not only do they create a pleasurable environment around them but also they prove that they are not management's puppets which all the time work and follow orders (e.g. the colleague who 'ran' to collect John on the 17th August). However, in this case, humour can be also seen as a means of conformity and control as it embodies the pressure to conform to certain attitudes (Collinson, 1988); as the accepted employee norm is to joke about one's managers, each employee feels that he/she has to comply with this so as not to be judged negatively by his/her peers. Therefore, it could be argued that the employees joke in order to conform to the expectations of their managers or their colleagues as an employee who does not joke or laugh appears not to fit in as expected and risks rejection from that culture (Schneider 1987; Brown, 1998). As being part of a group requires making an effort to behave according to the expected norms (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010), an employee who does not joke or laugh risks being socially isolated from them; for example, when Aristotle makes a positive comment about the fact that Georgia gets things done (16th July), Socrates and Plato seem to exchange a disapproving look which they possibly would not have exchanged if Aristotle had mocked Georgia's boastful attitude. The employees have to live up to certain expectations, one of which is being humorous, not only because their managers prefer them to do so but also because humour is considered as a good trait when it comes to social interaction.

As a middle way between resistance and ingratiation, humour can be seen as a means of communication; the employees use humour in order to send well-received and well-understood messages to both their colleagues and their managers (McIlheran, 2006). For example, when Socrates and Plato tease John about the fact that it is his turn to bring the drinks (25th July), this can be seen as a mere form of communication; the employees are neither expressing a kind of resistance to John nor ingratiating him but simply teasing him in a friendly way. Equally, when Plato jokes about John being away (4th September), he simply reminds Socrates of the funny incident when John had forgotten something and had to return. Humour 'spices up' conversations between managers and employees and between employees themselves and can be used as a relief from boredom but also as a relief to conflicts (Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap, 1990); jokes between employees about managerial confusion (e.g. 14th August), cost cutting (e.g. 7th August) or even misunderstandings (e.g. 29th August) seem to avoid the build-up of tension; for example, if Plato instead of simply jokingly branding John a 'bastard' (13th August) or saying that the

situation is 'ridiculous' (16th August), actually expressed his feelings to his managers, the conflict might have turned into a major incident.

In short, the ZEUS employees use humour for a variety of purposes. As a form of mild resistance, humour allows employees to release steam without creating tension with their managers; as a work-encouraged and socially-acceptable behaviour (i.e. behaviour appreciated at work and in society), humour enables the employees to be seen in a favourable light by both managers and colleagues; as a means of communication, humour offers employees the chance not only to emit clear messages but also to alleviate boredom at the workplace. As a conclusion, in ZEUS employee humour reflects the complexity of organisational life (Hatch, 1997) and has a positive result on the employees as it is not used offensively, intensively or inappropriately (Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap, 1990; Romero and Cruthirds, 2006; Lyttle, 2007; Romero and Pescosolido, 2008).

4.6.4 Managerial uses of humour

It could be argued that humour is used by managers as a means of communication which in fact enhances understanding and is generally well-received provided the sender of the message knows his/her audience (McIlheran, 2006). Therefore, the managers' jokes in ZEUS can be seen as an attempt to communicate with the employees or even as an attempt of the managers to strengthen their relationship with their subordinates (Cooper, 2005) as the need to be liked exists in human nature in different degrees (Liden and Mitchell, 1988). For example, John exchanges jokes and laughs together with the employees (e.g. 25th, 26th July; 17th, 21st August) and also Mary and Georgia employ humour as well (e.g. 1st, 27th, 29th August; 3rd, 5th September); the friendly teasing occurs and is encouraged at all levels as not only the managers tease each other (17th July, 21st August) but also the employees tease the managers (25th July, 21st August). In fact, managers use humour on many of their personal (i.e. not in emails or phone calls) interactions with the employees; even when they unexpectedly enter the office and do not find most of the employees at their desks (1st and 27th August) or even under crisis situations (3rd September), the managers seem to keep calm and continue smiling, laughing and joking.

However, the incident of the 16th July where Georgia jokes about the fact that she always gets what she wants work-wise combined with the evidence of Georgia's demanding requests (e.g. to Nicole or other employees and which do not come as a surprise to

Aristotle on the 24th September or to Socrates on the 26th September) can possibly serve as evidence of the fact that managers may often tailor humour in order to serve their needs. In this case, Georgia may be using a joke in order to remind others of her authority and warn them of her power in the company. Or stated in Goffman's (1975) terms, Georgia has created a character and tries to maintain it at any instance during her working hours; she wants to be seen as the successful female manager who has authority over men or at least as a powerful manager who has to be respected and possibly feared. It could be also argued that there is a possibility that Georgia merely shared the joke with Nicole so that they can simply laugh about the fact that a woman rules in the rather male-dominated company but due to the open desk plan the joke became audible by all who were working in the room. In this case, the 'glass cage' exposed Georgia (Gabriel, 2008: 314) as she did not realise that the others could listen the conversation. Nevertheless, as it cannot be said with certainty whether Georgia intended to be heard or not, this incident serves only as a possible explanation and not as proof of managerial oppression in ZEUS.

There is strong evidence from researchers that humour can be used as a tool by managers (Duncan, 1982; Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap, 1990; Romero and Cruthirds, 2006; Lyttle, 2007) as it has the potential to positively affect a group and contribute to its overall effectiveness (Romero and Pescosolido, 2008). Thus, in ZEUS managers may be using humour because of its physical (e.g. laughter as a health benefit), psychological (e.g. coping with pressure), social (e.g. 'social lubricant'), cognitive (e.g. creativity) benefits it has on the employees (Lyttle, 2007: 240), which in turn lead to organisational benefits such as increased employee productivity (Romero and Pescosolido, 2008) and thus, increased organisational performance. For example, when the managers seem to encourage a fun atmosphere (e.g. 17th, 24th, 25th, 26th July; 1st, 7th, 15th, 17th, 21st, 27th, 29th August; 3rd, 5th September), cynically speaking it could be argued that managers do not actually care for each employee per se but for what he/she is capable of offering to the company and so, they view each employee as an asset and their only concern is to use humour in order to gain organisational benefits. In this case, the fact that in the eyes of managers 'everything is, can be and must be predicted, planned for, and controlled' could be seen as hubristic self-delusion which exists in the sphere of managerial fantasy as it fails to take into account the complex reality and the instability of organisational life and it creates a narcissistic illusion which exaggerates the power of control (Gabriel, 1999: 198). Nevertheless, even if one accepts that humour is one of the things that can be controlled by managers, whether it ought to be managed is questionable; after all, not only it is morally debatable but also it clashes with the concept of the empowered employee.

One way or the other (i.e. whether managers use humour in order to enhance performance or simply in order to improve employee morale per se), the most important point is that humour can yield the desired results (Romero and Cruthirds, 2006) when it is used responsibly, judiciously and appropriately (Duncan, 1982; Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap, 1990; Romero and Cruthirds, 2006; Lyttle, 2007) and this theory is supported by the ZEUS evidence. Even though not reflected in their emails, the ZEUS managers seem to encourage reciprocal humour (Duncan, 1982) at work and the employees seem to be positively responding to it. The motive behind this is not clear but the results are clear; irrespective of whether the managers merely want to create a happy working environment or to enhance employee well-being with the scope of enhancing organisational performance, the fact is that the ZEUS managers successfully joke with the employees. In fact, face-to-face communication using humour (e.g. 25th, 26th July; 1st, 17th, 21st, 27th, 29th August; 3rd, 5th September) proved to be far more effective than electronic communication. Amidst the communication problems (e.g. contradictory emails), face-to-face humour appears to alleviate problems in ZEUS. Due to its clarity and due to the fact that it brings managers and employees closer, humour succeeds where the email fails; managerial humour not only improves communication but also opens the way for employee feedback as employees realise that humour is an acceptable way of expression in the workplace.

4.6.5 Ironic humour and cynicism

Ironic humour is built on contradiction but it is a fact that even an irony can be interpreted in a non-ironic way, depending on the interpreters (Hatch, 1997). Therefore, incidents in ZEUS which can be perceived as ironic by one observer, may be seen as mere manifestations of humour by others. For example, Socrates wonders slightly ironically 'But how can this happen when.....What would we do if this.....?' when John's instructions seem to contradict with current practice (13th July) and after Mary's email which contrasts John's one, he simply finds it 'Typical' whereas Plato rather amused says that 'This is ridiculous' and after the resolution comes, Aristotle says 'At least they decided' and smiles in a way that is not clear whether it is ironic or joking; on this occasion even if it is certain that Socrates is ironic (as his tone of voice and facial expression leave no doubts), whether Aristotle was being ironic or merely funny remains questionable. Equally, when Plato repeats Georgia's joke that she gets what she wants (16th July), his tone and facial expression suggest that he is not ironic but his reaction to Aristotle's comment about Georgia's hard work (where he and Socrates exchange a secret look) suggests that

maybe in fact he was being ironic or at least expecting to hear a negative comment from Aristotle instead of a praise for Georgia.

Nevertheless, there are cases where irony is not only in the eyes of the beholder as it is rather obvious. For example, managerial confusion in ZEUS undoubtedly results in some ironic comments. Socrates is ironic when his managers not only give conflicting orders but also contradict each other (13th July), Socrates and Plato make ironic comments when managerial orders do not comply with current work practice (14th, 16th, 20th August) or when the HRM manager (i.e. Donald) neglects to act after Plato's resignation (28th August). The ZEUS employees use irony in order to defend themselves from stress and overload (Hoyle and Wallace, 2008); in detail, their humour (pragmatic irony) is an attempt to cope with the nature of organisational life: the fact that formal goals are not always achievable (endemic irony) and the nature of the global market situation and its prevailing ideology that 'not only can everything be managed but everything should be managed' and hence, 'everything that matters can be measured and what can be measured can be managed' (ibid: 1435) (contingent irony). The main form of irony that prevails in ZEUS is pragmatic as this form of irony is the employee response which occurs in order to cope with the endemic and contingent ironies that characterise the social and organisational situation (ibid). Pragmatic irony is likely to occur at some point in every organisation as it is a response which protects employees from 'managerialism' (ibid: 1442) but in organisations like ZEUS where managerial ambiguity and lack of action are a fact, it is almost unavoidable; it is not a coincidence that when confused, employees were ironic (e.g. 13th July, 14th, 16th, 20th August) but when matters were more clear and their manager showed that he appreciated their opinion, they ceased being ironic (e.g. later in the day on the 14th August).

Irony is not to be seen as resistance as it is a response which apart from a prophylaxis 'against the excesses of managerialism' (ibid: 1442), also has a positive impact on organisational goals as employees still do what is requested (ibid). For example, after their ironic comments, both Socrates and Plato go back to work unaffected and definitely not angry. In fact, according to Hoyle and Wallace (ibid), ironic responses are acceptable as long as they do not result in cynicism, which even though difficult to distinguish from irony, refers to negative, disruptive, continuous and excessive self-interested behaviour (ibid). However, this position is debatable as this definition of cynicism not only fails to see the employee perspective on the matter (i.e. what is disruptive and negative from a managerial viewpoint is not necessarily disruptive and negative from an employee viewpoint) but also marginalises the cynic as a negative person who acts so due to his/her

problematic predisposition (i.e. excessive self-interest) when in fact, it is the organisational environment that often triggers employee cynicism; for example, inconsistent messages from managers such as the ones that the ZEUS managers emit have the potential to lead to employee cynicism (Hoogervorst, Flier and Koopman, 2004) as also does low trustworthiness and incompetence of top managers (Kim et al, 2009). Additionally, when managers tend to blur the traditional boundaries between 'work and nonwork', this can also result in employee cynicism (Fleming, 2005b: 289); for example, companies like ZEUS who encourage their employees to have fun while at work with the aim to increase organisational prosperity fail to realise not only that fun has to be appropriate for the work situation but also that in order to be authentic, fun has to be free of managerial control and authority (ibid).

Ironists are sceptics and not necessarily cynics (Hoyle and Wallace, 2008). For example, Socrates and Plato can be seen as ironists and sceptics due to the fact that they challenge their managers' positions and make ironic comments in private but they cannot necessarily be seen as cynics as their behaviour is neither excessive nor disruptive (i.e. in the eyes of their managers) and not even noticeable by their managers. Based on Hoyle and Wallace's (2008) element of continuation that exists in cynicism but without accepting their view of cynicism as a negative, disruptive and excessive self-interested behaviour, it could be said that cynicism mostly describes a behaviour which is characterised by constant irony and not a mere voicing of sporadic ironic comments as Socrates and Plato do. This view though does not accommodate a cynical attitude towards life; for example, Aristotle does not seem to use irony at work when compared with Socrates and Plato but there is a chance that he is in fact a cynic who simply silences as he feels that it is useless to even waste his energy pondering about his managers. However, irrespective of how cynicism manifests itself in a person (i.e. voicing constant irony or adopting a silent cynical attitude), the positive effect of cynicism in the workplace is evident; apart from being seen as a problem (ibid), a form of mild and safe resistance (Contu, 2008) or even a defence mechanism, cynicism can be seen as a 'success of corporate power relations' which allows employees to feel that they dis-identify themselves from power even though they are actually performing what a manager/organisation requests (Fleming and Spicer, 2003: 610). In fact, employees who are more cynical are less likely to express anger in the workplace and more likely to suppress their anger (Geddes and Callister, 2007). For example, both Socrates and Plato distance themselves from the positions and the actions of their managers but continue following their orders and working as they normally do after every incident (e.g. 14th, 16th, 20th, 28th August). Cynicism can be seen 'as the production of subjectivity' (Fleming, 2005a: 58) and not as a negative attitude; especially in the

context of the post-modern organisation which claims to be free of employee suppression and encourage the employees to speak-up, employee cynicism helps employees and managers alike as it enables employees to express themselves and yet accomplish the given tasks. As such, a negative interpretation of cynicism (e.g. Hoyle and Wallace, 2008) in the post-modern workplace not only denies the employee his/her subjectivity but also gives the impression that even though the modern organisation was satisfied to control the employee's body, the post-modern organisation seeks to control his/her mind as well.

4.6.6 Summary

According to the findings, the humour in ZEUS reflects not only the organisational culture but also the underlying power and bureaucracy schemes that exist along with the complexity of organisational life (Hatch, 1997) and depicts the 'contradictions, inconsistencies and incoherence of social organization' (Hatch and Ehrlich, 1993: 524) such as the managerial indecision. Employee humour in ZEUS reveals the complexity of organisational life (Hatch, 1997) and was found to have a positive effect on the employees as it was not used offensively, intensively or inappropriately (Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap, 1990; Romero and Cruthirds, 2006; Lyttle, 2007; Romero and Pescosolido, 2008). The ZEUS managers may be using humour as a mere means of communication with the employees (McIlheran, 2006) but there is also a possibility that they may be using humour due to its benefits on organisational performance through increased employee productivity (Duncan, 1982; Romero and Cruthirds, 2006; Lyttle, 2007; Romero and Pescosolido, 2008). Therefore, with the third research question in mind, it could be argued that irrespective of the motive behind it, managerial humour not only brought managers and employees closer but also opened the communication barriers between them. As far as the content of humour is concerned, ironic humour is not always detectable as it can depend on the interpreter (Hatch, 1997), but when it is, it should not be confused with cynicism as ironists are definitely sceptics but not necessarily cynics (Hoyle and Wallace, 2008). According to Hoyle and Wallace (*ibid*), cynics show negative, disruptive, continuous and excessive self-interested behaviour but this position is unattainable in the post-modern organisation; this research suggests that if in a post-modern organisation one accepts that cynicism is a negative and disruptive attitude, he/she not only fails to see that cynical employees still perform managerial requests (Fleming and Spicer, 2003) but also discovers a problem: that contrary to its claims against employee suppression, the post-modern organisation does not allow the employees freedom of speech and even deprives them from having an opinion; if this is the case, the post-modern organisation

has failed to adhere to the promises it has made to employees, to society and even to itself (Wilson Shaef and Fassel, 1988).

5 Conclusions, implications and reflections

5.1 Summary of the situation in ZEUS

As the theatre metaphor not only provides an insight into the theatricality which characterises everyday life (e.g. Goffman, 1981) but also has explanatory power when it comes to understanding behaviour, the ZEUS office can be metaphorically seen as a stage where managers and employees mutually perform certain characters (ibid, 1975). Employees and managers alike live up to the expectations of the work identity they have created for themselves (Hewlin, 2003), consciously following the required social conventions and agreements (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010). In a workplace where conformity and 'fitting in' (Schneider, 1987; Brown, 1998) seem to play a vital role, the employees are obliged to 'fit in' (Goffman, 1966) and thus, they perform in order to appear they fit in.

The findings of this study show that ZEUS is experiencing communication problems. Although downward communication is frequent and sufficient in both quantity and quality as the managers communicate daily with the employees via different means, the employees end up confused and unsatisfied due to the fact that the managerial messages are inconsistent with the work practices and they create a gap between what is said and reality. The problems do not stem from the use of the wrong media or the lack of information richness of the used media (e.g. email) but mostly due to the intentional or unintentional incorrect use of the media (Markus, 1994; Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004; O'Kane, Palmer and Hargie, 2007); the contradictory content of the communicated messages makes the conversation collapse (Mengis and Eppler, 2008). Amidst these problems the managers do not engage in 'open and honest two-way communication' with the employees (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004: 374) and the employees do not appear to offer any 'critical upward communication' (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 711) to their managers and discuss the matter only between them. Despite the fact that the value of communication is evident in the official discourse and even though the post-modern organisation theory claims that the flow of information is abundant and employees are empowered (Daft, 2000), in practice managers do not communicate effectively as they often emit contradictory messages and do not encourage employee feedback (Faÿ, 2008).

Another paradox seems to exist in management-employee relations. Even though at first sight the managers and employees appear to be having friendly relations, the employees

do not appear to be very happy while at work. As if in a Goffmanesque play (Goffman, 1975), managers and employees, following the relevant conventions that surround behaviour (ibid, 1966, 1981, 2005, 2010), seem to try to live up to the expectations that the post-modern organisation discourse has created for them (e.g. Daft, 2000); as such, one encounters the theatrical characters of the agreeable employees (who complain only in the absence of their managers) and the powerful yet caring managers (who may be staging their supposed private face or even having sinister motives). The employees seem to conform to their managers' requests but distance themselves from ingratiation and comment negatively about it; the appearance of a happy workplace seems to hide the reality of an unhappy workforce as the employees approve neither the actions of their managers nor the company policy.

In ZEUS the complex, ambiguous and often paradoxical work reality renders employee sensemaking challenging and makes one wonder whether effective communication can ever be achieved in practice. The ZEUS workplace seems not only to deviate considerably from the post-modern ideals but also to accommodate the existence of post-modern and modern elements. The employees deal with complex problems and manage to make sense even though their managers give them conflicting orders. Irrespective of whether fitting in is a prerequisite for making sense or making sense is a prerequisite for fitting in, the main point seems to be the notion of fitting in. Based on the concept that the employees who do not fit in an organisational culture get rejected (Brown, 1998), it could be said that the ZEUS employees seem to be fitting in in the company environment as, unless they decide to leave (Schneider, 1987), they are obliged to follow the relevant rules of participation (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010).

In ZEUS hierarchical power prevails and power differences exist. The work environment is informal and friendly and teamwork prevails but elements of the modern organisation, such as bureaucracy, vertical hierarchy, centralisation, seem to still exist and the employees are not empowered. Distinguishing between conformity and resistance is not easy not only because it depends on the viewpoint but also because often the impulse to resist gets countered (Kärreman and Alvesson, 2009) and because the element of performance (Goffman, 1975) tends to overshadow reality. The employees appear to conform so as to safeguard their already insecure jobs (i.e. they are contractors); in private they do complain and occasionally they do get angry and some even powerfully and theatrically exit the workplace.

Humour in ZEUS reveals not only the 'culture of fun' (Fleming, 2005b) that the managers try to promote but also the power and bureaucracy schemes as well as the complexity of organisational life (Hatch, 1997) and the 'contradictions, inconsistencies and incoherence of social organization' (Hatch and Ehrlich, 1993: 524) (e.g. managerial indecision). Employee humour in ZEUS affects employees positively as it is used appropriately (Duncan, Smeltzer and Leap, 1990; Romero and Cruthirds, 2006; Lyttle, 2007; Romero and Pescosolido, 2008) and in fact, face-to-face communication with humour is proved to be more effective than electronic communication. Even though humour can be seen as a mere means of communication (McIlheran, 2006), it is plausible that the ZEUS managers might be utilising humour due to its positive effects on organisational performance through increased employee productivity (Duncan, 1982; Romero and Cruthirds, 2006; Lyttle, 2007; Romero and Pescosolido, 2008). Nevertheless, irrespective of its motives, managerial humour improves communication between managers and employees.

In short, the ZEUS employees are not empowered (as they have no work autonomy), enjoy limited job security (as they are contractors) and receive one-way and often problematic communication from their managers (with the exception of the incidents of successful two-way face-to-face communication where humour was used) but yet appear to be fitting in the workplace due to the fact that the 'social order' (Goffman, 1966: 8 and 2010: ixx) of the organisation obliges them to do so. Therefore, even though appearances portray ZEUS as a caring, fair and generally pleasant place, the reality differs; the ZEUS situation creates not only a gap between the rhetoric and the reality of post-modern organisation theory but also depicts a case where the supposed post-modern organisation coexists with the modern organisation. This clash between reality and appearance (e.g. happy-unhappy workforce, public-private performances, care-neglect from managers) not only harms the image of the post-modern organisation as a place where charismatic managers, understanding, respect, motivation, inspiration, empowerment, reward and effective communication prevail (e.g. Daft, 2000) but also challenges whether this image actually exists.

From a critical perspective, the whole mind-set behind the 'fitting in in the workplace' assumption is debatable; the post-modern organisation theory's belief in the notion of 'fitting in' not only ignores individuality but also reveals its preference for homogeneity among its workforce (Willmott, 1993; Boje and Winsor, 1993). Even though the element of performance (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) that exists in the workplace makes employees appear to fit in the place and thus, support the 'fitting-in' discourse, actual fitting-in does not occur due to the complex notion of power struggle (Gabriel, 1999;

Mumby, 2005; Fleming and Spicer, 2008) that exists in organisations. As power and resistance are not mutually exclusive phenomena but two contradictory elements (Mumby, 2005) which co-exist in a complex struggle (Gabriel, 1999; Mumby, 2005; Fleming and Spicer, 2008), each individual involved should be seen as capable of both 'controlling and being controlled' as well as 'losing control and escaping control' (Gabriel, 1999: 198). For example, when the post-modern organisation utilises surveillance in order to supervise and 'normalise' employees (Foucault, 1977) and the employees respond accordingly (e.g. by pretending to work), there is no actual fitting in but only an appearance of fitting in. Hence, in practice, the post-modern organisation closely observes employee actions and creates conditions which promote self-discipline (Boje and Winsor, 1993) while in theory, it promises more freedom to the employees.

Humour has indeed the potential to alleviate problems and improve communication but under the watchful eye of the post-modern organisation, even humour can be subjected to censoring; the post-modern organisation may occasionally be lenient towards ironic humour, which in fact is not always detectable as it depends on the interpreter (Hatch, 1997), but not towards cynicism. For example, Hoyle and Wallace (2008) describe cynicism as a negative, disruptive, continuous and excessive self-interested behaviour even though the reality is that cynical employees do perform their managers' requests (Fleming and Spicer, 2003) and do freely express their opinion. Nevertheless, if in a post-modern organisation like ZEUS one accepts that cynicism is a negative and disruptive attitude which is to be frowned upon, he/she not only fails to see the reality (i.e. that cynical employees are productive) but also encounters an organisation which does not allow the employees freedom of speech; if this is the case, the post-modern organisation has not kept the promises it has made to employees, to society and even to itself (Wilson Shaef and Fassel, 1988).

As such, the claims of the post-modern organisation theory along with the rather simplistic assumptions of some of the existing literature on communication (e.g. that organisations are 'communication culture[s]' (Cameron, 2000: pgviii)) need to be re-evaluated and re-defined in the search for a more critical understanding of communication. Communication is a complex and multidimensional process (Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004) which extends beyond the notion of downward communication and its impacts extend beyond the notion of organisational success; according to the findings of this research, communication is related to power and, as every other aspect of behaviour in the workplace, is influenced by the existence of certain rules, conventions and agreements

(Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) which shape organisational psychology and interpersonal relations.

5.2 Addressing the research questions

5.2.1 Research Question 1: Individual employee reactions to management communication

In this study, the responses of each individual to managerial communication were not always similar; mood changes, passion, calmness, confusion, anger, scepticism, humour, cynicism, stoicism and silence were all part of the agenda but were not experienced by all employees and at all times. Unsurprisingly, different situations triggered different reactions whereas often even a single situation brought about different reactions among employees (i.e. different levels of intensity of the same reaction or even completely different reactions). Different reactions to management communication occurred not only due to situational differences but also due to personal differences as individuals differ not only in character but also in their perception and evaluation of different situations; human behaviour is a purposeful and meaningful action (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000) which should be seen as a constant and complex interaction between personal and situational characteristics (Terborg, 1981). Each individual has a different personality and comprehends the world differently (Cohen and Taylor, 1976) and hence, agreeing with Terborg (1981) and applying what is suggested about anger to behavioural reactions in general, it 'is a function of person and situation' (Kuppens et al, 2007: 710) as it is the particular and the general situation that influence the response and not the narrow personality traits (Böddeker and Stemmler, 2000).

In detail, Socrates is usually following managerial requests but when managerial communication is problematic (i.e. contradicting/confusing such as on the 13th July, 14th and 16th August), he does make sure to point out the 'grey areas' to his colleagues and even occasionally speaks up to his line manager by asking him questions (e.g. 14th August). Even though he says he is not afraid of his managers as they are human after all (28th August) and makes ironic comments about them to his colleagues (e.g. 13th July, 14th August), he always accepts their decisions in the end (17th August, 29th August) as they are the ones who decide and know what needs to be done. He is not surprised to see employees leave the company as he feels that this is a direct result of the company's management and overall policy (e.g. 15th August) which he generally disapproves.

Aristotle's presence in the office is less noticeable when compared to Socrates' and Plato's presence not only because he often works in the other office (i.e. offshore) but also because he is rather quiet when in the office; he does not complain and is not ironic even when Socrates and Plato are doing so when management emit contradicting/confusing messages (e.g. 13th July, 16th August). After receiving conflicting/confusing managerial messages he is often thoughtful and engages in discussions with his colleagues but unlike Socrates and Plato he seems to merely accept the fact that things are not that good. Out of the three of them, he is the most lenient in his judgement of his managers (however, the fact that he is less involved could possibly play a role as well); amidst the problems, he acknowledges that John and Georgia are hard-working (13th July and 16th July respectively) and does not seem to put the blame on them the way Socrates and Plato do; even when the behaviour of Georgia is unacceptable (i.e. when she orders others such as on the 24th September), he merely sees her as occasionally being 'sharp'. Although he is aware of the managerial and general company problems and takes part in discussions with his colleagues about them, he is still surprised to see people leaving the company and contrary to Socrates, his opinion is that some employees simply want to move on in life (30th August).

Plato is the newest employee in the office and his presence does not go unnoticed as he is louder and more expressive than Aristotle. He smiles, jokes and appears to be in a good mood at most times, even when management request him to do things he does not wish to do (e.g. 25th July) or when they change his plans without informing him (31st August). He is confused and surprised with the problematic managerial communication situation and occasionally exchanges ironic comments with Socrates about it (e.g. 14th August) and on two occasions he actually exclaims that the situation is 'ridiculous' (13th July, 16th August). On one hand, he is in good terms with management to the point that his colleagues see his behaviour as potential ingratiation (i.e. when on the 16th July he repeats that Georgia gets things done and when on the 15th August he tells her to take as much stationery as she likes as she is management) whereas on the other hand he makes harsh judgements about them in their absence (e.g. when managers conflict each other, when he thinks John has not replied to his resignation email). Although he disapproves of their actions, he shows respect for his managers (e.g. he apologises to Mary when he feels he may have crossed the border with his joke) and in fact slightly fears their power (i.e. on the 28th August he wonders what would happen if Donald heard the negative comments he and Socrates made about him). Nevertheless, despite his good mood while at work, he ends up resigning due to personal reasons but also stating that he is 'fed up' with the managers (13th August).

Although all three employees seem to be dissatisfied with their managers' conflicting messages and the company policy, they appear to follow managerial requests while assuming the 'agreeable employee' performance. Even though they all hide their feelings in front of their managers, each of them presents a different 'character' (Goffman, 1975) when it comes to expressing their disapproval. Socrates is the sceptic protagonist who points out the problems (often with the use of irony) to his colleagues, mildly challenges his line manager by asking him questions and yet cynically accepts his work reality and respects managerial decisions despite his disapproval in private (i.e. in the absence of managers). Aristotle is the quiet secondary/supporting character who stoically accepts every managerial action and absurd message without complaining or making ironic comments. Plato as the loud, more passionate and seemingly happy new character seems to support Socrates' stance but unlike Socrates, he is cautious toward management and in the end he exits the stage (citing personal reasons but also indicating that the managers played a role in his decision) as the hero who finally got the attention he was promised and he deserved.

No matter to what extent they disapprove of certain things, when in front of their managers, the employees perform and maintain the face (ibid, 2005) of the 'obedient employee' who shows respect to the 'social order' (ibid, 1966: 8; ibid, 2010: ixx) of ZEUS. The rule of participation obliges employees to behave in a way that is considered situationally appropriate (ibid, 1966) since, like in everyday life, the workplace cannot accommodate a person who does not support the desired values (ibid, 2010). An individual who does not play his/her role in the 'ritual', threatens not only his/her personal image but also the image of others (ibid, 2005) as he/she disrupts their performance as well (ibid, 1975). In short, the rules and norms that surround the workplace dictate that participants in a situation shall behave accordingly or else the consequences will be negative for them (ibid, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010). As such, the ZEUS employees, like most employees who wish to safeguard their job, make a conscious effort to satisfy or at least not to dissatisfy their managers. Even though in private the employees react negatively to problematic managerial communication and the overall company culture, in front of their managers the employees pretend that everything is okay and the managers seem to accommodate the situation.

Irrespective of whether the managers are oblivious of this 'agreeable/obedient employee' act or happy to accommodate it due to its convenience (e.g. they are not challenged), the point is that the claims of the post-modern organisation cannot support this distorted reality; if managers are not in a position to understand or choose not to see the reality

behind employee behaviour, the claims of the post-modern theory about the ability of managers to understand the needs of the employees and motivate them are possibly overestimated. Undoubtedly, the employee performance that occurs at the workplace creates homogeneity among the workforce and certainly makes things easier for managers; however, the fact that managers encourage or even aim to create overall uniformity (Boje and Winsor, 1993) and ignore pluralism or even try to eliminate it, is morally questionable (Willmott, 1993) to say the least. The post-modern organisation as it currently stands in the case of ZEUS does not seem to be in a position to completely detach itself from all the values of the modern organisation and thus, certain elements of post-modern organisation theory need to be critically examined and re-assessed so that the rhetoric does not clash with reality.

5.2.2 Research Question 2: Recurring behavioural patterns among employees

Based on the ZEUS findings, interpersonal variation is noted in relation to employee behaviour. Socrates' behaviour is mostly characterised by scepticism. He deeply thinks about the nature of the work guidelines and procedures which the managers communicate, places them in the general work and company policy context, analyses the repercussions they have on the employees and points out the inconsistencies (e.g. 13th July, 14th August, 16th August); he maintains his calmness at most times yet his comments are often ironic when he refers to the problematic managerial situation in ZEUS. Although he finds the managerial situation deeply confusing and problematic, he seems to have adopted a cynical attitude to work where he simply waits for the managers to finally decide what needs to be done (e.g. 13th July, 30th August); he appears to be quite dissatisfied with the situation in ZEUS and yet he continues working in it as he has done for many years. Aristotle, who equally has been working in the company for many years, has a more stoic attitude as, contrary to Socrates, he does not even complain about the situation; like Socrates and Plato, he does get confused when managers emit conflicting messages and recognises the problem but he remains rather quiet and neither makes ironic comments nor complains much about it (e.g. 13th July, 16th and 30th August). The behaviour of newcomer Plato is characterised by his more passionate disposition (when compared to Socrates and Aristotle) and his almost constant good mood and humorous attitude. Like Socrates, he seems disturbed by the fact that managers cannot act in unison and often is ironic (e.g. 14th August) about it but unlike Socrates, he slightly loses his temper under certain occasions (e.g. he finds the managerial contradiction and indecision 'ridiculous' on the 13th July and on the 16th August). Like Socrates and Aristotle, he gets

surprised and confused when he receives conflicting managerial requests but unlike them, he ends up resigning.

As far as the intrapersonal behavioural variation is concerned, the cases of both Socrates and Plato are worth noting. Plato, as the newest of the employees, is characterised by his constant happiness and humour, which he does not lose even at difficult or awkward times and yet he surprisingly resigns. He resigns and officially attributes his decision to personal matters but the fact that he became 'fed up' with the managerial situation (as he informally confessed to his colleague) surely played a role in his decision; in fact, according to his colleagues, he left because management did not keep their promises to him. Therefore, there is suspicion that Plato might have not resigned if his managers had shown more appreciation towards him or if the managers adopted a different behaviour towards the employees. On rather similar grounds, Socrates' and Plato's irony regarding managerial inconsistency and lack of clarity would possibly have been eliminated if their managers emitted consistent and clear messages to the employees. Both Socrates and Plato do not use irony towards their colleagues but only when they make comments about their managers under certain occasions; in fact, when their line manager clarifies the situation to them, it is not a coincidence that Socrates and Plato cease to be ironic. As such, even though one's disposition may play a role when it comes to irony (e.g. Aristotle does not use it), the materialisation of this tendency seems to be linked to the working environment and in this case, specific managerial actions.

As far as collective employee behaviour is concerned, it can be divided into two categories: behaviour towards colleagues and behaviour towards managers. In detail, when it comes to behaviour towards their peers, the employees appear to be on friendly terms; they cooperate during tasks, talk about work and non-work matters and often joke with each other. When it comes to behaviour that occurs in relation to their managers, certain patterns are observed. The employees respond positively to managerial humour (with the exception of Georgia's joke) and management care and negatively to employee ingratiation, managerial neglect and inconsistent/unclear managerial communication. Although they seem to accommodate the fact that they are the recipients of managerial orders and are neither empowered nor have an active part in the decision-making process, they are confused, concerned and dissatisfied with the problematic communication and the company policy changes that affect their work. However, their negative feelings are only expressed in discussions which occur between them in the absence of their managers. In the presence of their managers, the employees do not offer any 'critical upward communication' (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 711) even though they

appear to be in friendly terms with their managers and even joke with them. The employees seem to conform to managerial requests and to the general situation by merely avoiding to reveal in public what they do reveal in private; on most occasions when they see or speak to their managers, they do not challenge them and behave as if they do not have any issues with the way their managers act or the company works; whether they are confused, worried or disagreeing, they simply discuss the matter only between them (with the exception of Socrates' questions to his manager on certain occasions).

In short, each employee has a different stance towards management but all employees react in a similar way when it comes to their negative feelings which stem from their managers' actions; they neither challenge their managers nor complain to them but choose to hide their feelings from them and act as if everything is going well. The employees due to the existence of organisational and individual characteristics in daily verbal and nonverbal situations consciously create representations which portray them as embracing organisational values (Hewlin, 2003) and inhibit not only resistance but even 'critical upward communication' (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 711); the 'dissentive voice' is either mildly expressed or completely silenced (ibid: 713). This does not come as a surprise; according to Goffman (1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010), individuals tend to constrain themselves and act in certain ways in order to be seen as behaving appropriately during a situation which occurs in the presence of others. Social organisation, whether it is mere public order or the workplace, obliges individuals to fit in, show respect to the relevant rules and norms and sustain the desired values (ibid); in a society which does not seem to easily forgive situational improprieties (ibid, 1966, 2005), the individual has to present him/herself in a certain way (ibid, 1975) and maintain his/her face (ibid, 2005). The workplace is a prime example of a place where social order obliges individuals to behave in a way which indicates respect to the relevant rules and norms of behaviour in order to assimilate in and be accepted (ibid, 1966, 2010). As such, employees, as every human being in society in general, perform in order to present themselves in everyday life and show their private face only when they are offstage (i.e. with their colleagues) (ibid, 1975).

Nevertheless, the problem does not lie in the notion of 'performance' per se but with the fact that this 'performance' seems to be underestimated in theory. Accepting that some elements of theatricality are unavoidable not only in the workplace but also when it comes to behaviour in general as individuals in public are not meant to be seen acting 'in a situationally inappropriate way' (ibid, 1981: 85), the question is to what extent the post-modern organisation theory takes into consideration these 'performance' patterns. The

post-modern organisation discourse takes great pride in promoting the idea of the contented and empowered employee who not only participates in decisions but also is encouraged to voice his/her opinion to his/her managers (Daft, 2000); amidst this rhetoric it is difficult to accommodate the employee who does not feel comfortable to talk to his/her managers and chooses to bottle-up his/her emotions instead of speaking-up.

5.2.3 Research Question 3: Style of management communication and employee responses

The findings of the ZEUS study suggest that irrespective of the style of management communication used, in the presence of their managers the employees usually seem to have a single response; they merely seem to accept what their managers do or tell them without challenging or even questioning them. The employees create 'facades of conformity' (Hewlin, 2003: 633) in their daily effort to present themselves and maintain a face which is deemed situationally appropriate by their managers as the workplace, like any other social organisation, does not easily forgive situationally inappropriate behaviour (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010). As such, the employees seem to be in constant friendly terms and good relations with their managers not only when their managers are friendly/caring towards them but also when their managers under- or mis-communicate (e.g. when they do not inform them about policy changes or when they emit conflicting messages) and even when they are demanding (i.e. Georgia) or uncaring/neglectful (i.e. Donald). The employees seem to enjoy their time with their managers and feel comfortable around them (e.g. they joke and discuss work and non-work related matters with John) yet 'critical upward communication' is absent as the employees choose to mildly express (e.g. when Socrates asks John questions in order to clarify the 'grey' area) or simply silence (e.g. as the employees do on most 'problematic' occasions) their non-supportive voice (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 711).

However, when their managers are not present, the employees do express themselves by discussing critically between them and frequently express disapproval and negative feelings against the managers' actions and the company's policy. When their managers issue requests which contradict the existing work practices and fail to clarify working procedures (e.g. 13th July, 14th August, 16th August) or simply cannot decide what needs to be done (e.g. 20th August), the employees are extensively discussing it; the employees do get confused, concerned, surprised, amused and they highly disapprove of the situation and this is reflected in their comments which are often ironic (in the case of

Socrates and Plato). The employees do not lose their patience even though the problematic managerial communications seem to occur rather often; the ambiguous work practices and the managerial indecision about them appear to create problems to the employees quite often but after discussing about it between them, the employees merely return to work in the same manner as they usually do. The employees appear seemingly unaffected with the communication problem but it cannot be argued that they work in an ideal working environment. Their managers may be friendly, understanding/caring and try to promote a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere but the communication problems do persist. Although the employees seem to be lenient with their managers when they are demanding (e.g. Georgia's 'sharp' attitude on the 24th September) or forgetting to tell them about important policy changes (7th August), they dislike to be ignored (e.g. by Donald who does not respond to them when it comes to their pay problem) and get confused and highly frustrated when they are given conflicting orders.

The communication problem does not seem to stem so much from the style of managerial communication but from its content. With the exception of Donald's case (where he seems to simply avoid/ignore the employees) and Georgia's occasionally 'sharp' behaviour, ironically, seemingly polite requests appear to create problems. For example, Georgia's email (16th July) which states that something should be done by the end of the week and 'If not, I want to know what the problem is' does not seem to elicit any negative employee responses whereas John's update on the 13th July triggers an employee discussion. The employees seem to follow their managers' requests on a daily basis without complaining about it in private as long as these requests are not opposing work practices. Acknowledging that their managers are the ones to decide (13th July), they seem dissatisfied when their managers cannot decide (20th August) but satisfied when they are told with clarity what to do (30th August). The employees seem to accept the fact that their job requires them to follow requests not only from their line manager but also from Mary and Georgia but they are frustrated when they cannot work due to conflicting managerial requests.

Even though managerial email communications seem to elicit more negative responses than face-to-face or telephone communications, it can be argued that this occurs not because of the medium used per se but because of the fact that face-to-face or telephone discussions usually offer the needed clarifications as they allow the relevant parties to exchange opinions instantly through dialogue. As Markus (1994) suggests, the behaviour of people (i.e. availability and responsiveness) determines the success of a medium; emails in ZEUS do not fail because they are not rich enough but because the managers

are using them incorrectly by sending inconsistent messages (ibid). In ZEUS the email seems very valuable as many people at different locations receive it and as the messages it carries are kept in writing (ibid) but when it carries inconsistent messages without offering the chance for dialogue, it creates problems. In short, most of the negative employee responses in ZEUS occur due to the ambiguous content of the communicated message, irrespective of the medium used; the employees find it unacceptable that their managers' requests come into contrast with existing working procedures and do not seem able to decide what needs to be done about it. These problems intensify when the employees do not have the chance to engage in a dialogue with their managers so as to receive clarifications or at least ask questions whereas when the employees receive clarifications or a promise that the managers will reassess matters and come to a decision, the situation improves.

Several examples support this view. First, the contradictory emails (13th July: John's email which contradicts work procedures and is followed by Mary's email which replies to John that this cannot be done) have a negative impact on the employees whereas John's call that follows (which not only announces the managerial decision but also gives the chance to Socrates to ask questions) seems to resolve the issue. Second, when John discusses problematic areas with the employees and cannot reply to Socrates' questions (14th July audio meeting), even though they end up joking about it in the end, the employees later comment negatively about it whereas they do not do so when John calls again and says that management will review their decisions. Third, when Socrates half-jokingly asks John about the problem in person (20th August), John shows understanding and goes to speak to Georgia and the employees do not comment further about it afterwards. Fourth, when Plato phones Mary in order to clarify her email and talks with her (21st August), the employees accept her decision 'since she said so'. The employees do comment negatively (and ironically) on situations where their managers issue conflicting requests, do not give clarifications or do not have a single opinion on work matters but the problems are solved or at least improved when they have the chance to interact with their managers (say their opinion, ask questions, receive clarifications or a promise that a decision will follow, joke about it). After these phone or face-to-face interactions, although the employees do not cease to be sceptic about the problems (since they persist), they cease to be ironic and do not engage in further discussions between them about it.

Face-to-face communication with humour (20th August) and then phone calls (13th July and 21st August) appeared to produce better results than emails (13th July). The email created problems when it transferred ambiguous meanings (as also did the audio meeting

of the 14th August) whereas when the employees were given the chance to ask questions regarding a managerial decision (13th July, 21st August) or able to point the problem to their manager and convince him that things need to be reassessed (14th July, 20th August), the situation improved. Therefore, face-to-face communication and phone calls appeared to alleviate the problems caused by emails; during problems, non-electronic communication clarified the ambiguous content of the email and allowed employees to voice their questions and concerns and as such, employees became less confused and hence, they were able to work. In short, in ZEUS the employees reacted negatively to contradictory emails (irrespective of their style) as these created confusion among them. Nevertheless, although in private (i.e. between them) they extensively discussed about the problem on different occasions, in public (i.e. in the presence of their managers) they sporadically and mildly expressed their concern about it (i.e. only Socrates asks questions to John about the 'grey area'). Even though the employees expressed no clear 'supportive voice' to their managers, the mildly 'dissentive voice' of Socrates combined with the silenced voice of Aristotle and Plato acted as a 'supporting voice' in the ears of their managers (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 713). As most individuals who participate in situations and behave according to the 'social order' that surround them (Goffman, 1966: 8 and 2010, ix), employees seem to prefer the safe, low-risk and high-reward option which managers approve (Tourish and Robson, 2006). Since this option is encouraged by managers (ibid), the absence of 'critical upward communication' (ibid: 711) is not only linked with power but also affected by power and as such, it has to be examined in relation to the element of power.

5.2.4 Research Question 4: How the element of power affects the responses of employees

The ZEUS employees are not satisfied with the status quo in the company as the confusion their managers create disrupts their work. Although the employees seem comfortable with their managers, during problems they discuss only with their colleagues and voice their complaints in the absence of their managers. In Goffman's (1975) terms, the employees choose to hide their private face from their managers and as if on a stage, they perform only their public face in front of their managers. Undeniably, feelings are subjective experiences whereas emotions are outward displays of these experiences and as such, these displays can be disguised or even faked in the presence of others (Gabriel, Fineman and Sims, 2000). Nevertheless, the complete absence of 'critical upward communication' (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 711) extends far beyond the notion of merely

disguising or altering certain aspects of behaviour and certainly clashes with the post-modern organisation discourse about the empowered employee and the optimum communication schemes (e.g. Daft, 2000).

It could be argued that employees consciously create 'facades of conformity' due to the existence of organisational and individual characteristics (Hewlin, 2003: 633) and do not challenge their managers because this is a safe option (Tourish and Robson, 2006) and/or because they realise that their opinion does not matter since managers do not like to be questioned (Faÿ, 2008); in this case, the ZEUS employees are not empowered and are expected to follow the requests of those who have power (i.e. their managers) and therefore, they choose to appear as conforming. However, the reality is that the root of the problem stems from the ability of power to shape not only relations but also 'social order' (Goffman, 1966: 8 and 2010: ixx) in the workplace. In this case, whoever has the power reins in the organisation, has the ability to shape the 'play' by establishing 'the rules of the game'. Although the employees appear to react in a way they do as a direct response to the actual content of communication and not to power per se and although the employees are dissatisfied with their managers apparently because they emit inconsistent messages and not because they merely have power, the 'When Georgia says, we jump!' joke (26th July) clearly summarises the culture that surrounds employee behaviour in ZEUS; each employee may respond slightly differently to managerial power (e.g. Socrates is more critical than Aristotle) but in essence they all recognise and accept its dominance in the workplace.

In detail, as the prison has the power not only to punish but also to discipline the inmates (Foucault, 1977), equally the workplace has the ability to produce the desired behaviours. The organisation resembles a prison which carries out behaviour altering, training and correction (ibid); employees are measured and hierarchised, the desired conformity is introduced (i.e. what is considered normal) and the rules that ought to be followed are set (ibid). In a place like this, the employee is subject to a 'binary division and branding' (ibid: 199) where behaviour can be either normal and acceptable or abnormal and unacceptable. As Foucault suggests, individuals are produced by power (Townley, 1998), organisations are 'grounded in power relations' (McKinlay and Starkey, 1998b: 111) and power is inescapable since it resides in relationships (Burrell, 1998). However, where Foucault's (1977) 'Discipline and Punish' fails to emphasise the individual's willingness to conform (Findlay and Newton, 1998; Hoppen and Macintosh, 1998; McKinlay and Taylor, 1998), Goffman's work (1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) covers the gap as he explains

how the individual willingly modifies his/her behaviour according to the rules, norms and conventions in order to be accepted as part of a group and society in general.

Hence, the argument follows: as individuals willingly 'obey' the behaviour rules required for participation in a social organisation (public order or workplace) (ibid) and as power resides in social organisation and sets the desired level of conformity and the relevant rules (Foucault, 1977), therefore, individuals willingly 'obey' the rules that power sets. Power creates 'social order' (Goffman, 1966: 8 and 2010: ix); defining which behaviour is appropriate for a situation (ibid, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010), tolerating situational improprieties only under certain circumstances (ibid, 1966, 2005, 2010) and 'obliging participants to 'fit in'' (ibid, 1966: 11), power influences the way individuals present themselves (ibid, 1975) and determines the 'face' that a person has to maintain (ibid, 2005). Hence, in the workplace power is what shapes employee 'performances' (ibid, 1975); the managers, based on their notion of desirable behaviour, set the relevant rules and norms and the employees willingly constrain themselves to sustain the desired values (ibid, 2010). As social norms regulate relationships and organisations and as social organisation does not easily forgive individuals who do not fit in the relevant social frame (ibid), the individual has to appear to fit in. As persons who transgress the legal order are put in jails and as persons who transgress the social order are put in asylums (ibid, 1966), equally persons who transgress the organisational order risk facing isolation or punishment; organisational power has the ability to punish and discipline employees and therefore, most employees even in the post-modern organisation are in a way obliged to put on an appearance of conformity and as such, this has several implications for organisational theory.

5.3 Implications for theory

According to the findings of this study a dilemma arises; either ZEUS is not a post-modern organisation or some of the claims of the post-modern organisation theory have to be re-evaluated in order to examine whether they can be actually materialised in practice. However, the fact that ZEUS is a global company operating within the oil industry at an international level and the fact that this study took place in Britain, calls for a re-assessment of the claims of the post-modern organisation theory, at least in certain contexts. Accepting that ZEUS is a post-modern organisation, the realisation comes that at least in practice working in a post-modern organisation is not as ideal as the post-modern organisation theory suggests (e.g. Daft, 2000). Nevertheless, a more sinister

option may exist; this 'weakness' of the post-modern organisation theory (i.e. the fact that theory does not coincide with organisational reality) may be deliberate in the case that post-modern organisation theory is a form of rhetoric designed to conveniently disguise something else (e.g. continuation of coercive work practices). In short, irrespective of whether post-modern organisation theory is merely flawed or intentionally has a hidden agenda (e.g. Boje and Winsor, 1993), the fact remains that organisational practice defies many aspects of post-modern organisation theory.

The employees are far from empowered and communication is far from ideal. The employees are entangled in the complex power struggle which exists in the workplace (Gabriel, 1999; Mumby, 2005; Fleming and Spicer, 2008) and often cynicism (Fleming and Spicer, 2003) and the absence of 'critical upward communication' (Tourish and Robson, 2006: 711) prevail as the only option to managerial derision (Faÿ, 2008) and the inappropriate use of the communication media (Markus, 1994; Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004; O'Kane, Palmer and Hargie, 2007). Even though managers seem to value a 'culture of fun' (Fleming, 2005b: 289), fun may never be an experience at work not only because the private is always distinguished from the public sphere (Goffman, 1975) but also because of the questionable nature of the general motives of the post-modern organisation; there is suspicion that the post-modern organisation is trying to create or at least appreciating homogeneity among its workforce (Willmott, 1993) and promoting the debatable notion of 'fitting in' the place (Schneider, 1987; Brown, 1998).

Additionally, the communication problems of ZEUS not only portray the fact that workplace communication is far from ideal but also suggest that the complexity of communication at the workplace is often not taken into consideration by theorists. Several communication theories (e.g. Smidts, Pruyn and Van Riel, 2001; Mayfield and Mayfield, 2002; De Ridder, 2004; Hoogervorst, Flier and Koopman, 2004; Jo and Shim, 2005; Gopinath and Becker, 2007) tend to emphasise good communication mostly focusing on its positive effects on employees and subsequently on productivity (e.g. performance, trust, efficiency) and paying more attention to the successful downward flow of communication (i.e. from managers to the employees) and only some theories recognise the intrinsic value and the complexity of communication and take it into consideration (i.e. Holtzhausen, 2002; Hargie, Dickson and Tourish, 2004; Hargie, 2006). Communication theories need to be in a position to shed light into all the aspects of communication (e.g. non-verbal communication) and to take into account the intrinsic value of communication as well as the fact that actual communication occurs when both parties involved are able to equally express their opinions without fear (i.e. feedback). Additionally, another

important issue needs to be taken into consideration; communication is a process which relates to power, and thus, even when employees are asked their opinion, they are in a way obliged to express themselves within certain limits.

Defying the utopian claims of the post-modern organisation theory (e.g. employee empowerment, job satisfaction, ideal communication) and the rather simplistic assumptions of some communication theories (e.g. that communication involves only talking to others), the post-modern organisation seems to be heavily influenced by the values of the modern organisation and communication is equally affected. Even though the 'espoused culture' (Brown, 1998: 31) reflects the post-modern values, the actual culture is deeply rooted in modern values. As such, the claims of the post-modern organisation theory along with the assumptions of certain communication theories need to be re-defined. Organisational behaviour needs to be assessed along with the wider social context where it occurs as the need to 'fit in' shapes behaviour accordingly (e.g. Goffman, 1966). In a workplace where everyone is expected to 'fit in' in order to be welcome, resistance and humour (and cynicism) take various forms which are not easily identifiable; the pressure to 'fit in' encourages uniformity and discourages pluralism. Therefore, employees not only do not critically challenge their managers (e.g. Tourish and Robson, 2006) but also put on a performance of conformity (e.g. Hewlin, 2003), which seems to be underestimated in theory.

The fact that the post-modern organisation cannot detach itself from modern values is inherently problematic but not inexplicable; as theories and ideas evolve over time, transitions of this type (i.e. from the modern to the post-modern) occur slowly and categorisation is not possible due to overlapping elements (e.g. Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006) and there are theorists who recognise this fact; for example, Neilsen (1996) suggests that post-modernism has not completely transcended modernism as transitions are neither rapid nor smooth. Nevertheless, the fact that the post-modern rhetoric clashes with reality is not only even more problematic but also inexplicable. Irrespective of whether the modern values that influence the post-modern organisation are right or wrong, the claims of the post-modern organisation theory need to be rooted to reality in order to be justified. Equally, communication theories need not only to be in touch with reality but also to reflect the power dynamics that exist in organisations. Without being judgemental towards the element of power per se (i.e. whether managers wrongfully or rightfully exercise their power over the employees), the main point is that power exists in organisations and defines the relationships that take place within the organisational environment as power has the ability to not only punish 'offenders' but also define 'normality' and discipline

individuals accordingly (Foucault, 1977). Power creates and shapes organisational order; managers determine 'performance' standards (Goffman, 1975) as they reward or punish what they consider appropriate or inappropriate behaviour respectively whereas employees put on an appearance of conformity. The aim is not to debate the value of power or change the way it works but to take power into consideration when theorising. The element of performance which exists in organisational (and social) life occurs as a result of the rules and conventions that surround behaviour (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010), which in fact are a product of the power relations that govern the organisation. Therefore, since employee performance is an inevitable consequence of organisational power and since power resides in organisations, the element of performance should be reflected in the relevant theories and it should not be assumed that power relations have no or minimum effect on employee behaviour.

Post-modern organisation theory appears inconsistent with organisational reality when it comes to understanding employee behaviour whereas many communication theories seem to be inadequate when it comes to understanding workplace communication and therefore, they both need to be re-assessed and re-defined. Even though it is suggested that people live in a 'communication culture' (Cameron, 2000: viii), the social pressure to act in a way which is deemed acceptable by society obliges individuals to modify not only their acts but also even their speech when in public and the workplace poses no exception (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010). The element of power and its effect on employees cannot be overlooked when it comes to analysing employee behaviour; as power shapes workplace relationships and defines which behaviour is appropriate and which is not, the element of performance is inevitable and as such, it should be taken into consideration in all theories.

5.4 Originality, strengths and limitations of this research

The originality of this research can be attributed to three main factors: its interdisciplinary nature, its ethnographic/interpretive methodology and its critical perspective. First of all, by combining communication and cultural theories with human resource management and organisational behaviour theories, this research encompasses the complexity of organisational behaviour. Moreover, its ethnographic methodology is crucial for understanding employee behaviour in a cultural context. Furthermore, the adoption of a critical perspective which reflects on post-modern organisation theory and takes into

consideration the viewpoints of both employees and managers, examines and challenges the claims and the assumptions of some of the dominant existing literature.

The major strength of this research is that the observer collected the data while being in the position of an insider (work colleague) but started analysing the data while being in the position of an outsider (no longer working for the company); as an insider one is in a position to understand the wider context within which behaviour occurs whereas as an outsider one is able to judge incidents more objectively. An additional strength of this study is the fact that the observation lasted for two and a half months; this not only allowed the gathering of a sufficient amount of material but also ensured that the behaviour analysed represented normal working day behaviour and not rare or unique one-off situations. Finally, the incorporation of Goffman's (1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) theatre metaphor into the analysis provided a dynamic and unique viewpoint where human behaviour is deeply understood along with the social conventions and agreements that surround it.

The main limitation of this study is the small amount of subjects as only three individuals manned the operations department of the company. Additionally, another limitation is the specificity of the study as only Scottish males in a telecommunications office within the British oil and gas industry participated. These limitations are rather expected as most small scale studies are in a position to contribute to the main body of knowledge in terms of quality and not quantity. However, this in fact is the major advantage of small scale studies such as this one as due to their intensity and depth, they provide a deeper insight into a phenomenon when compared to large scale studies.

5.5 Contribution to the discipline

This study not only contributes to the existing theories of management, human resource management, behaviour observation and human psychology but also combines human resource management theories with communication theories. Certain existing theories were supported (e.g. managerial humour was found to improve communication between managers and employees on most occasions) while at the same time some of the claims of the post-modern management and certain communication theories were challenged (e.g. employee empowerment, effective communication between managers and employees). Hence, by adding to the existing literature and critically challenging some parts which need to be re-assessed and re-defined, this study not only promotes

knowledge but also helps the practice of management; apart from the fact that it underlines the importance of analysing communications in organisations, it cautions theorists and managers alike that certain theoretical principles may be problematic in practice or at least need to be re-evaluated as post-modern management theory appears to underestimate (or even intentionally hide) reality.

Additionally, this study addresses important issues which have not been adequately covered or at least clarified in the existing literature and which in turn have important theoretical repercussions. First of all, this study examines the case of employees 'fitting in' in the workplace and discovers a thought-provoking reality. According to the findings, fitting in is not possible yet at the same time it is; the employees do not fit in yet they do appear to fit in; without a prerequisite of actual fitting in, the employees merely behave as if they fit in. This 'deceptive' appearance of fitting in exists due to the element of 'performance' (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010); as employee behaviour is influenced by certain rules, conventions and agreements which oblige participants to act in a situationally appropriate way (*ibid*), the employees act accordingly. This situation not only supports the 'fitting in' discourse but also perpetuates its dichotomous perception in the literature. However, the 'binary division and branding' (Foucault, 1977: 199) of individuals and situations, and consequently the ideas and theories that stem from these absolute categorisations, create a distorted view of reality as they oversimplify inherently complex and multidimensional phenomena (such as human behaviour) to the extent that they detach them from the factors that affect them.

Thus, this research suggests that the notion of 'performance' and its relation to power seem to be underestimated in several human resource management and communication theories, and as such, discourses such as the 'fitting in' discourse need to be re-defined in order to be rooted to reality. Equally, like in the case of the 'fitting in' discourse, this study suggests that communication ought to be examined along with the factors that have an impact on it; as communication is affected by employee 'performance' and as employee 'performance' is related to power, communication cannot be detached from power. As employees appear to conform to the behaviour rules that define appropriate behaviour for participants in the workplace (Goffman, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) and as the individuals who have power define the rules (Foucault, 1977), employees consciously follow the rules that power sets. Power creates 'social order' (Goffman, 1966: 8 and 2010: ix) not only because it regulates which behaviour is appropriate for a situation (*ibid*, 1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) but also because it has the ability to punish the participants who deviate from what it considers normal behaviour (*ibid*). Thus, this study, by taking into

account the element of 'performance' (ibid) at work and the role of power in instigating and shaping it, not only cautions against oversimplified binary interpretations of workplace phenomena but also underlines the importance and need for more realistic theoretical interpretations which take into account the complex nature of human behaviour without subjecting it into simplistic categorisation and without intentionally/unintentionally portraying a distorted reality.

5.6 Suggestions for future research

More studies on the subject of employee reactions to managerial communication are required not only within the oil and gas industry but also across different industries and across the world. These studies will allow for the generalisation of results regarding employee reactions and managerial communication and at the same time they will shed light to areas which currently require more attention such as the subject of cynicism in the workplace (e.g. causes, role in the workplace, implications), the potential of the new media in relation to the information richness theory (e.g. Markus, 1994), the extent to which the element of power affects communication between managers and employees and whether true communication between them is actually attainable. For example, further research into the effect of power on workplace behaviour and communication is required and as such, a perspective which combines Foucault's (1977) notion of power and Goffman's (1966, 1975, 1981, 2005, 2010) notion of performance will allow for the deep understanding of communication and overcome simplistic assumptions.

Additionally, more research is needed in order to discover whether the gap between post-modern organisation theory and practice that was found to exist in this study exists in other organisations within the same industry or in other industries and across the globe. Giving post-modern management theory the benefit of doubt or simply viewing the gap between post-modern organisation theory and practice from a more lenient perspective, it could be said that maybe it is still too early to see results. As Nielsen (1996: 289) says, 'We may be moving toward a postmodern world, but there is no reason to suggest that the transition will be either smooth or rapid' and there is still a dichotomy between the modern and the post-modern; in fact, it takes time for ideas and theories to change; when people stop viewing themselves as rational beings (in modernist terms) and instead view themselves as beings with 'fluid boundaries and multiple realities', images and theories of organisation change accordingly (Barry and Hazen, 1996: 153).

Whether post-modern organisation practice still evolves and tries to catch up with post-modern organisation theory or post-modern organisation theory is detached from reality (i.e. unintentionally or intentionally), the case is that further studies are required. The feasibility of certain post-modern organisation theory claims (e.g. employee empowerment) and the validity of the assumptions of several communication theories (e.g. that actual communication between managers and employees does occur) in practice need to be re-assessed and re-defined as the dynamic effect of power on communication and behaviour in general tends to be underestimated in theory. Therefore, new studies are needed not only in order to discover whether and to what extent post-modern organisation theory differs from practice but also in order to enrich the existing theory.

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Appendix A: Data examples

Examples of data encoding

The two examples shown below do not represent the actual data

- Fact: Tony looks stressed
- Encoded: Τ λουκς στρεσντ

(English meaning , Greek letters: useful in dialogues where exact words needed)

- Fact: John tells Rebecca that he is angry
- Encoded: Γ → Ρ that θυμωμ

(Greek-English meaning, mixture of Greek-English-Symbols: useful in descriptions/fast actions)

Examples of data

These two examples represent the actual data (after de-coding)

I enter the room. Plato, Aristotle and Socrates are already in the room and we exchange greetings.

They are working, each one on his own computer and the room is quiet. All of them are looking at their screens and the only movement is in their arms when they use their mouse or keyboard. (They look all absorbed into what they are doing, their faces have a neutral expression, and their bodies are relaxed.)

Socrates, Plato and Aristotle start speaking together about a rather funny incident that happened at work. They have all turned their chairs slightly so as to face each other as much as possible. Plato in order to make better eye contact (as the computers seem to be in the way and he can't see Socrates well) stands up whereas Socrates and Aristotle remain seated with their chairs turned towards the direction of each other. Plato is

speaking loudly and often laughing loudly. Aristotle is speaking in his rather low voice and laughing but not very loudly. Socrates is not speaking very much as he is often checking his screen. However, he is paying attention to the conversation and often contributes to the discussion with a joke; he doesn't laugh loud but just smiles. (Aristotle and Plato look relaxed, interested, amused, happy whereas Socrates although amused and relaxed , doesn't look very interested).

Appendix B: Information leaflet given to the line manager and the participants

In my free time I have been studying for a part-time PhD in HRM in the Robert Gordon university. My aim is to analyse the occurrence of behavioural schemes (satisfaction, interest, amusement, anger, sadness, frustration) which are intertwined or triggered by the situational or infrastructural characteristics of work situations/environments from an interactionist perspective in order to explain them in the light of Humanism and Psychoanalysis, while simultaneously based on contemporary theories and practices of management; after 5 (hopefully) years my thesis will be ready and I will submit it to the university. Of course, anything involving examples/analyses/situations/descriptions is completely anonymous (that is why the real name of the company has been changed and the name 'ZEUS' will be used from now and onwards) but in order to comply with the ethical laws of research, I have to provide you with information regarding the aims and purpose of my research before I get your approval.

In brief, in this research we will observe the behaviour of the ZEUS operations personnel from an interactionist perspective and we will try to explain their behaviour in the light of Humanism and Psychoanalysis while based on contemporary theories and practices of management. The subjects will be observed in their normal daily working environment, where their verbal, somatic and psychological reactions will be recorded after each reception of oral (face-to-face, phone, teleconference) or written (email, reports), formal or informal, personal or team-oriented communications from the management team. The specific issues that are to be addressed are:

-Why each individual reacts in the way they do

-Whether any re-occurring inter- or intra-personal behavioural patterns exist (i.e. Does each individual adopt a certain stable reaction/behaviour towards the management team? Do all individuals adopt a certain pattern of reaction/behaviour towards management under certain circumstances?)

-Whether certain styles of management communications elicit different responses (i.e. Do employees react differently when the style of communication of the management changes?)

-To what extent the element of power affects the responses of employees (i.e. Are there any similarities between the way the employees react to management and the way they react towards their colleagues? Do some employees respond positively to managerial control/power whereas others respond negatively to it? Do employees react in the way they do as a response to the actual content and style of the communication or as a response to the general context of hierarchical managerial power?)

-How could communication misunderstandings and problems be avoided or at least minimised

Further detailed research project information

The study of human behaviour has attracted a lot of attention through the ages. Nowadays, we could say that the interest in human behaviour is at zenith since it is a concern not only of psychologists but also of scientists from other fields, one of which is management. Of course, a definition of what behaviour means is essential at this point. According to the dictionary definition the term 'behaviour' means 'conduct, manners' [Kindersley, 2002] whereas synonyms for 'behaviour' are 'actions, conduct, demeanour, deportment, manner, manners, ways' [Dignen, 2002]. However, Gabriel, Fineman and Sims suggest that 'action' is a more suitable word to describe human behaviour since this involves purpose and meaning and not mere physical movement [Gabriel, Fineman, Sims, 2000]. Consequently, we can say that an individual's behaviour is communicated or made aware to others through his/her reactions to certain stimuli. Thus, behaviour can be easily observed through the vocal, facial and generally the somatic expressions of an individual; these reactions are triggered out and are intertwined with complex mental procedures, which remain hidden and need to be analysed carefully.

From a Psychology point of view, the basic theories/schools of thought (from which several others stem) which have been historically developed are: Structuralism, Functionalism, Gestalt psychology, Psychoanalysis, Behaviourism, Phenomenology and Humanism, Cognitive Psychology, and Evolutionary Psychology. Structuralism was focusing on the structure of the mind whereas Functionalism was focusing on the functions of the mind. However, the former declined in the 1920s whereas the latter was absorbed into other theories of psychology. On the same grounds, another school of thought which was absorbed into other theories was Gestalt Psychology, which had its epicentre on the idea of the mind as a 'whole', believing that people perceive entities and not individual elements. Psychoanalysis concentrated in the unconscious processes that underpin human behaviour and is still active nowadays. Behaviourism focused on observable behaviour and emphasised the role of conditioning in the development of human behaviour and although many of its theories aren't supported any more, it still exists. Humanistic Psychology, which is still active today, engulfed Phenomenology and concentrated on the worth of individuals as it believed that they have free will and their behaviour is neither the mere consequence of unconscious processes nor conditioning. Cognitive Psychology, which measured outward behaviour by seeking a better understanding of the inner workings of the mind, as well as Evolutionary Psychology, which stressed the influential role of genetics on human behaviour, are both still existent nowadays. [Giles, 2005]

From a Management point of view, the theories/schools of thought that have been developed can be divided into different perspectives: classical, behavioural, humanistic, quantitative, contemporary. In detail, the most important management theories that have evolved are : the classical organisation theory, the scientific management theory and the behavioural (or human relations) school [University of Leicester, 2000]. Of course we have to mention that the above categorisation may appear slightly different in other books. However, the main point is that the classical theory emphasised a rational approach to management, the scientific theory insisted on scientifically determined changes in management, and the humanistic theory put emphasis on the importance of the understanding of human behaviour. The main contributors to management theory are : Henri Fayol, F.W.Taylor, Elton Mayo, Mary Parker Follet, Max Weber, Chester Bernard, L.M.Gilbreth and F.B.Gilbreth, Abraham Maslow, Douglas Mc Gregor. More recently, new theories and trends emerged in the

theory and practice of management (systems school, quantitative school, contingency theory, Total Quality Management etc). Especially nowadays, there has been a shift towards a new management paradigm, the Learning Organisation where “everyone in the organization participates in identifying and solving problems”; this new paradigm operates in an environment where the market is global, the workforce is diverse, the technology is electronic and change and chaos are the natural order of things; this paradigm has new competences as it focuses on customer and employees, has dispersed leadership, emphasises teamwork and collaboration [Daft, 2000].

Consequently, if we were to analyse behaviour in a managerial context, we ought to combine two approaches; as far as the observable behaviour is concerned, we should view the situation from a contemporary managerial perspective, whereas when it comes to the explanation of the hidden processes that cause this behaviour, we have to combine the science of Management with the science of Psychology.

According to Watson, organizations are sets of ongoing human relationships utilizing various technologies in which people co-operate to achieve tasks [Watson, 1994]. Of course, people differ from each other not only physically but also behaviourally. Difference exists in all organizations, and especially in those which operate on a global scale, and cannot be ignored [Gabriel, Fineman, Sims, 2000]. These differences between people (whether they are individual or cultural differences) can create frustration, misunderstandings and can often lead to conflict. Of course, conflict and co-operation do not need to be viewed as opposed to each other; in fact, they can be seen as the two sides of the same coin and each of them has to be evaluated according to the circumstances i.e. co-operation with a murderer is bad whereas conflict with a rapist is good [Watson, 1995]. In addition to the individual and cultural differences, comes the difference of power which exists as well in organisations. Although nowadays organisations tend to become flatter and so, managers and leaders ‘rely less on hierarchical power’ and rely more on creating ‘cultures with powerful shared values, ideals and symbols’ [Gabriel, Fineman, Sims, 2000], still conflict between employers and employees is sometimes unavoidable. According to Watson, apart from differences in human nature, the basic reason behind conflicts is that employers ‘use’ employees for their own purposes and on the same grounds employees use their employment for their own purposes. In brief, conflicts can be triggered out due to individual, cultural or power differences and can occur among employees or between employers and employees. As a result, feelings of anger, sadness or frustration are often experienced by an individual within the workplace. Nevertheless, these feelings are not always expressed, depending on the individual or the situation. According to Gabriel, our feelings are our subjective experiences whereas our emotions are the outward display of these experiences, a display which sometimes we choose either to disguise or to fake where we are in front of others. [ibid]

In fact, according to Interactional Psychology, the explanation of behaviour should be viewed as a ‘continuous and multidirectional interaction between person characteristics and situation characteristics [Terborg, 1981]. Thus, the behaviour of the employees has to be viewed from an interactionist perspective as this will take into consideration the context in which every reaction occurs. After all, one could argue that it is the context which determines whether a behaviour is normal or not. Of course, two problems arise. First, one could argue that a person’s behaviour does not change according to the situation and that every person has a rather stable pattern of behaviour. For example, people who tend to get angry when suppressed, are likely to do so regardless of the identity of the person/situation

that is causing that. Second, the explanation of a behaviour can vary considerably depending on the different theory used. For example, if we were to look employees' behaviour from a Freudian-psychoanalytical perspective, we would see their behaviour as mostly determined by unconscious forces and shaped by their past experiences [Giles, 2005], whereas from a humanistic point of view, employee behaviour is part of a conscious process and is actively chosen.

The first problem can be easily overcome. Our aim is to explain an employee's behaviour only while he is at work and not in general. Consequently, as we will attempt to analyse behaviour only at a certain context, it would be neither relevant nor wise to make generalizations about that person's behaviour in all contexts. As far as the second problem is concerned, we have to admit that the choice of a theory can be a subjective matter. Hence, we will view employee behaviour from a double point of view: humanistic and psychoanalytic. In detail, the reactions of the employees will be mostly viewed in the light of Humanism. However, at situations when behaviour appears unusual, inexplicable or extreme (e.g. in conflicts), we will attempt a Freudian interpretation.

From a theory of management point of view, our research will be based on contemporary theories and practices and will fit within the existing scientific and managerial framework. In detail, nowadays there is a changing paradigm to management as the old paradigm gives its way to the new. In the past, most organisations were based on the traditional vertical scheme, which was characterised by specialisation of work, centralisation, formalisation and autocratic management. However, nowadays firms need flexible forms in order to be able to respond to change and so, they tend to have flat structures, which are characterised by employee participation and empowerment, change, teamwork and strong adaptive cultures. Nowadays management tried to share and not hoard power and leaders strive to attract followers and not to control them. Consequently, each employee is valued and considered an important contributor to the company's success. Employee behaviour is nowadays viewed through the lenses of McGregor's theory, which basically states that employees should be viewed as hard-working value-creators (theory Y) and not as inherently lazy and reluctant to work (theory X). On the same grounds, employee behaviour is explained in the light of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which states that individuals have to first satisfy (i.e. achieve and sustain) their basic (lower) needs in order to achieve self fulfillment [Daft, 2000].

Of course, even though the style of management has changed, the rules that indicate how businesses work remain almost unchanged and hence, there are many points to be taken into consideration when explaining employee behaviour. First of all, working involves acting in a way that is determined by the decisions and directions of somebody else. Second, employees need to comply with certain formal, impersonal and specific rules, which are usually rational and can sometimes be flexible. Moreover, each company has a culture, to which each employee is expected to fit in gradually. Furthermore, learning is crucial in organizational and personal success but as it involves uncertainty, sometimes employees are reluctant to it due to the fear of failure. Even more, when employees enter into the work arena, they are aware that hierarchical power differences exist and they consciously grant their leaders the right to lead. Finally, working in a firm involves interaction with others and since individuals differ not only in their job status but also in the way they deal with things, misunderstandings and conflicts are likely to occur [Gabriel, Fineman, Sims, 2000]

Therefore, it is obvious that employee behaviour is partially suppressed as employees are expected to conform in order to adapt to the way the organisation works. As a logical consequence, when explaining employee behaviour, we always have to have in mind that employees are aware of these expectations and have consciously accepted them and thus, their behaviour not only reflects this agreement but also is influenced by the fear of unemployment. Nevertheless, the level of conformity depends on the individual and the situation; there are situations where an employee can behave outside of the expected norm e.g. when his employers/leaders are not present or when a conflict or unusual situation occurs.

It is obvious that this research involves examining the attitudes of employees towards the established authority within the organisation. Of course, it has to be admitted that the word 'authority' can mean different things to different people not only in everyday contexts but also in managerial research contexts. According to some researchers, authority can be placed on a person, or can be connected with a position but also can be seen as 'something which is granted by a subordinate to his superior or someone else; however, the latter view could be criticised as inefficient as it evokes suspicion that another word would be preferable [Mandeville, 1960]. As far as the person-related and position-related authorities are concerned, it is useful to distinguish them into two types of authority: the ascribed authority, which is based on dominance and the achieved one, which is based on competence [Anonymous, 1965]. Of course, authority patterns differ among firms, depending on several situational factors and the three patterns that can be identified are: isolated autocracy, managerially coordinated company, cooperative hierarchy [Whitley, 2003]; however, we can almost be certain that big companies in the UK would operate under the second or the third scheme, excluding the absolute autocracy styles. Consequently, we can take for granted that authority patterns exist in the workplace. Nevertheless, we can't take for granted the reaction of employees to authority.

From a psychological perspective, people seem to accept and obey the rules and decision of authority groups even in the absence of a reward/punishment scheme. This voluntary acceptance stems from the belief that authorities 'are legitimate and, hence, entitled to be obeyed'. Consequently, legitimacy is the concept that determines the effectiveness of authority. In detail, two theories of legitimacy have been developed: According to the first one, deference depends on the social bond that exists between the authority and the people as people choose to defer to authority when they feel valued. According to the second one, deference is strongly influenced by instrumental motivations. However, these two theories aren't mutually exclusive as the psychology of legitimacy has been proven to involve both relational and instrumental aspects [Tyler, 1997].

Of course, it is worth mentioning that it has been suggested that the legitimacy of authority (legal, political, religious, managerial) has recently declined [ibid]. From a socio-cultural perspective, this loss of authority is believed to be occurring on two levels; on the macro level, we observe a decline in public confidence towards authority whereas on the micro level we observe a decline in the desire not only to be bossed but also to be a boss. Consequently, this gradual decline is a double loss as people seem not to wish to be leaders neither followers [Heller, 1985].

Nevertheless, from a managerial perspective, authority still seems to be effective provided that the balance between direction and empowerment is correct. In detail, according to Hackman, the ideal outcome occurs when a leader specifies the ends but not the means.

Employees should be strictly guided towards the right direction but also empowered to choose the means to achieve the desired outcome [Gary, 2002]. In fact, according to Heifetz, the best results occur when leaders don't generate followers but other leaders, who seek to take responsibility [Heifetz, 1999].

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Appendix C: Consent forms given to the line manager and the participants

LINE MANAGER AGREEMENT FOR RESEARCH ACCESS

Employee reactions to management communication: A study of operations personnel in the oil industry.

In response to the email (22/06/07) from Nicole Tsiontsi regarding the exploratory study of the above-mentioned project title, herewith:

- Name :
- Designation :
- Company :
- Address :

Personally state that:

- a. I authorise Nicole Tsiontsi to engage in PhD research involving participant observation.
- b. I am aware that I am invited to contact the research supervisor Professor Ashly Pinnington (01224 263021) or the Associate Dean Research Professor Robert Newton (01224 263907) when I have any questions or concerns relating to this project
- c. I have been informed of the purpose of the research project in the email from Nicole Tsiontsi.
- d. I understand that Nicole Tsiontsi will keep all of the primary data strictly confidential and content which is published will be non-attributable to the individuals participating in the research.
- e. The data collection and its reporting will focus on the doctoral research and its appropriate academic and practitioner publication

Signature:

Date:

PARTICIPANT'S STATEMENT OF CONSENT

Employee reactions to management communication: A study of operations personnel in the oil industry.

In response to the letter by Nicole Tsiontsi regarding the exploratory study of the above-mentioned project title, herewith:

- Name :
- Designation :
- Company :
- Address :

Personally state that:

- f. I have authorisation from my organisation to participate in this study, or I have discretion to make myself available for the purpose.
- g. I am voluntarily participating in this study.
- h. I have been informed of the purpose of the research project.
- i. I agree that all data and information provided will be strictly confidential.
- j. I understand that I can withdraw from the project at any time.

Signature:

Date:

Appendix D: Ethics form submitted to the university

SECTION B: ETHICS REVIEW CHECKLIST - PART 1

To be completed by research student

- | | | Yes | No |
|----|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. | Is approval from an external Research Ethics Committee required/being sought? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | Is the research solely literature-based? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

If you answered YES to 1 and/or 2 please go to the Ethics Review Checklist - Part 2

- | | | | |
|-----|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 3. | Does the research involve the use of any dangerous substances? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. | Does the research involve ionising or other type of dangerous “radiation”? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. | Could conflicts of interest arise between the source of funding and the potential outcomes of the research? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. | Is it likely that the research will put any of the following at risk: | | |
| | (i) living creatures? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | (ii) stakeholders? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | (iii) the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | (iv) the economy? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. | Does the research involve experimentation on any of the following? | | |
| | (i) animals? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | (ii) animal tissues? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | (iii) human tissues (including blood, fluid, skin, cell lines)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. | Will the research involve prolonged or repetitive testing, or the collection of audio, photographic or video materials? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. | Could the research induce psychological stress or anxiety, cause harm or have negative consequences for the participants (beyond the risks encountered in normal life)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. | Will financial inducements be offered? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. | Will deception of participants be necessary during the research? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. | Are there problems with the participant’s right to remain anonymous? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. | Does the research involve participants who may be particularly vulnerable (such as children or adults with severe learning disabilities)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Appendix E: Raw data

WEDNESDAY 11TH JULY

I enter the room. Plato, Aristoteles and Socrates are already in the room and we exchange greetings. They are working, each one on his own computer and the room is quiet. All of them are looking at their screens and the only movement is in their arms when they use their mouse or keyboard. (They look all absorbed into what they are doing, their faces have a neutral expression, and their bodies are relaxed.)

Plato starts talking with someone who enters the room. Plato has turned his chair to the direction of the person so he can have eye contact with him. Plato is talking about work and smiling and often laughing. While he speaks, he moves his hands and arms. (He looks interested in the conversation and amused.)

Socrates goes out of the room. His walk is a normal-paced walk. He is heading for the other office, which is nearby, to test some equipment. (He looks thoughtful but his body is relaxed.)

Aristoteles is still quiet. He is observing his screen and often typing. His movements are calm. (He is absorbed in what he is doing, his face has a neutral expression, and his body is relaxed.)

One of the computers behind me generates an alarm. Aristoteles walks slightly fast (He looks concerned) and comes near. He checks and stops the alarm. I ask him why this happened and what I have to do the next time it happens; he explains to me in detail. He speaks in a rather low slow voice (which seems to be his usual), his face looks serious but after he finishes what he has to say, he smiles and asks if I have understood, to which I reply yes. He slowly goes back to his desk. (His movements are relaxed)

Socrates returns back from the nearby office. (His body is relaxed).

Aristoteles and Plato start speaking. They have both turned their chairs so that they can look each other. They talk about work but also often refer to personal matters while they discuss. They don't speak at the same time; each one waits for the other to finish and then starts. They are having a dialogue. Plato moves his hands when he speaks whereas Aristoteles doesn't. Plato laughs often and loud and looks happy. (His body is relaxed, he is interested, he is amused and happy). Aristoteles speaks in a low slow voice; he is often smiling and sometimes laughing but not loud; when he speaks, his face looks serious and he doesn't use his hands to add to his expression; when he smiles, he doesn't move his hands; when he laughs, he moves his hands and arms. (His body is relaxed, he is interested and amused).

Socrates is speaking about work with somebody who enters the room. His voice is rather low, he doesn't engage in eye contact and he doesn't move his upper body or smile. (His face has a neutral expression and his body is relaxed).

Socrates, Plato and Aristoteles start speaking together about a rather funny incident that happened at work. They have all turned their chairs slightly so as to face each other as much as possible. Plato in order to make better eye contact (as the computers seem to be in the way and he can't see Socrates well) stands up whereas Socrates and Aristoteles remain seated with their chairs turned towards the direction of each other. Plato is speaking loudly and often laughing loudly. Aristoteles is speaking in his rather low voice and laughing but not very loudly. Socrates is not speaking very much as he is often checking his screen. However, he is paying attention to the conversation and often contributes to the discussion with a joke; he doesn't laugh loud but

just smiles. (Aristoteles and Plato look relaxed, interested, amused, happy whereas Socrates although amused and relaxed, doesn't look very interested).

Plato and Aristoteles continue discussing. They turn their chairs so as to look at each other and they speak in a lower-than-before voice.

Socrates goes out to the nearby office.

Aristoteles and Plato are quiet now. Each is working on his own computer. The room is quiet.

Socrates is coming in and out of the room many times as he is working on something that has to be checked on the computer and also tested in the nearby office. (his face is neutral and his body relaxed and his movements are normal speed).

Aristoteles and Plato go out to the nearby office, too (they are relaxed, neutral expression of face, normal walk)

All three return together and they discuss about the results (it is obvious that they were working together on the same thing)(they relaxed body, neutral expression, interested, normal walk).

They go again out of the room in the same manner.

After a while they come back and discuss again. Aristoteles speaks in a low slow voice and doesn't move his hands whereas Plato speaks in a louder voice but this time he doesn't move his hands much. Both of them have eye contact and are serious.

Socrates returns to the office. He converses with someone that enters the room. His voice is rather low and he doesn't move his hands while he speaks.

Socrates sits at his desk. (relaxed). Plato goes to Socrates to ask a question. Socrates replies and Plato says 'thank you very much' and goes back to his desk. (looks happy, normal walk).

Lunch time <Recording stops>

Everyone is at their desk working quietly.

John (line manager) calls. There seems to be a problem. He is asking to speak to Socrates. Socrates picks up his receiver. Socrates is listening while John is explaining. Socrates is calmly listening. His body isn't moving and he is looking at this computer and saying some figures to John when asked. His voice is calm and he seems relaxed and concentrating in what he is doing. At the end, Socrates says 'Okay, I will do that'. He closes the phone. His body language doesn't change; he is still calm and quiet. He looks briefly at his screen. Then, he informs Aristoteles and Plato of the situation and he walks out in his normal pace. Aristoteles and Plato keep working on their computers.

Socrates returns and sits at his desk. He sends an email to John (and c.c. all of us) to indicate that the problem has been solved. The email just describes his actions and doesn't have emotive language:

John,

I(technical details)

Regards,

Socrates

It is leaving time, where everyone prepares and leaves at their own time and greets the others. Aristoteles, Socrates and Plato look relaxed; Aristoteles and Socrates are just smiling whereas Plato is looking happy.

THURSDAY 12th JULY

I enter the room. Plato and Socrates are already in and talking about work. (they greet me when they see me and then get back to their discussion). Plato has turned his chair so that he can have eye-contact with Socrates. Socrates has also moved his chair a bit so that he can see Plato, too. They speak in a normal voice, no smiling and not moving their bodies much. (They seem relaxed and interested.). Aristoteles comes in and after greeting, joins the discussion: He is standing and his eyes move from Plato to Socrates as he is speaking to both, his voice is rather low, he doesn't move his hands, (he is relaxed and interested.)

They stop speaking and all of them go back to work, concentrating on their screens. The room gets quiet. I remember about something funny that happened the day before and I say it to the guys; they laugh and then we start a conversation about some television programmes. (relaxed, amused, interested, happy). Plato's phone rings. It is John (line manager). Everybody gets back to work (still relaxed, normal-paced movements, no rush) and the room is quiet. Only Plato's voice can be heard. Seems that John is asking him questions and he is replying. Plato's voice is calm, rather loud and he doesn't move much on the chair. The information consists of the description of several actions that Plato has done and others that need to be done in order to repair something. (neutral face, relaxed body, absorbed). After a while, Plato asks something about an outstanding issue that he had escalated to John and it seems that John has done his actions as Plato says 'Thank you. I really appreciate that' (happy). Then, Plato and John seem to be talking in a more cheerful mood; Plato tells a joke and laughs loud (moves hands). The tone stays the same for some minutes. Then, the call ends. (Plato says 'Bye'). Plato asks Socrates if he has time to work on the problem together. Plato explains what John told him and suggests that they should start. (neutral face, relaxed body). Plato and Socrates go to the nearby office in a relaxed walk and with neutral faces.

Aristoteles picks up his phone that rings. He is speaking in his low, slow voice and he isn't moving much, just looking at his screen (relaxed, absorbed). He is speaking to John. This involves another task. Aristoteles is listening carefully and only speaks to say 'okay, I will do that' occasionally and slightly moves his head. His face is expressionless, his body is relaxed and he is absorbed. The chat goes on. After a while, the call ends and Aristoteles goes out of the room to the nearby office so as to start according to the instructions of the manager. (relaxed body, normal pace).

Aristoteles, Plato, and Socrates go in and out of the room; once they go to the nearby office and once they return to check their screens. (relaxed body, neutral faces, normal walk, concentrated)

Lunch break <recording stops>

The work continues till the last minute they leave. However, nobody seems moody or tired. Plato speaks loudly and often jokes and most of the time has a smile on his face and moves his hands and his body movements (including walk) are fast (enthusiasm, happy, loud). Socrates speaks in a normal tone, seems relaxed and walks at the same pace. He sometimes jokes and just smiles. He doesn't move his hands when he speaks, his movements are controlled (not very expressive, happy, quiet). Aristoteles speaks in a low voice. He moves his hands but not much. Sometimes he seems to get anxious and his movements are faster than usual and then again normal; when his movements are faster, he doesn't seem to pay attention to his surroundings as he usually looks towards the floor/door while he is exiting the room and towards his desk

while he is entering; he doesn't make eye contact and only when someone asks him something he replies quickly. (sometimes anxious, quiet).

Leaving time.

FRIDAY 13th JULY

I enter the room and it is empty. After a while, Socrates and Plato enter and we greet each other. Then, Aristoteles enters and we greet each other. As soon as I connect to the net and I check my email, I receive an email that John (line manager) sent to all of us yesterday late in the evening. His email is address to all and the structure is:

All,
I would like to update you on(technical details on what process we should follow).
Cheers,
John

Socrates looks and says to Aristoteles and Plato: 'Did you see the email?' in a normal tone and with a neutral face. Plato looks at him and says 'You mean the one from John?' (normal tone, neutral face). Socrates says 'Yes' (neutral tone). Plato says 'Yes' (slightly higher tone and with a smile and looks Socrates with a smile that could be perceived as ironic/mocking of the situation) whereas Aristoteles looks and says in a neutral tone 'Not yet'. Socrates goes on in a neutral tone and describes what the email says (relaxed body, no hand movements, eye contact with both, neutral face): 'He says that we should.....!'. Then, his tone changes when he says : 'But how can this happen when.....What would we do if this.....?'; his questions are rhetoric and slightly comic/ironic and show his disapproval but also his confusion and his amusement/surprise; he isn't angry though, his body is relaxed; he looks once at Plato and once at Aristoteles and his voice volume and speed are his normal, his hands are moving occasionally slightly, he is mostly amused. After that, Aristoteles glances at his screen and then says: 'And look at the time when he sent it! He is really working most of the day!' (he has a surprised look, he has turned his chair so as to look at the others, his voice is his normal low, he isn't smiling, he isn't moving his hands) . Then he adds 'I guess we have to!'. Plato says 'So, will we have toevery time we?!'; his face shows surprise and concern/worry (he has turned so as to look both and when he asks the question he rises from his chair, his tone is normal and not ironic, his eyes are a bit wider due to the astonishment. He moves his hands and his voice is slightly louder than usual. He seems surprised/astonished with the content of the email). Socrates says 'Oh, yes!' and is smiling. Aristoteles then says 'So, when we, we will be doing....., too'. Socrates' phone rings and he picks it up and the conversation ends and Aristoteles and Plato go back to work. They concentrate on their screens and just move their hands in order to type/click the mouse (they are relaxed body and absorbed).

Socrates goes to the nearby office. (relaxed body, neutral face)

After a while, Aristoteles and Plato go to the nearby office, too (relaxed body, neutral face)

All 3 return together. They look relaxed and amused by something. Everybody sits back at their desks and works.

Lunch <recording stopped>

Mary sent an email to all. She replied to John's email by clicking 'reply to all' option and so, everyone of us can see what she replied to John in regards with the email that he sent:

John,

We can'tWe have toEverytime.....this.....should be used.

Regards,

Mary

Aristoteles, Plato and Socrates start speaking (eye contact):

-A: Did you see the email? (interest, surprise in face, no body)

-S: Typical (little irony, not anger, relax body, smile on face)

-P: And how are we supposed to know what to do now? (surprise in face, concern tone, hand movements)

-S: Let them (ie management) decide (relaxed body, neutral face, decisive tone)

-A: So, if

A technical discussion between the guys starts. Aristoteles seems confused, Socrates looks amused and Plato looks surprised. Aristoteles speaks in a low voice, moves his hands often. Socrates speaks in a normal voice, doesn't move his hands and his tone changes; his comments are often comic/joking way and sometimes slightly ironic. Plato mostly hears what the other 2 say and when he speaks, his voice is louder than the others', he moves his hands and often laughs loud and when he disapproves he says 'This is ridiculous'. All of them seem to be using normal voices and relaxed bodies. Hector (management) enters the room and the conversation ends abruptly and everyone gets back to work after greeting him in a rather cheerful way. Their bodies are relaxed. Hector leaves. Plato, Aristoteles and Socrates are still working on their computers as if they have forgotten about the previous incident.

My phone rings and it is John. He said to me that he wanted to clarify matters and that is why he called and not emailed. He asks if he can speak to one of the guys, anyone who is available at the moment. So, I pass the phone to Socrates. Socrates seems to be listening what John is saying. His face is serious/neutral and he isn't moving much. He seems to be concentrating on what John is telling him. After some minutes he says : 'What if...?' (not anxious, just question). Then after a while he says 'Okay' and then again after a while 'Okay' (his body is relaxed and face neutral). Phone ends and Socrates says 'Bye'. Socrates announces to the rest what John told him. His voice is his usual tone, he isn't moving his hands and his face is serious, his body is relaxed. Aristoteles and Plato don't interrupt while Socrates is speaking. They are looking him in the eyes and aren't moving much and seem absorbed in what he says. When Socrates completes the description of the phone call, Aristoteles says 'At least they decided' and smiles (irony or joke?). Socrates and Plato smile, too. Plato says a joke and all laugh. They all go back to work.

Leaving time. Relaxed and happy.

MONDAY 16th JULY

I enter the room and Aristoteles and Plato are working at their computers. (Socrates is working in the nearby room). (we greet each other). The office is rather quiet as the phones don't ring often. Occasionally Plato and Aristoteles exchange information on a work-related matter. They don't have eye-contact and they don't move much; they look at their screens and just speak aloud the results. Their bodies are relaxed and they seem absorbed.

Georgia enters the room and after the greetings, she walks towards my desk and jokes about the fact that she always gets what she wants (workwise). Then, she approaches my desk and she says 'We should have a new code. WGGG. What Georgia Wants Georgia Gets' and we laugh. Aristoteles and Plato are working on their computers and don't react to that but surely they heard as Georgia spoke rather loudly. Georgia leaves. Aristoteles and Plato don't make any comments, they just continue their work (relaxed body, concentrating).

Socrates returns to his desk and concentrates on his computer. Relaxed body, neutral face.

Lunch time <recording stops>

A problem seems to have arisen. Aristoteles, Plato and Socrates are exchanging opinions on what to do; they are all commenting that this is to be solved by the management team. Then Plato says 'Oh, I know what I will do! I will say it to Georgia who gets things done as she said!'. His tone isn't ironic, he is smiling and looks happy. Aristoteles doesn't comment/react to this whereas Socrates just glances at Plato when he says that and Plato realises that Socrates wasn't present and so, he explains what happened and that 'Georgia gets things done, as she said'. Aristoteles then comments on the literal meaning of this and praises Georgia's hard work whereas Socrates doesn't comment. However, the way he looks at Plato and the way that Plato looks back at him (while Aristoteles is briefly checking something on his screen) possibly reveals that they disapprove of the way but don't say it. Everybody gets back to work. Relaxed, concentrating.

John forwards to all an email from Georgia. His email says:

All,
Please see attached from Georgia.
Regards,
John

Georgia's email says:

Can you please do.....and have it ready by the end of the week. If not, I want to know what the problem is.

Everybody starts working on what Georgia said. They work on their screens and often go to the nearby room (relaxed, concentrating)

The phone rings and it is John. He asks and is put through to Aristoteles. Aristoteles is listening without moving and while looking at his screen; after some minutes he says 'Okay, I will do that' (normal voice, relaxed body, neutral expression, nod head). Then John asks and is put through to Plato. Plato often asks questions to clarify the exact situation. His voice is normal and he doesn't move much. At the end he says 'Oh, okay, John, I willThanks'. (normal voice, relaxed body, smile at end). Then John is put through to Socrates. Socrates' voice is normal, body is

relaxed and he occasionally says 'Okay' and he doesn't move much. At the end he says 'Okay John' and hangs up.

They all work according to John's instructions. Most of the time each one works on his screen and often goes out of the room to the nearby office. Sometimes they communicate their results but without looking at each other. (relaxed, concentrated). They are all working hard but they are not stressed. The situation is under control.

They keep working until the task is completed. Nobody replies to Georgia's email but Socrates calls John and explains what they did and that the task has been successfully accomplished:

-J:???

-S: We

-J:???

-S: Yes, we.....

-J: ???

-S: Okay! Bye!

Aristoteles and Plato are at their desk while Socrates is on this phone call and are working on their screens. Socrates is relaxed, normal voice, neutral expression with smile at end, no hand movements, relaxed

Leaving time

TUESDAY 17th JULY

I enter the room and exchange greetings with Aristoteles and Plato who are already in. (Socrates is working in another office today)

Aristoteles and Plato work quietly on their desks (neutral face, relaxed body, move only hand for type/click mouse).

Aristoteles and Plato have turned their chairs slightly towards each other and are speaking about work but then extend the conversation to non-work: Aristoteles is doing most of the speaking and Plato is often laughing; Aristoteles' voice is his normal low, his hands don't move much, and his face doesn't change and only smiles after he finishes a joke whereas Plato's voice is loud and he laughs a lot and he moves his hands a lot.

A colleague enters and speaks to Aristoteles about work and so Plato returns to his desk to work. Plato then, goes to the nearby office (normal walk). Colleague leaves and Aristoteles concentrates on his computer. His phone rings and it is Socrates. At first they seem to be informing each other about work and in the end they exchange a joke: Aristoteles is speaking (no hand movements, no laughing, his normal low slow voice), then he is listening (no movement, smile and laughs), then he jokes (smiles, no hand movement).

Plato returns. Plato and Aristoteles speak about work. They have turned their chairs and speak in a dialogue, each in turns; they are working together on something. Both in normal voice, no hand movement when speak apart from the type/click movements, no smile, sometimes they look at the screen and sometimes they have eye contact when they speak. They decide to phone John for

advice and put him in the loud speaker. In the same tone as they were before, they ask him his opinion:

-P: Hi John. I am here with Aristoteles and we have you on the loudspeaker. We wanted to ask you.....(Plato speaks as he was speaking to Aristoteles before, normal voice, some hand movement while Aristoteles is listening)

-J: Hm..... (seems to be thinking about it).. I am not sure guys.....

-A:(technical details) Normal voice, neutral face, relaxed body, no hand movement

-P:(technical details) Normal voice, neutral face, relaxed body, some hand movements

-J: Then, I believe we should.....Don't you think so? (his tone shows that he is asking their opinion but it could also be rhetoric ie to be replied only if they disagree, not ironic/aggressive)

-P: Okay John, we will do that. (seems to have treated John's question as rhetoric). His voice is slightly higher than before, he is smiling, his hands aren't moving, his body is relaxed. At the same time Aristoteles neither speaks nor moves, his face is neutral while Plato says that.

-A: Okay then. Thanks John (smile at the end, no hand movement, relaxed body)

-J: No problem!

They close the phone and concentrate again on their task. They ask questions to each other as they go along and their tone is normal, they have eye contact, and Plato is moving his hands while he is speaking whereas Aristoteles isn't. Both have a neutral expression and although busy, look relaxed.

Aristoteles and Plato go to their desks and work on their own in the same manner.

Lunch <recording stopped>

Mary enters the room and Plato speaks to her as if to a friend (stands up, walks to her desk, looks at her, smiles, loud voice, no hand movement, says 'How are you?'). They start a friendly chat where Plato is standing near Mary's desk and speaking while smiling and moving his hands while speaking. They both look like there are sincerely enjoying the conversation and are amused. When they finish, Mary turns towards Aristoteles (who hasn't joined them in the chat) and with a smile asks him 'So, how are you Aristoteles?'. Aristoteles says 'I am fine, thank you'. His voice is his normal low slow, he doesn't move his hands, his face is serious when he says 'I am fine' and then smiles and nods his head when he says 'thank you'. Then Mary asks how are things workwise : 'So, how's things here?'. Aristoteles starts explaining what they are working on (normal voice, no hands movement, eye contact, no smile). Mary says 'Oh, I see'. Mary goes out. Aristoteles and Plato start speaking to each other; this time their voices are slightly lower but they both have eye contact/no hands movement/no smiles: they are speaking about the line of action that management team are supporting and that they disagree. They go back to work.

Plato goes out (normal walk, relaxed body)

Mary comes back in. She just starts speaking with Aristoteles when Plato returns and so, he joins in and they all speak together. They all speak about non-work related things and laugh as friends. All of them are relaxed, amused and comfortable in the presence of each other. Then, they go back to work.

Aristoteles is working on his screen and Plato is speaking to Mary. He is asking her about a database detail and Mary happily offers to show him on screen how to do it. So, Aristoteles joins them and both him and Plato are looking at what Mary is showing them. After she finishes, they both look pleased: Aristoteles says 'Thank you' and smiles and nods his head whereas Plato says with a voice that shows enthusiasm 'Great!'. Mary exits the room and they both return to their screens.

Plato comes near my desk and asks a question about the spelling and the pronunciation of my surname and I just joke about it and we end up laughing. Aristoteles, who is standing beside us as he is sending a fax, laughs, too. Then, Plato teases Aristoteles about something that he did with the fax and they both laugh. They return relaxed to work.

Mary enters. She announces to us that she found out that John is 30 and she will tease him and she tells us to do that, too. Then, she leaves. Aristoteles mentions to Plato about how good Mary's knowledge in databases is. His phone rings and he goes back to his desk. As soon as he puts the phone down, he announces to us that he forgot that he had an appointment at the dentist (his face is a bit red and he looks anxious). He says 'I will be back soon' and rushes off. Plato works at his screen.

Aristoteles returns and he is relaxed, his walk is normal and face smile and not red. He goes and starts work at his desk and his body is relaxed, normal face.

John calls and asks to speak to Plato. Plato is listening at first (relaxed, normal face, no move) and then he says with a smile 'I will do it, it is just five minutes!'. Then, he says 'Bye', puts the phone down and goes out of the room (relaxed, normal face, normal walk) to the nearby office. Mary calls and asks for Plato and leaves a message, to call her back.

Plato returns and sees the note on his desk and calls Mary straight away. He says 'Hello Mary. They told me you wanted to speak to me' (relaxed body, neutral face, no hand movements). He listens what she says. He speaks in a rather low voice at start but towards the end his voice is normal (maybe because Aristoteles was on the phone, maybe not); initially his face is neutral but towards the end he jokes and laughs. Phone call ends. Then he turns to Aristoteles and they start speaking about work and in the end he offers to help Aristoteles in case he needs; both of them look relaxed, have eye contact and don't move much or smile. Then, they both work on Aristoteles' screen. Then, they move and work on Plato's screen. After this, they keep working sometimes individually and sometimes at one screen till the end. They don't speak much and concentrate but look relaxed and not anxious. They work like this till leaving time, where they both smile and look happy and relaxed.

WEDNESDAY 18th, THURSDAY 19th, FRIDAY 20th JULY *(these don't count as days 6,7,8 as no recording)*

No recording as Socrates, Aristoteles and Plato are working in another office and I am on my own in the office.

MONDAY 23rd JULY *(don't know whether this should count as day 6 or be deleted as no communication)*

I enter the room and Socrates is already in and we greet each other. (Both Aristoteles and Plato are working in another office). We are working quietly on our desks.

Socrates' phone rings and a colleague informs him about a problem and so, he starts work on it. His facial expression is neutral, his movements are normal and he seems to be relaxed.

A colleague comes in and speaks with Socrates about work at first and then about non-work related matters. Socrates' face has a neutral expression and he moves his hands sometimes while they speak about work whereas he is smiling and sometimes laughing while they have their friendly discussion; his body is relaxed all time. The colleague leaves and Socrates goes back to work

Socrates is going in and out of the room as he is testing something in the nearby office and then checking it against his screen. His face is neutral and his walk normal and his body relaxed while he exits and enters.

Lunch <Recording stops>

Socrates is still going in and out of the room (he stopped for his lunch break) in the same manner. Socrates settles at his desk and works (neutral face, relaxed body, only move hands to type/click) and occasionally we exchange work-related or non-work related comments.

The day finishes and it seems that this is the first day that we didn't have any kind of communication from management

TUESDAY 24th JULY

I enter the room and we exchange greetings with Socrates who is already in. (Aristoteles and Plato are working in another office). Each one of us is working on our computers. Socrates is relaxed, his face is neutral and his movements normal (only type/click movement).

John sends us an informal email. 'Guys, just to let you know that I won't be working this morning but you can get me on my mobile if you need. I will be back in the office this afternoon. Cheers, John'. Socrates looks at the email and seems a bit surprised at first; he says 'I thought that he would be coming here today' (surprised) but then goes on 'I guess I misunderstood' (neutral face). I say 'You are right...I thought he said we would have a meeting!'. Socrates replies with a smile 'There is nobody here anyway!' (he is referring to Aristoteles and Plato being away and means that there is no point of a team meeting without them); he isn't annoyed/disappointed, he is just relaxed and says all these in an observational mode and the smile is not ironic. (the attitude was as if he wanted to say 'never mind, no problem'). Socrates goes back to work. Some minutes later John calls Socrates as he forgot to mention in the email something he wanted to tell us:

-S:Hello?

-J:... (Socrates is listening, neutral face, concentrating, no hand movement, relaxed body)

-S: Okay. (neutral face, no move, relaxed)

-J:...

-S: Bye (small smile)

Phone ends and Socrates informs me what John wanted him to do and then, he starts working on it.

Lunch <recording stopped>

Socrates is working on his screen (neutral face, essential hand, relaxed body)

Martin (management) enters the room and after the essential greetings, he starts a friendly chat with Socrates about non-work related matters (he sometimes mentions work-related funny incidents). Socrates has turned his chair and has eye contact with Martin and smiles and laughs and he often moves his hands when he speaks; his body is relaxed and he looks interested and amused. His phone rings and so, he picks it up and the chat stops; his face is neutral and his body is still relaxed and his voice is normal (he wasn't worried how to stop the conversation or didn't apologise, he simply did as he would do if in the company of a friend: he

turned and pick up the phone and he isn't worried how long he is on the phone). The phone ends, and Socrates turns and they start the chat where they left, they both look like they are enjoying a friendly chat. The chat ends and Martin goes out of the room and Socrates returns to work (neutral face, relaxed body, essential hand movements)

Martin returns to the room and is describing a funny work-related incident that happened. Socrates is looking at him, listening and smiling and looks interested in what Martin says and really amused. Martin leaves.

Socrates calls John:

-S: Hi John. (small smile, relaxed body, no move)

-J:..... (same)

-S: When are you coming down? (neutral face, relaxed body, no move)

-J: (same)

-S: Okay...thanks...bye (small smile, relaxed body, no move)

Socrates informs me that John will be here tomorrow and Thursday and goes back to work as normal (neutral face, relaxed body, hand move for computer)

WEDNESDAY 25th JULY

I enter the room and exchange greetings with Plato and Socrates who are already in. (Aristoteles is in another office). They have turned towards each other and are speaking about work and laughing about something. Socrates is speaking and smiling whereas Plato is speaking and laughing loudly. They both are relaxed and amused.

Plato goes to the nearby room (normal walk, neutral face) and Socrates is speaking on the phone with a colleague (normal voice, neutral face but often smile, relaxed body, no move). The moment the phone ends , another colleague enters and they start speaking about work (Socrates in the same manner as before). Colleague leaves. Plato enters (normal walk, neutral face).

John arrives. After the greetings, he asks Plato if he is going again in the other office:

-J: Are you going again to?

-P: I don't know (relaxed, shoulder movement, small smile in the end, eye contact)

-J: Oh, maybe Mary will call you. (while he says this he goes near Plato's desk and speaks in a rather low voice)

Plato replies in an equally low voice and his body is relaxed, his face neutral, no hand movement.

The conversation ends and everybody is working quietly at their desk. Socrates and Plato are looking at their screens, moving only their hands for type/click. John is most of the time on the phone and is speaking in a rather low voice (normal voice)

I go to a nearby office <Recording stops>

I return and I find Socrates, Plato and John laughing about something. They all look relaxed and comfortable as friends. Then, John is trying to call Mary so as to speak about Plato and they all joke again as they can't get hold of her. Socrates and Plato are amused, relaxed and smiling when John is speaking and often add a funny comment. They all get back to work.

Plato offers to get drinks for everyone. He asks everyone what we would like and then he goes (normal walk) out with a smile and comes back with a smile, holding the drinks. He distributes the drinks. John, teases him

'Oh, I said sugary tea, not black' and is smiling but before Plato says anything, John adds 'Oh, I will bring another one' and laughs and goes and gets one while we all laugh. They all start speaking about general non-work stuff (house prices) and they are all relaxed. They all get back to work and continue.

John's phone rings and it is Mary:

-J: Hi Mary

-M:(she is asking if Plato will go to work to the other office again)

-J: He said he would do it but he is not overly happy

-M:

-J: Bye

John puts the phone down and informs Plato that he has spoken to Mary about it. Plato is relaxed, no move, neutral face and ends with smile. John's phone rings and he picks it up and stays on it for much time while Socrates and Plato are working together on Plato's screen (they both relaxed, neutral face, they speak in low voice so as not to disturb John).

Socrates goes to the nearby room. (normal walk, relaxed, neutral face)

Plato says to John 'I am going for lunch' (normal voice, smile, relaxed).

-J: Are you going on your own? (simple question, neutral face)

-P: Yes (simple answer, neutral face)

-J: Can I join you? (simple question, neutral face)

-P: Of course! (big smile, hand movement)

They both go out chatting.

Lunch <Recording stops>

Socrates, Plato and John are working at their desks. Socrates and Plato are relaxed, neutral face, moving hands for computer whereas John is mostly on the phone for audio meetings. In between the meetings he often speaks to Socrates and Plato and jokes with them and they all stop work for a while and laugh like friends.

John is asking something and Plato offers to show him where it is. So, they both go out in a normal walk and then come back again in the same manner.

John says 'I guess it is my turn for the drinks now. What would you like?' and smiles. Socrates and Plato tease him (Socrates: 'It was time!', Plato: 'I wasn't going to have one but since you are offering....') and they all laugh. John brings what was asked and everyone settles back at work.

John is on the phone with other managers and as soon as he is off, he is announcing to us what was said and decided about a technical problem. Socrates and Plato have a neutral face, don't move, relaxed body. Then , they say their opinion and a technical conversation starts where both of them and John exchange opinions in a calm, neutral, relaxed way. They get back to work as before as John's phone rings; it is Mary. John seems to be mostly listening to what he says and after the phone closes, he goes near Plato and says 'I am sorry Plato, it seems you have to go' [he is referring about the other office. Plato was reluctant to go but had said that he would do so if he must]; John's face shows sympathy/understanding for Plato. Then John and Plato engage in a low voice discussion (neutral expression, relaxed, comfortable, no anger/sadness) -seems as if they are discussing about what Mary said and their opinion about it but they keep their voices down so that the whole conversation couldn't be heard; they look as if they are having a confidential chat; Plato is relaxed and calm and doesn't move much his hands. Then, in the end, Plato is heard saying in a louder voice joking about a job-related fact and then saying 'Okay, I will go' and is smiling; seems as if they were discussing about it and then they both ended up smiling.

John exits the room to go to a meeting. Plato goes near Socrates and start speaking in a rather lower voice. From the phrases I can hear, I realise that they are just discussing what was discussed a while ago with John. Plato at first describes the incident in a normal informative manner (neutral phase, no show of any emotion, relaxed, move hands some) while Socrates listens. Then, they both start commenting about it and their voices are slightly lower so that it is not obvious to me what they are saying. They both seem relaxed, calm, not move much, often they smile (smile or irony?) and then they both get back to work.

John comes back.

Everyone greets each other and the day ends.

THURSDAY 26th JULY

I enter the room and John, Socrates and Plato are already in. After we greet each other, they get back to work. Each is working quietly at his desk. Both Socrates and Plato look relaxed, neutral face, move hands only for type/click, concentrate.

Some colleagues enter the room as they have a meeting here with John. John, before he starts the meeting, turns to Socrates and says in a normal and informal tone:

-J:has to be done. Socrates, can you do this?

-S: Yes (normal voice, neutral expression, started action straight away)

-J: Thanks

John starts the meeting and both Socrates and Plato, who joined Socrates in the task, work together and speak rather quietly in order not to disturb. Their faces are neutral, their movements normal, occasionally they joke about something and just smile.

Meeting is over and John now is on the phone to a colleague. His voice is normal low slow. As he is on the phone, Georgia calls him on his mobile and so apologises to the colleague and hangs up and starts speaking with Georgia. After this call, he goes out of the room to attend a meeting.

Socrates and Plato are still working together in exactly the same manner as before.

Socrates and Plato are working on their desks, each on his own. Relaxed body, neutral face, move hands for click/type.

John is back. Socrates asks informally John's advice about something, he replies, then Plato joins and he replies again:

-S: John, what do I do about.....(normal voice, relaxed body)

-J: Just.....(S is listening while eye contact)(Plato is, too)

-P: And what about.....(normal voice, relaxed body)

-J:(both S and P listening while eye contact)

Everybody works quietly at their desks, as before John's entrance

Lunch <recording stops>

Socrates, Plato and John exit the room and go to have a meeting.

They all return back and as they enter they seem to have exchanged a joke as they all smile. All of them look relaxed, walk normal, voice normal.

John prepares his bag and after the greetings, he leaves.

Plato and Socrates sit at their desks, turn their chairs so as to look at each other and start speaking about an incident between a colleague and the management, which had led to the person leaving without giving his resignation and warning the management about his intentions (i.e. he wasn't happy with the company and when his contract ended he just left without negotiating about the renewal of his contract or informing anyone about his intentions, which even though legal, wasn't the expected thing which most employees do). They aren't expressing any opinion, just discussing the facts in a relaxed way. Relaxed body, no hand movements, neutral expression.

Socrates and Plato go back to work in the same manner as before. Sometimes they joke and laugh while working (not always eye contact). Once, I made a complain about some people who don't do their work, unlike us and Plato jokes: 'Yes. When Georgia says, we jump!', and we all laugh.

Leaving time

FRIDAY 27th JULY

I enter the room and exchange greetings with Socrates. (Plato and Aristoteles are not in this office today).

Socrates is working at his desk. His face is neutral, his body relaxed, he moves only hands for type/click.

We joke about something work-related and laugh. Then, we go back to work, in the same manner as before.

Socrates' phone rings and it is John who seems to be exchanging updates on a technical matter. Socrates is relaxed (neutral face, relaxed body, no move arms) throughout and after the conversation

-S: Hello?

-J:

-S: (technical details)

-J:

-S: Okay, bye

Socrates goes in and out of the room twice as he is working on something in the nearby office

Lunch <recording stopped>

Socrates is working at his desk in the same manner as before.

(MONDAY 30th JULY)

I enter the room and exchange greetings with Socrates. (Plato and Aristoteles are again in the other office).

Socrates is constantly going in and out of the room as there is a lot of work and he is dealing with it alone. At one time he is at his desk working at his screen (neutral face, relaxed body, move hands to click/type) and at another he is going to the nearby office (neutral face, normal walk, relaxed body). His phone rings many times throughout the day as colleagues call for updates on the ongoing tasks or to report new ones; when this happens, he speaks in a normal tone and speed of voice, his face is neutral and sometimes smiles, he doesn't move his hands much while he listens/speaks, his body is relaxed. This goes on for the whole day.

Today there wasn't any communication from management**TUESDAY 31st JULY**

I enter the room and exchange greetings with Socrates and another colleague who is sitting and working at one of the desks (Plato and Aristoteles are in the other office).

Socrates is working at his desk on his screen. His face is neutral, his body relaxed and his hands move only to type/click.

Socrates's phone rings and it is a colleague who seems to be asking him about a technical matter. Socrates is speaking to him (technical details) while looking at his screen, in the same manner than before. After some time, Socrates and the colleague exchange a work-related joke and laugh. Phone call ends and Socrates returns to what he was doing.

Socrates and the colleague start discussing about a non-work related subject and exchange some jokes and laugh.

Socrates is working on his screen.

The colleague goes near Socrates and they both work on his screen. They speak to each other while looking on the screen. Socrates' voice is normal, he is relaxed, hands move occasionally when he speaks.

Lunch <recording stops>

The colleague calls John in order to enter an audio with him and Georgia and after informing them that he will use the loudspeaker so that Socrates can hear and say his opinion if needed, the audio starts. After the colleagues question, John starts explaining the situation in his normal low slow voice. He is explaining what has to be done and what he intends to do (technical details). Then, the colleague speaks. Then, Georgia intervenes and says her opinion and what she believes that

should be done. In the meantime, Socrates is listening to the audio; he is working in his screen (neutral face, relaxed body, move hand to type/click) and whenever he listens something that is directed/related to him, he stops what he is doing in order to concentrate and he speaks when he disagrees (neutral face, relaxed body, no hand movement). After a lengthy technical discussion, where all the members say their opinions, John gives a summary of the decisions and asks 'Is everybody okay with this?' in a normal tone. Socrates, Georgia, the colleague confirm and the call ends after the essential greetings.

The colleague exits and Socrates is working at his desk on his screen. His face is neutral, his body relaxed and his hands move only to type/click.

Leaving time

WEDNESDAY 1st AUGUST

I enter the room and exchange greetings with Socrates. (Aristoteles and Plato are in the other office).

Socrates is working at his desk on his screen. His face is neutral, his body relaxed and his hands move only to type/click.

Georgia enters the room and asks with a smile 'Where is everyone?!'. Socrates replies that they are in the other office (his voice is normal, his hands don't move, relaxed body). Georgias' phone rings and she rushes out of the room. Socrates gets back to work in the same manner as before.

A problem came up and I ask Socrates' advice. He advises me to call John and also email Mary about it as they need to be informed. His voice is normal and his body relaxed. He explains that I should inform them as they are involved in this matter and they know better about it.

Lunch <recording stops>

Socrates is going in and out of the room. Once he is at his screen and once at the nearby office. His face is neutral, his body relaxed.

Leaving time

(THURSDAY 2nd AUGUST)

No recording as I am away working in the other office.

(FRIDAY 3rd AUGUST)

No recording as again only Socrates and myself are in and as it isn't very busy we just work and often speak about non-work related matters.

(MONDAY 6th AUGUST)

No recording as I am working in the other office

TUESDAY 7th AUGUST

I enter the room and after greeting Socrates, I settle at my desk. (Plato hasn't come yet and Aristoteles won't be coming here today as is injured). Socrates is working on his screen; his face is neutral, his body is relaxed and he is concentrating on the screen and moving his hands only to type/click the mouse.

Plato enters with a smile and after cheerfully greeting us, settles at his desk to work. His face is neutral, his body moving but relaxed and his hands move to type/click or to search through his work notes.

Plato seems to be having a problem with his computer. He seems a bit annoyed with it but he still is in a good mood. He just looks at the screen and says loudly 'Stupid computer'; his face is serious, his hands are moving towards the screen as if he is speaking angrily to the screen but after he says that he laughs, he relaxes and turns towards Socrates to explain what the problem is. Socrates stops what he was doing, looks at him and they both smile. After that, they both return to work; Socrates in the same manner as before and Plato seems relaxed even though the computer isn't very 'cooperative' as it still is slow.

Socrates and Plato, after a brief technical chat (both serious face, no hand movements, relaxed body), exit the room (normal walk) in order to go to work in the nearby office.

Socrates and Plato return in a normal walk and smiling as Plato has just said something funny; they both look relaxed. They settle at their desks and work quietly.

A colleague comes in and tells them an update on the company's expenditure scheme ('I was told that from now on we can'tWe have to.....!'). They all start a friendly discussion (eye contact) about it. Both Socrates and Plato are saying their opinion (one at a time) and discussing with the colleague with normal voice, neutral faces, no much hand movement (Plato moves hands more than Socrates generally when he speaks), relaxed body; they express the fact that they don't like this cost-cutting measure of the company and they explain how this will affect them. Although they are both expressing their dissatisfaction to the management's decision (which they recognise stems from higher management), they still look relaxed and not angry. Towards, the end they even joke about it and they all laugh.

The colleague leaves and Plato and Socrates keep on discussing but speak about non-work related matters. They are both relaxed, often smiling or laughing, often moving their hands while speaking (especially Plato).

Socrates and Plato get back to work in the same manner as they did before the colleague entered.

Lunch <recording stops>

Socrates and Plato are speaking about work (some eye contact, normal voice, relaxed body, face serious and often smile, no hand movements) but they often joke about things (related to work).

Plato exits the room to go to the nearby office (normal walk, neutral face, relaxed body) while Socrates is working at his screen (relaxed body, neutral face, move hands to type/click)

Plato enters the room in the same manner than he left.

Socrates goes twice in and out of the room as he is working on something in the nearby office and he has to check it his screen, too. His walk is normal, he is relaxed.

John emails Socrates and Plato and c.c. myself regarding a technical matter:

Guys,

I just spoke with ...(name) and he said that.....(technical details). Can you please assist

Cheers,

John

This email doesn't have an observable effect on Socrates and Plato as they neither comment about it or change their behaviour. It is not obvious if they will action it as the action that John requested is something for the near future and not today. So, Socrates and Plato keep working at their screens as they did before.

Plato stands up and goes near Socrates' desk with a normal walk, neutral face and asks him something technical , which Socrates replies with an equally neutral face (eye contact). Then, they start a discussion about management; they speak about how things used to be in this company in the past and how now things have changed for the worse; they mention several problems. Their voices are slightly lower than normal, they have eye contact, their bodies are relaxed (Socrates is still sitting at this desk whereas Plato is casually leaning against a desk so that he isn't standing); Plato is moving his hands while speaking whereas Socrates usually isn't; their faces are neutral unless they say a joke (related to the attitude of management), where they both laugh (Plato is laughing louder than Socrates).

Plato goes back to his desk (normal walk, smile in face still) and they both get back to work in the same manner as before.

Plato's phone rings and it is John.

-P: Hello!

-J:

-P: Hi John. How are you? (Plato smiles)

Plato is listening carefully without moving/speaking and then they start a discussion (work-related) where Plato's face is neutral and he doesn't move much.

Then, they start discussing something work-related but funny and Plato often is laughing
In the end, Plato says 'Okay, thanks' very politely and he puts the phone down and looks happy.

Leaving time

(WEDNESDAY 8th AUGUST)

I enter the room and we exchange greetings with Socrates. (Plato isn't in today and Aristoteles will come soon to attend a course in the building). Socrates is working at his desk; his face is neutral, his body relaxed and he moves his hands to type/click.

Aristoteles comes and after the greetings we are asking how he is feeling today. He is explaining (and it is obvious) that he is not feeling very well but he came in as he had said to John some time ago that he would attend a course today. He is speaking in his normal low slow voice and he is still smiling sometimes but his body language is showing that he is in some pain still.

Aristoteles exits (normal walk) and goes to attend the course.

Socrates is most of the day going in and out of the room as he is working in the nearby office and then returning to his screen to check. (normal walk, relaxed body, moves hands to type/click when desk). Occasionally we

(THURSDAY 9th AUGUST)

Aristoteles is at home, Socrates is on holiday, and I am in the office only with Plato and most of the time he is going in and out of the room to the nearby office. His face is neutral, his walk normal and occasionally we exchange work-related information (neutral face) or we joke and laugh.

(FRIDAY 10th AUGUST)

The situation is the same as yesterday. The only difference is that we received an email from Georgia (her usual format that announces who is leaving/starting) regarding 3 colleagues who left the company; Plato didn't do or comment anything about it, he went on with what he was doing.

MONDAY 13th AUGUST

I enter the room and exchange greetings with Plato. (Aristoteles is working in the other office, Socrates is on holiday). Plato is working on his computer; neutral face, relaxed body, hand move for type/click

A colleague enters and starts speaking with Plato. Plato is relaxed, smiling. The colleague mentions about the 3 employees that left and Plato says he is aware of it. Then they speak about work but often joke, too. The colleague leaves.

Plato stands up and walks (normal) to my desk. His face is rather serious when he says in a rather lower voice and without moving his hands and his body is slightly tense 'I want to tell you something so that you don't hear it from others first...I will resign...Nothing happened but it is personal and after all, I am fed up with them [means management/company in general]' and he explains that he has had an offer to go abroad. After this, he lightens up and his voice is normal, he smiles, he moves his hands a bit more and his body is relaxed. Then, I say 'The important thing is that you look happy and that means that you took the right decision' (his face is a big smile) and I ask him if he has told John and he said 'I emailed John but he hasn't replied yet'. ~Except from the initial tension, after the confession Plato progressively relaxed and so from tense, he became relaxed and smiling and then he very happy and excited (bit red, moving hands, laughing). We end up joking and then we go back to work.

Plato is working on his computer; neutral face, relaxed body, hand move for type/click

Another colleague enters and starts chatting with Plato. They are speaking about non-work matters. Plato is relaxed and in a joking mood; he jokes about personal matters that happened to him once; he is even joking about sad things that happened to him once or even the ironic ones. Through the friendly conversation with the colleague, Plato is speaking in a slightly louder voice than his normal, he is laughing a lot, and is moving his hands and his whole body (initially he was sitting but he often stands up to give emphasis to certain jokes). Finally, he laughs and says in a joking way: 'John, you have been a bastard!' and says to the colleague that John didn't reply to his resignation email. The talk ends and the colleague leaves.

Plato is going in and out of the room as he is working in the nearby office. His walk is slightly faster and he is often smiling.

Plato informs me that John emailed him but for something else. He seems puzzled, as as he says he isn't sure whether John is angry/avoiding to reply to his resignation email or he hasn't actually read it, a thing which happens rather often as John receives a lot of emails daily and often doesn't have the time to read them all and so some may remain unanswered if the sender doesn't resend.

Kevin from management enters the room to introduce a new colleague (projects). Plato, Kevin and the newcomer are speaking briefly and joking about the difficulty of ops work. Plato looks relaxed, smiles, normal voice and no hand movement. Plato's phone rings and Kevin and the new person leave.

Plato is speaking on the phone and it seems that he is speaking with John. He looks relaxed, normal voice, no hand movement, relaxed body. The call ends and Plato asks me if the guy who came in before was Kevin. I say 'yes'. Plato says 'It is the first time I see him after the interview'. Then, he goes on to explain to me what happened over the phone when he was speaking to John: Plato said that John asked him politely 'Is there something that we (company) could do for you' in order to stay but that he said that he has decided to leave; then, Plato asked if he has to stay for a further month (according to the notice period of his contract) at work or can leave earlier and John said that he will speak to the personnel management to see if they can allow him to leave earlier

than a month. After he described this to me, Plato explained that he really appreciated John's effort to help him and speak to management even though he had an interest of keeping him the whole month as the ops are short-staffed at the moment.

Lunch <recording stopped>

Plato comes back from lunch and he heads towards my desk with a look of surprise on his face. In a rather lower voice, with the astonishment on his face, moving his hands much he says 'I was at lunch withand Georgia came and spoke to him and she didn't speak to me, she didn't even look at me!' and ends the sentence with a smile that showed as if he didn't even want to think how angry Georgia would have been. I told him that surely she didn't see him as she is very busy; after this, he agreed 'You are right. Maybe she didn't see me'. I tell him 'Surely. This is not like Georgia. She would never do that'. Then, he looks relaxed and again smiles and is calm and walks normally and goes to his desk to work.

Plato is working on his desk; neutral face, relaxed body, hand move for type/click

John phones me and asks my advice about the availability of time, the place and other details as well as discussion points regarding the meeting. After this, he sends an email to all with the relevant meeting request (audio). Plato has obviously read the email but still is working in the same manner as before.

TUESDAY 14th AUGUST

I enter the room and after exchanging greetings with Socrates and Plato, I settle at my desk. Both Socrates and Plato are working on their computers and are relaxed; their faces are neutral, their bodies relaxed, they move only their hands to click/type.

The audio meeting starts. After the greetings, John starts speaking about the matter (technical) and when he finishes what he has to say he asks 'What do you think?' in a normal voice (not rhetoric/angry) (Both Socrates and Plato are listening and not moving much and relaxed body and neutral face). Then, Socrates (normal voice, relaxed body, no hand movements) explains what actions have been done till now about it and asks a question relating to John's/management's position. Then, John says 'This is difficult and not clear' and seems to be smiling ('hmm' in a way that shows he is doing so) (both Socrates and Plato are laughing too); then, he explains what his actions were and what the ops actions should be about it. (Socrates and Plato listening again in same manner as before). Socrates in normal voice says 'Okay' but also tries to clarify the matter by adding 'ThisShouldn't we....?'. John replies 'Yes'. Then Socrates asks another question in the same manner (while Plato is listening) 'Should we...?' and John replies 'We probably should. In theory.....'. (Socrates and Plato seem puzzled as the practice is different than the theory. Their faces are a bit puzzled, they don't move much, their bodies relaxed). Socrates is asking some more questions and John openly admits that this isn't clear and ends up joking about it. Both Socrates and Plato smile but again the discussion between Socrates and John continues (Plato listens). During the discussion Socrates appears confident (normal voice, relaxed body, neutral face, doesn't hesitate) whereas John appears unsure; he often stops or exhales heavily and he is also

keeping notes; however, he doesn't try to hide it as he is just communicating the decisions of the management. Plato most of the time calmly listens.

Towards the end, John says 'I would be better if we had a regular call (audio with him every week at certain time). What do you think...Would it be beneficial? Socrates says 'Yes' in a normal way and John says 'To be honest, I should have done that earlier' in a normal way while Socrates and Plato listen in the same way as before, without moving and with neutral face. Then, John concludes 'Any questions?' and both Socrates and Plato say 'No' and the audio ends.

Socrates and Plato start discussing about it (eye contact, each at his desk sitting, chairs turned). As Plato is rather newer in the company than Socrates, he asks questions and Socrates is replying. They are calm, relaxed bodies, faces neutral but often they joke and smile/laugh about it and they admit that they are confused. Then they get back to work on their computers and are relaxed; their faces are neutral, their bodies relaxed, they move only their hands to click/type.

Lunch <recording stops>

Two colleagues enter and they all start speaking about the decisions of the management (the audio discussion) and both Socrates and Plato often say some ironic comments and also they say that they are confused. Their bodies are relaxed, their faces are smiling sometimes jokingly and sometimes ironically. It seems that everybody are saying their opinion, which doesn't agree with the idea of what the management decided as it makes matters complicated. The colleagues leave and Socrates and Plato go back to work normally.

Socrates' phone rings and it is John. Socrates is listening with neutral face, relaxed body, not moving and just saying 'Yes, (technical details)' some times. It sounds as if they are discussing again about the meeting matter. (Plato is working normally). The phone call ends and Socrates informs Plato that John may have another meeting with the management and they will review their decisions. Then, Plato and Socrates start discussing again the problems related to the particular matter but this time they neither joke nor make ironic comments, just discuss with neutral faces, normal voice, no much body movement (both at their desks)

Leaving time

WEDNESDAY 15th AUGUST

I enter the room and we exchange greetings with Aristoteles, Plato and Socrates. After this, each one is working on his computer. They have neutral faces, relaxed body, moving hands only to click/type.

Georgia comes in. She greets 'Hi guys' and all say 'Hi Georgia' (eye contact, smile) and then get back to work as they did before. Georgia starts work on an empty desk.

Aristoteles and Socrates go out to the nearby office in a normal walk, without talking, neutral faces, relaxed bodies. Georgia goes near Plato's desk and asks him about his resignation. She speaks in a low voice. Plato turns his chair so that he has eye contact with her and replies in an equally low voice, some hand movement, relaxed body and occasionally smiles. The conversation can't be heard clearly. Georgia often says 'I understand' while Plato explains. Then, Georgia jokes and

Plato laughs happily. Georgia goes back to her desk and Plato goes back to work in the same manner as before.

Socrates and Aristoteles return in the same manner they left (normal walk, without talking, neutral faces, relaxed bodies) and settle at their desks and work (neutral faces, relaxed body, moving hands only to click/type)

Georgia asks if she can take some of the spare stationary that lies on a desk. Plato says jokingly 'Of course you can! You are the management after all!'. He says this loudly, moving his hands in a big gesture and with a big smile. Georgia finds it funny and laughs. She takes the items and leaves. Aristoteles and Socrates haven't commented but when Plato said that, they exchanged behind Plato's back a disapproving look but it wasn't obvious if they disapproved of what Plato said or of the fact that management can do what they want. Then, they all went back to work as usual.

John phoned Socrates (John initially phoned me and then I transferred the line to Socrates. He wanted to speak about some technical details on which Socrates was working on). Socrates is listening and occasionally saying 'Okay'. He doesn't move and his voice is normal and his face neutral. Phone ends and Socrates goes back to work in the same way as before.

Socrates and Plato start talking about Georgia and Aristoteles is listening. Plato says that Socrates was right (seems that at some point he had told him what happened on Monday ie when Georgai didn't speak to him and he thought it was because he resigned) and that probably Georgia hadn't actually seen him when she didn't speak to him that day. Socrates agrees and explains that she is very busy most of the time. Plato describes then what was said this morning between Georgia and himself: He said that he spoke with her and that in the end Georgia said 'I am sorry that you are leaving'. (During all of this conversation between Socrates and Plato, Aristoteles is just listening. They all have turned their chairs so to have eye contact, neutral faces, no move hands much (Plato moves a bit more hands and on chair), normal voices, relaxed body).

Plato goes out to the nearby office (normal walk, neutral face, relaxed body). Then, Socrates looks Aristoteles and says 'Probably the reason he is leaving is that they (means management) didn't keep their promises to him regarding work.....(the hours spent in the other office)'. Socrates says that in a normal way without smiling and Aristoteles just nodes his head as if he agrees. They get back to work as before.

Plato enters in the same manner as he exited.

Lunch <recording stops>

Georgia sends an email (her usual format to announce leavers/newcomers) to announce that a person is leaving. Aristoteles and Plato look shocked but Socrates not. He says he knew about it. Then, they start a discussion about the actions of the management and comment on the fact that many people are leaving lately. Socrates, Plato, Aristoteles have neutral faces, relaxed bodies, eye contact; Socrates is moving his hands sometimes when he speaks while Plato a lot when he speaks and Aristoteles is nodding his head occasionally both when he speaks so as to emphasis and when he listens so as to show he agrees. Then, Socrates says he believes that people are leaving because of the way the things work, Aristoteles believes that these people just want to move on whereas Plato (as relatively newer in the company) doesn't say an opinion but

occasionally asks some questions. Throughout the whole discussion all of them are relaxed, neutral face, and not angry as they seem only to be commenting.

Each one goes back to work normally.

Leaving time.

THURSDAY 16th AUGUST

I enter the room and after exchanging greetings with Socrates, Plato and Aristoteles, I settle at my desk. All of them are working on their screens; they aren't speaking, not moving (apart from hands to click/type), neutral expression, concentrating screens.

Georgia calls Socrates. Socrates doesn't move much or change expression. He speaks in a normal tone (technical nature). He explains what the situation is. Then he is quiet as it seems that Georgia is speaking and he only often says 'yes'. Then, he speaks again and after he finishes what he has to say, he asks Georgia 'Is that okay?'. Then, he says 'Bye' and the call ends. Then, Socrates explains to Plato and Aristoteles what the conversation is about. His voice is slightly louder, he is standing, moving a little his hands, smiling often. Aristoteles and Plato have turned their chair to look at him and neither move or speak, relaxed listening. After describing the incident, Socrates adds (not angry, just comment) his opinion 'I think this is a grey area. Everything is so complex'. Then, Aristoteles says 'Doesn't look that good, e?' and he smiles in the end (no move) while he is still sitting. Plato stands up and with a huge grin in his face and a big movement of his hands says 'This is ridiculous! This is absolutely ridiculous!' He doesn't seem annoyed, he seems amused and surprised. Then, all three of them start discussing about the work-related procedures they disagree with. They aren't annoyed but they are expressing their disagreement:

Plato: higher voice (normal for him), faster tone (he often does), standing (he often does this), moving hands (he often does), laugh often and smile a lot, irony occasionally

Socrates: normal voice, normal tone, sometimes hands, smile occasionally, irony occasionally

Aristoteles: low voice (normal for him), slow tone (same), occasionally move hands, smiles when listening at jokes or serious when he says one and at end of the sentence smiles, nodes head when listening sometimes

The discussion stops and everybody returns to work in the same manner than they did before without any change.

John emails all of us:

All,

I just wanted to give you an update on..... (technical details).

Regards,

John

After this email there is no change/response from the guys. Either they haven't read or most probably they read and filed/deleted the email.

Lunch <recording stopped>

John sends another email:

Guys,

I was just informed by X (name) thatCould you please work on this?.....(technical details).

Cheers,

John

Shortly after this email, Socrates, Aristoteles and Plato start working on this together. They are speaking to each other while working from their screens and also going in and out of the room to the nearby office; they aren't anxious, no fast movements; they are working as before without difference, just cooperating. Neutral faces, normal voices, relaxed body, move hands for type click when desk and walk normally when in and out.

They complete the task and Socrates calls John and updates him. His voice is normal, his body relaxed, he isn't moving body or hands. He just updates him with technical details exactly in the same way as he was speaking to the others before.

Leaving time

FRIDAY 17th AUGUST

I enter the room and Socrates and Plato are in and we exchange greetings. (Aristoteles is off ill). Both of them are working once on their desk screen individually (neutral face, relaxed body, move hands only to type/click) and once in the nearby office. They both walk in and out many times, sometimes together and sometimes one at a time; their walk is normal, their faces neutral, their bodies relaxed.

Socrates and Plato are now working on their screens in the same manner than before.

John phones and tells me that he is in the airport and that X (a colleague) will bring him to the office soon. I inform Socrates and Plato and they comment jokingly about X that surely he rushed to help: Socrates says 'I bet he ran there' (this colleague was working in the nearby office a while ago and then he will go to collect John and come back again here both of them) and Plato adds 'Oh, yes, surely!' and they both laugh. Then, they get back to work.

John arrives. He greets 'Hi guys! How's things?'. Socrates and Plato greet him with a 'Hi John' and a smile. Then, Plato jokes about work and then Socrates follows. Then, John continues with another work-related joke and they all laugh. They are all relaxed, in good mood, smiling and laughing:

Socrates: friendly chat, amused, sits, hands move some, smile and laugh

Plato: friendly, amused, stands, hands move, smile and laugh

Both Socrates and Plato speak and react as they do towards their colleagues, comfortable and

relaxed.

They all get back to work (John goes on an empty desk).

John attends an audio and so even though he didn't request it, Socrates and Plato work quietly at their desks and go near each other for questions or speak low when on phone so as not to make noise.

John is off the audio. He informs Socrates and Plato about some things that need to be done: 'Guys, I think we should (technical). What do you think?'. His way is informal and he asks (not rhetorical/ironic). Socrates and Plato say in turn their opinion in a relaxed way (as they do when they speak to each other). Then, John says 'I agree. We better have an audio with Mary then about it.' Socrates and Plato go back to work in the same manner as before as John is about to attend another audio.

John is in the audio meeting. Socrates and Plato are working at their desks normally (neutral face, relaxed body, move hands to type/click)

John is off the audio. (no change in Socrates and Plato)

Lunch <recording stops>

Socrates goes out to the nearby office in his usual way. John asks Plato: 'Did Donald (from HRM) call you?'. Plato stands up, walks normally, goes near John, looks him eyes, moves his hands for emphasis, and says categorically (fast and slightly louder, neutral face) 'No' and then continues '....Not at all!'. John seems not happy with this as; he explains that since it involves Plato's resignation, he expected Donald to show more interest and try to help Plato and then concludes : 'I am a bit disappointed that he didn't call you' in a normal voice but reflecting the disapproval in his facial expression. Plato adds 'I, too!' and he smiles and reacts to it as if it were a joke.

At that moment, Socrates enters in his usual way. John says informally, 'Guys, I wanted to speak to you about(technical). According to the process for, we should be doingI know, it is not that straight-forward but I think that we can.....'. His tone is his usual low slow informal. Plato says 'Okay, John' and smiles (relaxed body, not move hands) and Socrates nods his head to indicate that he agrees (neutral face, relaxed body, no hand movements). It looks like Plato is happy to accept the solution whereas Socrates is a bit sceptical about it although he accepts it.

Everybody goes back to work concentrating in their screens

Leaving time (Socrates and Plato are friendly teasing John about a bag that he almost forgot and they all laugh)

MONDAY 20th AUGUST

I enter the room and exchange greetings. John, Socrates and Plato are in. (Aristoteles is working in the other office). Each one works quietly on their computer.

Socrates and Plato go near John's desk and they all start talking about a work-related problem that is complex and relatively urgent. They all look John's screen and each one at a time tells his opinion (no smiles/movements, normal voices), they speak as if all colleagues and John isn't the line manager; they aren't anxious but also not relaxed, they are alert.

Then, Socrates and Plato go (normal walk) to their computers to check. Then, Plato goes near Socrates and John joins him so that they all look at Socrates' screen. They all have the same reactions as before. They work together, ask opinions and nobody seems to have a 'higher rank' or an opinion that counts more. They keep working for a while.

Plato goes (normal walk, face neutral) to the nearby room to do his part there. Socrates and John keep working together on Socrates' screen.

After some time, John says to Socrates in a normal way as before 'Could you.....? I need.....Oh, wait, sorry, is it.....?'. Socrates in the same casual way replies 'I think it is better to" and they both start working on that.

Plato comes in in the same way he exited and joins them. They all keep working on the computer and speak interchangeably and casually. They all speak informally, normal way, no jokes/smiles, bodies alert (neither tense nor relaxed)

They manage to fix the problem. All seem happy and relieved. John says with a smile 'Well done, we did it!'. (both Socrates and Plato smile, too). Then he continues 'Is it okay if we had an informal meeting at some point? When are you available for a chat regarding.....?'. Socrates indicates that they are free now ('We can have it now', neutral face) and Plato agrees ('Yes', neutral face). So, they all sit near each other and have eye contact. John starts 'Well, I just wanted us to talk about.....and how we should deal with cases like that in the future. Basically, every time, you should.....(then, starts explaining technical details). Any questions?'. Plato and Socrates (neutral face, normal faces, relaxed bodies, Plato moves hands whereas Socrates not) ask some questions but John isn't able to answer all the details with certainty; when he isn't sure, he says 'My opinion is.....' and Plato and Socrates are calmly listening as they did before. Meeting is over.

John goes out of the room. Plato and Socrates comment to each other and admit that the matter is complex and that the fact that management doesn't have a single opinion on what should be done makes it even more complex:

-P: So, every timeshould we...? (standing, lower voice, puzzled look)

-S: Well, that is what they say. But in practice this is more complex. (standing, lower voice, amused and irony)

-P: And can't they decide then?! (surprised, little irony)

-S: That seems to be one part of the problem! (smiles). And John doesn't disagree with them! (smile with a hint of irony, disapproval)

John comes back

-S: I think this is getting very complex. How can.....?!(technical)(half normal-half jokingly)

-J: I know (nods head to show understanding). I will try to find out more. I will speak about it with

Georgia.

Socrates and Plato don't react to this, just go back to their desks and work in the normal way

Lunch <recording stopped>

John, Socrates and Plato are casually speaking about non-work related things. Socrates and Plato seem relaxed, happy and interested and so does John. In the end, John jokes about how people get his name wrong and both Socrates and Plato are laughing together with him.

Socrates, Plato and John are working at their desks quietly. Socrates and Plato have neutral faces, relaxed body, move only hands to click/type.

Aristoteles phones and speaks with John. John is asking him about technical details. Call ends. John informs Socrates and Plato about what Aristoteles dis and said. Socrates and Plato quietly listen to him and are relaxed.

TUESDAY 21st AUGUST

I enter the room and John, Plato, Socrates and Aristoteles are already in and after the greeting, they go back to work. The room is quiet. Occasionally John is asking work-related questions to see which is the latest update on whatever each person or the team is working with : Aristoteles turns his chair so as to look John and speaks in his usual tone: low, slow, no facial expression, no hand/body movements. Plato either turns his chair or stands up and goes near John and speaks in his normal way: loud, sometimes jokes and laughs, moves hands. Socrates turns his chair and speaks in his normal way: normal voice, neutral face, no body/hand movement usually. These short conversations are informal and all 3 guys respond in a casual tone. Often John jokes and Socrates and Plato follow in or Plato jokes and John and Socrates follow; Aristoteles seems absorbed in his work and doesn't often participate unless it is work-related. Maybe because he is slightly ill?

Georgia phones to speak with John. John first jokes ('I was hiding from you!') and then they start an audio. John's voice is low and slow (normal, maybe tired too?). Aristoteles, Socrates and Plato are working at their computers in the same manner as before: neutral face, relaxed body, move hand to type/click.

Lunch <recording stops>

John is off the audio and asks if anyone wants to join him to go to the canteen and since everybody has already eaten (they replied as if to a friend, casually, not felt obliged to go and they honest and smile for the offer), he just goes alone. On his return he brings chocolate for everyone. Aristoteles looks at him, says 'Thank you' and smiles and nodes his head. Plato smiles and says 'Thank you very much' and makes an accompanying gesture with his hands and has big smile. Socrates says 'Thanks John' and smiles, too. Then Plato and Socrates tease John: they pretend to look at each other and ignore John and say along the lines:

-P: ~at least he brought us something

-S: ~oh yes

And then John explains that he 'had to' bring some chocolate since I can't do without it and we all burst out laughing.

Everybody goes back to work.

John forwards a job-related email that was sent to him and just puts 'FYI' and sends it to us. Shortly after this, he speaks to everyone about it. It is a technical matter and everybody is listening to him and then they engage in a technical discussion. Aristoteles, Plato and Socrates seem relaxed and act as they normally do; they seem to be having just an informal conversation.

John goes out to attend a meeting. Aristoteles, Plato and Socrates are working quietly at their desks in their usual manner. Their behaviour doesn't change whether John is in or out of the room. They concentrate on work or ask each other updates, mostly without eye contact.

John returns. He says something funny work-related that happened in the meeting. All laugh (Aristoteles smile, Socrates smile, Plato laugh loud).

John goes out again and everyone gets back to work.

Mary emails all about something that they often forget to do and they shouldn't. (She c.c. me in):

Folks,

As you are aware,Therefore, I've attached the relevant details.

Pls have a read through the document before c.o.b. tomorrow

Thank you v much,

Mary

Aristoteles replies to her (by sending a Reply to All) 'Okay Mary, I will do that'. Plato (normal, confused) asks Socrates some details and Socrates (normal) says he doesn't know and better to phone Mary and so, Plato phones Mary. Plato first asks how she is (smile, polite), he then jokes and laughs; then he asks the question (neutral face, no move), then he listens (neutral face, no move); then he sums up and tells what he understood ('So,?'); then, after a silence, he says 'Great, thank you very much Mary' and moving his hands and smiling. Plato updates Socrates. Socrates says 'This is a grey area but since she said so' (neutral face, no anger just accept). They go back to work.

John comes in. He says 'I want to organise a meeting with you guys. When are you available? Is it okay on the Xth?'. Aristoteles, Plato, Socrates confirm in a normal tone that it is okay.

John goes out to another meeting. Plato says that he is moved that everybody from management still speaks to him and treats him as part of the team and also asked him to stay more if he likes (reg. his resignation). Plato is smiling and relaxed whereas Aristoteles at his screen and Socrates just looks at him neutral.

John is back. Aristoteles and Socrates leave for the day. John speaks to Plato about the meeting details: 'It is aboutI just want us to discuss about.....'. Plato asks questions (normal) and John answers; friendly chat; Plato eye contact, no move hands, no smile, concentrating. In the end Plato says 'Oh, thanks' and John says 'No problem!' and they both smile. Then, they leave , too.

WEDNESDAY 22nd AUGUST

No recording as I am most of the day in meetings (John is away in the other office)

THURSDAY 23rd AUGUST

No recording as I am working in the other office

FRIDAY 24th AUGUST

I enter the room. Socrates and John are already in. (They greet me and I greet them. They tell me that Plato will come later and Aristoteles is working in the other office). They are working quietly at their desks. Socrates is looking at his screen, occasionally moves hands to type/mouse, absorbed, expressionless face, relaxed body. John is doing the same hand movements and also looking his screen and his body is relaxed but he looks thoughtful.

Socrates and John start chatting about non-work related things. John started by asking 'So, how is..... going?'. Then, they start chat in a dialogical way, like friends. Both look relaxed (body no moving), happy (smile), interested (eye contact), normal tone and speed of voice. Informal. John's phone rings and so, they stop and John speaks and Socrates goes back to work as before.

Georgia sends an email to all announcing about the people who are leaving/starting (usual format):

Leavers

XY left on the ZZth

New starts

On ZZth XY joined as

Please join me in wishing everyone well in their new roles.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

Georgia

Socrates no obvious reaction; either he hasn't seen email or most probably he already knows about it or just not affected.

Plato comes in (he had a personal appointment he explains to me and that's why he is later at work). He looks a bit worried (his usual smile and laughter are missing and his body movements are slower and his voice slightly lower). He sits at his desk and starts work.

John is on and off the phone all time speaking with different people. Socrates and Plato are working at their desks.

Plato stands up, walks (normal pace, neutral face) towards Socrates' desk and asks him in a rather quiet tone (so as not to disturb John who is on the phone) a work-related question. Socrates stops what he was doing, eye contact, neutral face, replies to Plato in a quiet tone, too. Plato smiles and thanks him and goes back to his desk.

John is still on the phone (now he is in audio and so, he doesn't speak much, listens). So, room is quiet.

Plato repeats his previous action and goes towards Socrates and the previous scene is repeated; the only difference is that this time Plato seems happier as when he was walking towards Socrates, he was already smiling.

John is still on the phone.

For the 3rd time Plato goes to Socrates for a work-related question; his moods seems to be progressing as the time passes; the scene is repeated for a 3rd time. And in the end this time both Socrates and Plato are smiling. (Is Plato happier as the time passes by due to the fact the meeting he had wasn't pleasant or due to the fact that he was just a bit rushed to come to work and took him time to settle to his usual?)

Lunch <recording stopped>

John is off the phone. He addresses all of us: 'Guys, I am afraid that I have to go now. My flight is.....Here I have brought some of the food that I didn't use at home in case you would like it' (friendly tone, he comfortable with us). We all greet him (everyone smiling). John leaves.

Plato stands up, turns to Socrates and jokes (in his normal happy mood. Seems he is back to his normal self now): 'Are we sure that he is away now?' (this could be either on its own but also could be linked to joke between S and P when J had left and then came back as he forgot something) . Socrates looks at him and they both laugh. No irony, just funny: Plato is standing and laughing and moving his hands while saying this and looking happy, Socrates is sitting, smiling , not moving much , amused. They both get back to work as before.

Often Plato and Socrates exchange work-related comments. Plato turns and looks Socrates and speaks about work but always smiles (louder voice, move body, smile when speak esp towards the end) whereas Socrates looks at him, normal voice, relaxed body, smile occasionally.

Socrates and Plato are working quietly individually

MONDAY 27th AUGUST

I enter the room and only Plato is in and we greet each other. Aristoteles is in the other office, Socrates is in the nearby office. Plato is working quietly (concentrate screen, neutral face, relaxed body but often moving faster or slightly speaking to himself).

Mary enters the room and seeing only one guy in , says : 'What has happened her? Where is everyone?'. She seems surprised but says it in a friendly way, smiling. Plato replies in his normal way (smile, voice, move hands, turn and look) where everyone is. Then, Mary says with a smile

'Doing a runner? I was disappointed that you are leaving. You may come back though after'. Plato starts explaining his plans and they both chat in a friendly way (Plato as if speaking to a colleague, normal).....Mary asks 'When is your last day then?'. Plato says 'I don't know yet!' and explains that Donald hasn't contacted him. Mary says 'Everything seems to go wrong lately'. Then Mary informs him about the latest decisions and they start a dialogue, where Plato asks details and Mary replies.

Socrates returns (normal walk) and happily greets both Mary and myself (it seems that Plato saw him in the morning) and after a friendly non-work related chat with Mary (he smiles, relaxed body, no hands), he settles at his desk and starts work in his usual way (relaxed body, move hand only to type/click).

Mary greets us and leaves. Socrates and Plato continue working in the same manner as before.

Lunch <recording stops>

Socrates and Plato are going in and out of the room as they are both testing something together in the nearby office. Once they are working at their desks individually and once they are going out together or individually (normal while at desk and while walk, relaxed body). Often they speak to each other when in the room while at their screens about technical details (no eye contact, neutral face, normal voice, relaxed body, no hand move).

I leave earlier <recording stops>

TUESDAY 28th AUGUST-half day

I enter the room and Socrates and Plato are in (We greet each other)(Aristoteles is in the other office). They are both working quietly at their desk: relaxed body, neutral face, move hand to type/click.

Plato stands up and goes near Socrates and is politely asking a work-related question (normal walk, smile, normal voice, move hands, relaxed body). Socrates stops what he was doing and replies to him (eye contact, normal voice, no move hands, relaxed body). Then, Plato goes back to his desk in the same way and they both get back to work as before.

I have 2 meetings (lunch included) <recording stops>

Socrates and Plato are friendly chatting. They have turned their chairs so that eye-contact, are both relaxed and often smile/laugh while they speak, their bodies are relaxed, and they move their hands sometimes (mostly Plato). They are commenting about the people who are leaving at first and then speaking about non-work related things. Then, they speak about work details. Finally, they talk about the fact that Donald hasn't contacted Plato yet: Plato said that when John had said 'I am a bit disappointed about this' and asked his opinion, he (Plato) had said : 'Disappointed yes, surprised no!' . Both Socrates and Plato make an ironic comment accompanied with an ironic smile about Donald's attitude and then Socrates adds: 'They are trying to make you stay' and both Plato and Socrates laugh. Then, they start discussing about poor management (ie Donald's attitude) and

they are bringing up several examples where he neither acted nor even replied to emails/voicemails. At the end, Socrates states (as a reply to Plato's remark 'Imagine if he could hear us now....') 'He is only a guy who runs a company; he is not god': Socrates says that with neutral face, relaxed body and not moving his hands. They both smile and the conversation ends and they get back to work.

Plato and Socrates are working at their desks in their usual way

I have a meeting and I leave earlier <recording stops>

WEDNESDAY 29th AUGUST

I enter the room and only Socrates is in; I greet him with a nod as he is on the phone; then, we start talking about non-work related matters. (Aristoteles is in the other office)(Plato is in the other office, too)

Socrates goes back to work in his usual way. Occasionally we exchange work-related details (Socrates has neutral face, relaxed body, no move much) and sometimes we joke about work-related things or we speak about non-work related things (Socrates is smiling, relaxed body, move hands sometimes)

Lunch <recording stops>

Mary enters and asks Socrates 'How is it going?' with a smile. Socrates replies with a work-related funny incident [was about an urgent request towards a company who always delays) (eye contact, smile, relaxed body, no move hands) 'I told them to do it and they asked me what priority.....and I said now but I thought to say IN ONE WEEK FROM SUNDAY!'. Both of them laugh. Then Mary adds 'They are very family-oriented in(country). Maybe we [British] should be like that, too' and they chat a while about some examples (Socrates eye contact, dialogue, neutral face, relaxed body, no move hands). Then, the discussion turns to Donald and Socrates mentions in a neutral way about his dissatisfaction (neutral face, relaxed body) but Mary's phone rings and she goes out of the room and so, Socrates goes back to work in the same manner as before

Georgia enters together with Mary. (Georgia and Socrates exchange greetings:Socrates smiles and says 'Hello Georgia'). Both Georgia and Mary come near my desk and we start a non-work related chat, to which Socrates enters, too and we all laugh and speak like friends: Socrates is smiling and often laughing, relaxed body, no move hands.

Mary and Georgia exchange greetings with us and leave. Socrates goes back to work in the same manner as before.

Plato unexpectedly turns up; he looks happy and amused. He walks normally near Socrates' desk with a big smile on his face while Socrates is looking at him with surprise and smiles 'I thought you were in.....'. Plato replies in a joking mood 'I thought that, too!' and explains that due to a

misunderstanding there was a change of plan as he had to return here. They both smile and Plato goes and settles at his desk.

Plato and Socrates are working at their desks normally.

THURSDAY 30th AUGUST

I enter the room. Socrates is in but away from his desk. Aristoteles enters; we greet each other and we chat a bit; he looks happy, relaxed, his voice is normal, he doesn't move his hands, smiles most time.

Aristoteles is working at his screen. His face is neutral, his body relaxed, his hand move only to type/click.

Plato phones me to say that he will be a bit late as something came up (usual voice, sounds as usual).

Socrates enters the room (normal way). I inform both Socrates and Aristoteles about Plato's call. Plato jokes 'Again?!' and Aristoteles makes no comment/reaction. Then, Aristoteles and Socrates start speaking for non-work related matters. Aristoteles has turned his chair and Socrates is sitting and has turned his chair, too so that they have eye contact; Socrates' voice is normal, he isn't moving his hands, he is often smiling or laughing. Aristoteles' voice is low slow (his normal), he doesn't move his hands, he is smiling and laughing most of the time.

Aristoteles and Socrates are working at their desks . Their faces are neutral, their bodies relaxed, they move their hands to type/click.

Socrates and Aristoteles start speaking: Socrates starts the conversation about the people who are leaving; his voice is normal and his tone informative (no smile, neutral face, no move, eye contact). Aristoteles' voice is normal but his tone and face show that he is surprised and interested; he moves his chair slightly closer to Socrates, he doesn't smile, his eyes are slightly wider and he asks several questions. Then, in the same tone, Socrates mentions about mistakes relating to payments and contracts and Aristoteles reacts as before: Socrates' voice and expression are normal and neutral whereas Aristoteles' voice is normal but his face and his questions show that he is shocked; again his eyes are slightly wider, he ends most sentences with questions, often looks down.

Aristoteles and Socrates are working at their desks in the same manner as before.

Socrates tells Aristoteles about work: 'Forgot to tell you (technical). And he said.....!'. When he says this, Socrates is looking Aristoteles in the eyes, moves his hands, relaxed body, smiling and then laughs at the end; Aristoteles is looking at him in the eyes, not move, relaxed body, listening, smiling and laughs at end, too. Then, both in a neutral tone and normal voice they start discussing about the details of work

Aristoteles and Socrates are working at their desks in the same manner as before.

Aristoteles starts again conversation about the people who are leaving. Socrates and him are discussing that xx (number) people are leaving this month. Both of them have now neutral faces, relaxed bodies, no move hands, informative tone:

-S: It is xx this month. It is.....

-A: That's a lot

-S: And it may be more (small smile)

-A: X was a good.....(positive comments). They shouldn't have done this [appears that some people left as they weren't happy with the company]

Socrates and Aristoteles continue the discussion in the same manner: eye contact, normal voice, relaxed body, neutral face

Aristoteles and Socrates are working at their desks in the same manner as before.

Georgia storms in to check something with me. She is in a rush and no greetings are exchanged. No effect/change on Socrates and Aristoteles; they just look up momentarily as they hear the noise of the door but they go straight back to work as Georgia just rushes towards me. We briefly speak about a work matter and then she rushes off in the same manner and this time Aristoteles and Socrates don't look up.

Socrates is on the phone. Plato comes in happy and smiling and starts to speak with Aristoteles (eye contact). Aristoteles speaks in a slightly lower voice than his usual (because S is on the phone or because it is secret?), he doesn't move much. Plato's voice is normal, he is still moving as settling on his desk, goes near Aristoteles and listens. Aristoteles speaks and Plato listens. Aristoteles moves his hands, smiles and laughs, and his voice is slightly louder now; he seems to be describing a funny work-related incident. Plato is listening and smiling often. Aristoteles and Plato start a dialogue, where they both laugh often.

Socrates is off the phone and so Plato greets him. Then, Plato informs both Socrates and Aristoteles about work and they all have neutral faces, relaxed bodies, not move much.

Aristoteles and Socrates are working at their desks in the same manner as before and so does Plato.

Socrates is on the phone and Plato comes near me (normal walk) to thank me for before (when he phoned to tell me to tell the guys he will be late) and then he goes in the same way near Aristoteles and they chat about Plato's plans after he leaves. They have eye contact, relaxed bodies, no move, low voices (secret or because Socrates again on the phone?). I can't hear what Aristoteles is saying but I can hear at some point Plato saying 'Even a simple explanation would do'. Aristoteles and Plato go back to work in the same manner as before.

Socrates is off the phone and he goes back to work, too.

Socrates is going in and out of the office to the nearby office. His walk is normal, his face neutral, his body relaxed. Aristoteles and Plato are working together at Plato's screen. They are both looking at the screen, not moving bodies much, low slow voices, neutral faces. Aristoteles and Plato are working at their desks now.

Plato calls the finance team on behalf of himself, Socrates and Aristoteles as it seems that Donald hasn't done some promised actions regarding to a webpage that is crucial for receiving their salary. Plato politely (neutral face, no move hands or body) explains the situation and then the call ends. I realise that I have the same problem and so, I call the finance team as well, who informally tell me that when they tried to contact Donald by email, he never replied or acted and only when they c.c. many members of management in the same email, he acted in a day. The call ends and I notice that Socrates, Aristoteles and Plato are in the middle a discussion (it seems they started it while I was on the phone), where they are commenting about Donald's actions and expressing their dissatisfaction and disapproval of the fact that he seems to ignore everyone's emails and requests. All of the guys have eye contact as they have turned their chairs, neutral faces, Plato is moving his hands whereas Aristoteles and Plato are not, their bodies are relaxed; their neutral expression and their relaxed bodies don't reveal anything as if they look as if they are speaking about work; only their words reveal their feelings of disapproval but they don't seem to be angry.

Socrates, Aristoteles, Plato go back to work in the same manner as before.

Lunch <recording stops>

Plato offers chocolate to all of us and promises there is more to come. He walks to and from desks and then stands in the middle of the room and a non-work related chat starts. Aristoteles and Plato are sitting at their desks and Plato is standing and they are all speaking:

S: sitting, eye contact, smile, not move much, amused, relaxed
 A: sitting, eye contact, smile, not move much, amused, relaxed
 P: standing in middle, smile and laugh, moves body, happy, relaxed

Everybody gets back to work as before.

Socrates, Aristoteles, Plato have a brief friendly chat like before. They are all sitting and Plato looks happy whereas Aristoteles and Socrates look amused.

Everybody gets back to work.

John emails a technical detail:

All,
 Just to let you know that we don't
 Cheers,
 John

Aristoteles, Plato and Socrates discuss that they were under the impression that we do.....

-P: So what do we do with? (confused)

-S: Till now we were.....but since he said ... He is the person to know. (slightly angry)

Aristoteles makes no comment but looks thoughtful

They all go back to work in the same way as before.

Plato goes away for the day and Aristoteles and Socrates briefly discuss about a person who seems to have left the company without putting his notice in:

Aristoteles is asking and Socrates is informing him of what he knows (A was away and doesn't know the details). They both agree that the person shouldn't have left like that. They they speak about what they agree/disagree with company policy. They are eye contact, neutral face, normal voice, no move, relaxed bodies.

FRIDAY 31st AUGUST

I was in the other office for 2hrs <no recording>

I enter the room and Aristoteles and Socrates are in. (we greet each other). Each one is working quietly at their desk in their normal way. (Plato is in the other office)

Suddenly Plato enters. He said there was a change of plan but they didn't inform him. Plato explains; he isn't angry, he is in a good mood; he is laughing and walking up and down and joking. Socrates is joking and teasing him after he hears his explanation. They are both smiling. Aristoteles is smiling too. They all go to work.

John emails:

All,

On of the findings from the Audits was that..... Can you please ensure that..... It is also important to Please review the procedure to make sure you are all familiar with it and please give me a shout if you have any queries.

Regards,

John

There is no reaction to this email. Everybody is working at their desks. Either they haven't checked their emails or most probably they don't react to it as they seem to get communications like this often.

John sends another email about another matter:

All,

As we have a full house in Ops today can you please give some focus to

Thanks,

John

Again there is no reaction. I don't see any replies or actions relating to this request.

Aristoteles, Socrates and Plato are friendly chatting about Plato's future in a relaxed and friendly way and then get back to work.

Socrates and Plato start again a friendly chat where both of them are relaxed and Plato is moving his hands and Socrates not, they are often smiling. Aristoteles is working at this desk.

Plato jokes 'Still 3:30?'. It seems that for the first time in a long time it is not very busy as we all (Plato, Socrates, myself) agree.

MONDAY 3rd SEPTEMBER

I enter the room and Socrates, Plato, as well as a lot of other colleagues are in the centre of the room. (No greetings as all seem to be concentrating on an operational problem that occurred over the weekend and is still ongoing). (Socrates and Plato smile to me when they see me). Everyone, including Socrates and Plato is involved in a discussion. Socrates and Plato are concentrating, absorbed, interested, neutral face expression, no body movement when they listen/speak, eye contact with speakers.

Aristoteles arrives and after putting his things on his desk, he joins the others. For the first minutes he seems a bit confused, as he is unaware (moves eyes from one to the others, interested, not expected this and so is slightly surprised, body relaxed, not speak) but after a while he realises what is happening and so he still interested and relaxed body but face neutral and not surprised.

Plato comes near me and asks me how I am. I say 'I had a nice weekend but unfortunately today is a Monday. However, soon it will be Friday again!'. Plato says 'Oh, yes, soon it will be Friday. In fact, my last Friday here!'. We laugh and Plato goes back to join the group, who are still discussing.

Then, everybody gathers around a specific computer screen and continue discussing while occasionally pointing at the screen.

After a while, the other colleagues leave and only Aristoteles, Plato and Socrates (and myself) remain in the room. Socrates goes to his desk and works on his screen (normal way) whereas Aristoteles and Plato start working on the screen that everyone was looking before. They have eye contact, neutral face, relaxed body, no move much, Plato moves hands sometimes when technical discussion 3 times they joke and laugh loud in amusement and then get back to work.

Socrates announces that John will call at some point from the airport so that someone collect him and jokes 'Surely for economy' and smiles [referring to the cost-cutting policy of the company who doesn't allow expenses that it used to in the past]. Plato and Aristoteles find it very funny and laugh.

All of them go out to the nearby office in a normal walk.

Plato comes back to check something. John phones me that he is in the airport and someone to collect him. Plato in his normal walk goes to the nearby room to tell the others.

All of them are back. Socrates is laughing and saying to Plato 'John will get a taxi!'. Plato goes to collect John while the others settle at their desks to work.

Mary arrives; she says jokingly 'Hello, I heard it was all fun and games this weekend'. She laughs and Socrates and Aristoteles laugh too in amusement. Then, they all start speaking about technical details. (neutral faces, normal voices)

Georgia comes in and says 'How are you doing? What a great day!' (smiling, referring to the weekend problem jokingly). The technical discussion goes on in the same way. Georgia often is asking questions and Socrates and Aristoteles are replying (normal voice, neutral face).

John and Plato arrive (Plato's walk is normal) and after the greetings, John, Mary and Georgia go out to attend a meeting whereas Aristoteles, Socrates and Plato go in and out from their desks to the nearby office; they aren't talking much, usually neutral face unless sometimes smiling (when they joke), relaxed body, normal walk.

All of them return and Plato says that he saw Mary outside the room and he joked but then he realised that he overdid it and he may have sounded rude:

-P: You won't believe what happened! I said to Mary I honestly don't know how I said that! Aristoteles and Socrates are laughing loud and Plato too (he is moving his hands while speaking); They all find it amusing but Plato is a bit worried. Aristoteles doesn't comment whereas Socrates teases jokingly 'At least you didn't say!'. Plato says 'Thank goodness I am finishing this week anyway!' with a smile.

Mary enters. Plato apologises to her but Mary not only hadn't been offended but had found it funny. Mary and Plato laugh; Plato is laughing like before but this time no worry. They are like friends.

Mary, Socrates, Plato, Aristoteles, speak about work. They are all relaxed and neutral faces and comfortable as if Mary not there and they speak to each other about technical details. Mary greets and leaves.

Plato relaxed and saying to the others 'It seems she wasn't offended anyway'. Aristoteles and Socrates smile and they all get back to work normally.

Lunch <recording stops>

Aristoteles and Plato are working on one screen at the back of the room whereas Socrates is working at his own screen. They all have neutral faces, relaxed, move hands to click/type

All of them are going in and out of the room as they are working in the nearby office

Aristoteles and Plato work on their desks

Socrates is going quickly in and out of the room. His face is neutral but his body movements are faster than usual. He is either anxious or in a hurry.

Socrates finished his task and relaxed and now working at his desk in a normal way.

John and Georgia returned with a platter full of sweets (remnants of the meeting):

John: Guys, look what we brought for you! (smile)

Georgia: Come on guys, get what you want before it is too late (jokingly)

Leaving time

TUESDAY 4th SEPTEMBER

I enter the room. Socrates and Plato are in and talking about house prices (we greet each other when I open the door and then they go back to their conversation). (Aristoteles is on holiday.). Socrates and Plato are speaking in a dialogue mode. They have eye contact. Socrates is sitting, few hand movements, serious expression whereas Plato is standing close to Socrates' desk and often moving his hands. They look relaxed.

Socrates and Plato are working. They are not moving their body much, their faces are neutral and they just move their hands in order to type/move the mouse.

Reception rings us that a visitor has arrived for Georgia but they can't find her. I offer to go and speak to the visitor. Socrates tries to find where Georgia is (he is relaxed, not anxious, normal movements) while Plato is advising that we should take the visitor to Georgia's office in order to help as he is part of the higher management team. As Socrates couldn't find Georgia, I deal with the visitor and Socrates and Plato go back to work.

Plato stands up and out of the blue says a joke (something that happened to him). He is laughing and moving his hands while speaking. Socrates is looking at him in the eyes and when the joke finishes, laughs. They both look amused and happy.

Socrates and Plato are testing some equipment. Their facial expression is neutral, their body movements and their voices are normal (Plato's movements are faster and his voice is louder than Socrates'). They concentrate in what they are doing and their bodies are relaxed.

Socrates says to Plato 'I bet you are looking forward to this Monday' (because he finishes on Friday) and smiles. Plato stands up, looks at him and says in a joking tone with a big smile and with hand movements 'From Monday, I will be picking up ALL the phones in here!'. They are both laughing. They get back to work.

Socrates' phone rings. It is John. Socrates just says : 'okay, we will take you to the airport' (voice normal, face neutral, no body movement) and the call ends. He looks at Plato and explains that John will need a lift to the airport later. Then, he adds in a joking way : 'We should put that in (work log with codes)'. Plato says 'Certainly, it will be called management support code' and they both laugh. Then, Plato says, I will go to collect him fromand take him to the airport (serious face, no movements of body). They get back to work in the same manner that they did before the call.

Plato is on the phone on and off for work-related matters while Socrates is in and out of the office as he is doing some testing in the nearby office and then checking the results with his screen.

Socrates goes away for a non-work appointment.

Lunch time <recording stopped>

Some colleagues enter the room and Plato stops work and greets them. They start speaking about work matters and often Plato mentions some funny work-related incidents and they all laugh. They leave and Plato goes out to collect and take John to the airport.

Socrates comes back. He sits at his desk and works (normal movements, like before).

Socrates calls John on his mobile and says 'Hi John, it is Socrates. Quick question. How many ...do you want?'. Socrates is listening what John is saying. Then, he is saying some technical details to John. Then, again he seems to be listening. Then, he says 'Okay, no problem. Cheers now' and the call ends. (his face is neutral, his hands/body aren't moving). Immediately after this, he calls the company in order to order what John told him. (again, same reactions)

Plato is back. As soon as he enters the room, he goes near to Socrates and says jokingly with a big smile 'I think he is away'. They both laugh as he seems to be referring to John in a sense 'he is finally away' or 'surely he is not coming back today' (this is probably related to something that happened some days ago where John went away and then forgot something and came back even though he had greeted us all). Plato says to Socrates in a joking way about John: 'In the morning he asked me "Are you busy today in ops?" and when I replied 'So and so', John said "Maybe then you can" (do a complete update to a database which would be very lengthy). Then Plato adds in a joking way 'Steady!' and both Plato and Socrates burst out laughing.

Plato and Socrates are working. Plato is occasionally singing.

Leaving time.

WEDNESDAY 5th SEPTEMBER

I enter the room and exchange greetings with Plato and Socrates. (Aristoteles is on holiday).

Plato and Socrates are each working on their screens and the room is very quiet. Both of them have a neutral facial expression and their bodies are relaxed and they are moving only their hands as they type/move the mouse and concentrate on their screens.

Mary enters the room. She says 'Hi guys!' Both Plato and Socrates turn away from their screens, look at her, smile and greet her back. Then, Mary sits at an empty desk and shortly another colleague enters and sits beside her and they are working together on her screen and discussing the results. Plato and Socrates continue working quietly on their screens, as they did before Mary entered.

Plato goes to Socrates' desk (normal walk, neutral face) and speaks to him in a low voice (so as not to disturb Mary and the colleague) about work. Socrates looks him in the eyes and replies to him in an equally low voice (so as not to disturb, too). Both of them have neutral facial expression, don't move their hands, and look relaxed. Soon, they both walk out of the room and go to the nearby office (normal walk, neutral face, no speaking)

Plato and Socrates return in the same way that they exited. Each one goes to his desk and works quietly.

Georgia enters the room but she doesn't greet or say anything (either because she didn't want to interrupt Mary's discussion with the colleague and also because she noticed that everyone was

very busy or because she was in a hurry), goes near a screen and checks something and then goes out. Plato and Socrates saw that she entered but as they were busy, they didn't do anything apart from momentarily move their eyes and look towards the door and then get back to what they were doing in exactly the same manner that they were doing it.

Plato goes to Socrates' desk and they speak in a low voice. They have eye contact and then they look at a technical map on the wall and point out several things with their fingers. Their faces are neutral and their bodies are relaxed, they just move their arms and their fingers. Then, Plato says a joke and they laugh but not loud. Then, Socrates goes back to his desk and both of them work quietly in the same relaxed manner as before.

Plato stands up, goes to Socrates' desk (neutral face, normal walk, no hand movements) and they start speaking about work. They end with a joke that Socrates says and they both laugh. Then, they go on about work and (neutral face, normal walk, some hand movements -mostly Plato)

The colleague goes out and so, Mary concentrates on her screen and the room is quiet.

Georgia comes in again and this time she greets everyone and everyone greets her back (Plato and Socrates look at her and smile and greet her and then get back to what they were saying/doing). Georgia speaks with Mary about some personnel problems. Then, she looks at Plato and Socrates and tell them with a smile: 'I have found how to make bookings for meetings. When I want to book for 4, I will say that I need a meeting room for 20 people. And so, I can bring the sweeties!' (she is referring to the incident where she brought food to us because it was more than needed). Georgia, Mary, Plato, Socrates and myself burst out laughing. Plato and Socrates look as if they are among friends: relaxed, comfortable and happy.

Georgia leaves and everybody gets back to work. Mary attends an audio whereas both Plato and Socrates are working on their computers. They are relaxed, moving only hands, neutral faces.

Socrates and Plato are going in and out of the room as they are doing some testing in the nearby office. Each one seems to be working on his own as they come in and out at different times. They look relaxed, their walk is normal and their faces are neutral. Sometimes they seem to be absorbed and not look what is happening in the room whereas others they are paying attention to what is happening in the room when they enter.

Lunch <recording stops>

Socrates and Plato go out of the room and return with a guest. They are all speaking about technical details while Mary is at her desk working quietly. Then, while Socrates is speaking with the guest, Plato sees Mary getting ready to leave and goes near her and he asks a work-related question; she replies and then asks him something related to his plans after he leaves; Plato informs her in a friendly way about his plans (he is smiling and speaking as if to a friend, moving his hands, not very loud so as not to disturb Socrates and the guest) and in the end he asks 'Mary, are you going to be here tomorrow or Friday?'; and when Mary says 'Yes, I will be here tomorrow', he says 'A, okay then, I don't need to say goodbye now then; I will see you tomorrow' with a smile (happy, relaxed, comfortable). Mary leaves. Plato goes near Socrates and the guest and indicates that he has to go to the nearby room and exits (normal walk, relaxed, neutral face). Socrates and the guest have started work on his computer.

Guest leaves and Socrates keeps working. His phone keeps ringing most of the time. He is absorbed on the screen and every time the phone rings, he has to interrupt what he is doing. After a few phone calls, he seems a bit anxious as I hear him saying to a colleague who phoned: 'Can I call you back as I am very busy at the moment?'. His body movements are a bit faster than usual and his face shows that he is absorbed when working and slight irritation every time they interrupt him.

Socrates goes in and out of the room, holding a piece of equipment, slightly sweating (head), walking faster than usual and absorbed.

Plato comes in and out of the room (neutral face, relaxed body, normal walk) and sometimes he is singing a tune.

Socrates returns and he looks relaxed. His walk is normal and he sits at his desk with a 'Phew'. His phone rings, and in a rather slow but happy voice says 'Hello!' and then 'Hi John' and soon he explains what has been going on:

-S: Hello! (slow, happy voice, relaxed body)

-J: ??? (listening, no moving body, neutral expression, relaxed)

-S: Hi John (neutral face, no move body)

-J: ??? (same reaction)

-S: We had At last I managed to I have just fixed the (moving hands slightly, neutral face, relaxed)

-J: ??? (same)

-S: Okay, thanks... Bye. (adds small smile)

Socrates puts down the phone. He stretches his arms and slowly returns to his screen. He is working in a relaxed manner.

Plato returns and goes to Socrates' desk and after speaking briefly about technical details, they both exit the room (normal walk)

They both return and work at their screens quietly

Leaving time

THURSDAY 6th SEPTEMBER

I enter the room and only Socrates is in. (Aristoteles is on holiday and Plato is not in yet) (we greet each other). He is working on his computer and the room is quiet.

Some colleagues enter and start speaking with Socrates about work. They all engage in a technical discussion regarding work. (Socrates has neutral face, relaxed body, moves hands sometimes) The phone rings and I pick it up; it's Plato and he tells me that he will be later in today ('I just want to tell you that I will be a bit late today. I will be in after 10. Could you please tell to the others, too?..... Thanks'); his voice is as normal, he doesn't sound anxious but neither happy, he doesn't joke or explain why (it sounds as if he is held up for a reason but it doesn't sound as very serious).

The technical discussion goes on for a while. At the end, they all joke and they leave. (Socrates is laughing and looks amused)

Socrates is testing something and is going in and out of the room. His face is neutral, his pace is normal and his body is relaxed when he walks in and out.

Socrates comes back in the same manner. His phone rings most of the time (work-related) but he still is relaxed, neutral face (sometimes he smiles when he speaks), doesn't move body, normal voice.

Plato enters and as Socrates is on the phone, we just exchange a wave. His wave is very energetic and he moves most of his body and has a big smile. He settles at his desk and starts work. His movements are normal (relaxed body, neutral face, concentrate screen, move hands to type/click mouse).

Socrates exits the room in a rather faster than before walk but his face is neutral and he still looks relaxed and not anxious. After a while, he enters in the same manner but just sits at his desk and makes a brief phone call (calm voice, very low voice, probably personal phone call, relaxed body). Then, he addresses Plato in a joking way (looks at him, smiles and says 'So, how's you then?') and Plato looks at him and replies with a big grin on his face 'Great!' and then he laughs. They both turn to work.

Socrates is on and off the phone again whereas Plato is working on his computer. (relaxed body, neutral face, moving hands for phone/type).

Socrates and Plato are joking about something funny that happened at work. They have slightly turned their chairs, having eye-contact, they are both laughing, their bodies are relaxed.

Lunch <recording stops>

Socrates and Plato are each working on their screens.

Plato stands up, walks towards Socrates and jokes about a non-work related incident that happened to someone he knows. His voice is slightly louder than usual and he is often laughing while he is describing and moving his hands a lot. At the end both Socrates and Plato burst out in laughter.

Plato and Socrates are working on their screens.

Socrates and Plato are interchangably going in and out of the room. They are walking normally, relaxed. (At some point when Plato is out , Socrates and I arrange to buy him a leaving present)

FRIDAY 7th SEPTEMBER

I enter the room and no one is in. (Plato's things are there but he is out, Socrates hasn't arrived yet, Aristoteles is on holiday).

Socrates enters holding a bag with chocolates and a card. We sign the card and place the sweets and the card on Plato's desk and then we go back to work.

Plato enters smiling and starts speaking about work with Socrates while he is standing near his desk. The conversation ends and he looks at his desk. A big smile is in his face, he turns and thanks us 'Oh, guys, thank you very much!'. Then, he opens his bag and takes out 3 boxes of sweets that he brought for all of us 'Look what I brought today!' and we all smile. Then, he comes smiling (normal walk) to each one's desk and offers us sweets. Then, he goes back to work again (nearby office) and Socrates is working on his screen (normal face, relaxed body, essential hand movements).

Socrates is going in and out of the room as he is moving from his desk to the nearby office and vice versa. His facial expression is neutral, his walk is normal, his body is relaxed.

Plato comes in and with a smile notifies us that he is about to go to the other office (5 min away) to greet everyone and that he will be back after half an hour or so. His body is relaxed, his voice normal, he is smiling and he looks happy. He takes some of the sweets he brought and goes out to the other office in a happy manner.

Plato returns and he is already laughing while he is opening the door as he was speaking with a colleague just before entering. He looks happy and relaxed. He settles at his desk and starts work (neutral face, relaxed, move hands to type/click)

Socrates comes back (normal walk, neutral face, relaxed body) and settles at his desk. He is working and he looks relaxed.

Both Socrates and Plato exit the room in order to go to the nearby room for some testing. They are both relaxed, normal walk. Plato is now wearing the pin (he has pinned it on the pocket of his shirt) that was on his card that we gave him which shows a sheep and says 'I am going to pastures new'. They are both speaking about work while they are on their way out.

Socrates and Plato return and settle at their desks and work. Sometimes they are speaking to each other about work (no eye contact, neutral face, relaxed body, normal voice) about work whereas other times they are joking and laughing (eye contact, smile/laugh, relaxed). They are both relaxed.

Lunch <recording stopped>

Socrates is working at his desk while Plato is at the nearby office.

Plato returns and with a smile offers us more of the sweets he brought. We exchange some funny remarks about how much each has eaten and we all get back to work.

Plato's phone rings and it is John:

-P:Hello?

-J:

-P: Hi John. How are you pal? (smile

-J:.....

-P: (technical details)

-J:

-P: Oh, yes I have brought sweets, many of them!

-J:

-P: Thanks! Bye!

Plato puts the phone down and goes near Socrates and he jokes about the fact that John is far away and so, he won't be getting any chocolate. Then, Socrates and Plato start commenting in a joking way about some work-related incidents involving John. They are both relaxed, laughing, lightly lower voice, teasing mood and not angry/ironic.

Plato and Socrates go back to work but often exchange jokes/funny comments. When they work, they are neutral face, not moving much, relaxed whereas when they joke they just turn their heads so that they eye contact and they smile and often laugh, relaxed (Plato is moving his hands often)

Plato is leaving. Socrates and I greet him (handshake and embrace respectively) and we wish him well and to enjoy his time. He says to each one of us individually: Bye, it has been a pleasure working with you. Then, he exits smiling while we still greet him and we tease each other about the sweets that we ate.

Socrates and I return to work. Socrates looks calm, relaxed, as before (not emotional, he simply returned to work)

I say to Socrates that there is still a problem with the payment system and I risk not getting paid (After speaking with some colleagues it seems that apart from myself, many people had problems with the system and that they contacted Donald from management who is responsible for that but he neither replied to them nor did anything about it) and he says that he has been having the same problem and that he contacted John, too, via email earlier today. I am mentioning that I find Donald's behaviour unacceptable and demotivating and Socrates seems to agree with me. He is calm and relaxed but it is obvious that he disapproves of Donald's behaviour and he is slightly angry, too.

After a while, John emails Stephen, Donald and Georgia (all from management) and copies Socrates, myself and other colleagues in. The email is:

Stephen,

It seems that we still can'tI have just tried and X Y (name) has also tried. Can you please advise what is happening with this.

I have also spoken to my team in And they can't accesseither.

Regards,

John.

Soon, Stephen replies:

John,

This should be resolved by Monday. New However, the final completion notification will go to Donald.....

.....
Can you all on Monday.

With regards,

Stephen

After this, John emails:

Stephen,

I spoke to Donald earlier who advisedthat it should be resolved -but it isn't.

Regards,

John

Socrates and myself comment again on Donald's actions in the same manner as before. I am very angry but Socrates, although he agrees with me, seems to be calm, relaxed and speaking with a smile.

Leaving time

MONDAY 10th SEPTEMBER

I enter the room and Socrates is already in. (Aristoteles is on holidays and John is on a course). We exchange greetings.

Socrates is working at his desk. His facial expression is neutral, his body is relaxed and only his hands move to type/click.

I contact the finance team to see if the problem that could result in payment delay has been fixed and it is not. I contact Stephen by email and notify Socrates about it. He seems to be in exactly the same position like myself i.e. he won't get paid on time if this problem isn't solved within 2 hours. I am very angry again and speak about it. He agrees with me that this is totally unacceptable from management but he still is calm (relaxed body, normal voice, smile) and only his words show that he is dissatisfied with the situation.

Socrates is working at his desk in the same manner as before. Occasionally, when we have an update regarding the problem, we update each other.

Georgia emails everyone regarding Plato's leave:

All,

Leavers:

Plato left the team on Friday 7th September.

Please join me in wishing Plato well in his move back to

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards

Georgia

Socrates is working at his desk in the same manner as before.

Lunch <Recording stops>

I call Stephen's assistant and I find out that a person from higher management hasn't authorised my form even though the information has been sent to him. After finding out this, I asked for his phone number and phoned the headquarters and spoke to this person's secretary and the problem got solved exactly after 10 minutes. After this, I inform Socrates, who still seems to be having problems but is still waiting patiently.

Socrates phones Georgia regarding work. 'Hi Georgia, it's Socrates. It looks like.....(technical details). His voice is normal, his face is neutral, he isn't moving his hands, his body is relaxed. After he finishes, the call ends. He goes back to work in the manner that he did before.

Socrates goes in and out of the room as he is testing some equipment in the nearby office. His walk is normal and his face neutral.

TUESDAY 11th SEPTEMBER

I enter the room and exchange greetings with Socrates. (Aristoteles is on holidays and John is on a course)

Socrates is working at his desk. His facial expression is neutral, his body is relaxed and only his hands move to type/click.

Socrates goes out of the room to go to the nearby office. His face is neutral, his body relaxed, normal walk

Socrates returns in the same manner than he left.

Socrates goes in and out of the room as he is testing something and once is at his desk and once at nearby office. His face neutral, his movement normal (only hand move for click/type when desk, normal walk when enter or exit), his body relaxed.

Lunch <recording stops>

Socrates is working at his desk, as before, his face is neutral, his body relaxed, moves hands only for type/click

(I show an example of the data to Socrates. He believes I could have entered even more personal info eg when we daily bring drinks for each other or when we discuss or bring sweets.)

WEDNESDAY 12th SEPTEMBER

I enter the room and Socrates is away from his desk. (Aristoteles is on holidays and John is on a course)

Socrates enters the room (normal walk, relaxed body) and we exchange greetings. He just collects something from his desk and leaves in the same manner.

After a while, Socrates emails me:

Hi Nicole,

I am working in the ... store 000000 (phone number) if anybody is looking for me.

Regards

Socrates

Lunch <recording stops>

Socrates returns to the room (normal walk, relaxed body) and starts work at his desk (neutral face, relaxed body, move hand to click/type)

Socrates exits the room to go to the store he was working in the morning (normal walk, neutral face, relaxed body)

Socrates enters the room in the same manner.

(THURSDAY 13th SEPTEMBER)

I enter the room and Socrates hasn't come yet. (Aristoteles is on holidays and John is on a course). After I check my email, I see Socrates' email, which is addressed to all (John, other colleagues, myself):

All,

I will be off today as I have been up most of the night, picked up the stomach bug that's making the rounds just now.

XXX (name of colleague),

In case I don't make it tomorrow,(technical details about work)

Regards
Socrates

(FRIDAY 14th SEPTEMBER)

I enter the room and Socrates isn't in. (Aristoteles is on holidays and John is on a course). After I check my email, I don't see anything from Socrates. I guess he is still ill and unable to come to work.

Socrates hasn't come in today.

[MONDAY 17th - FRIDAY 21th SEPTEMBER]

I decided not to record as Aristoteles and John on holidays till 24th and only Socrates and myself in the office

MONDAY 24th SEPTEMBER

I enter the room and no one is in. I assume that Socrates is still ill and that Aristoteles will arrive shortly.

Aristoteles enters and we exchange greetings (it is the first day of work after his holiday and so, I ask him if he had a nice time and he said 'Yes, thank you') and then he settles and starts work at his desk his usual way. (neutral face, move hands only to click/type, relaxed body)

A colleague phones me and then asks to speak to Aristoteles. I pass the line to Aristoteles. Aristoteles speaks with the colleague. His voice is normal (low, slow), his body relaxed, his hands not moving, he laughs occasionally and nods his head. Phone call ends and he goes back to work as before.

Aristoteles goes out of the room to the nearby office (normal walk, neutral face, relaxed body).

Aristoteles comes back in the same manner than he left.

I phone John to ask a question and while we speak he mentions that Aristoteles has asked him some time off as he will undergo an operation.

Aristoteles settles at his desk and works as before.

One of the computers behind me generates an alarm and Aristoteles (normal walk, neutral face, relaxed body) goes to check. He seems to be speaking to himself 'Oh, #### [swearword/ first time I hear him swear, maybe he does but low and I can't hear him or maybe this is unique?] everything is, while working on the screen; his face is neutral, his movements normal, his body relaxed, concentrating. He works on the computer in the same way as he doesn't when at his desk.

He stops for a while and we start to speak about non-work related matters. While we conversate, he is smiling and relaxed. He gets back to work in the same manner as before (ie as when at his desk).

I hear him say once more '####' but his body reactions are still the same and then quietly continue with work at it.

Two colleagues enter the room and go back and speak with him about the problem. They conversate. Aristoteles is standing, his face is neutral but often smiles and he is moving his hands while he speaks.

The colleagues leave and Aristoteles works again on the computer quietly.

Aristoteles walks (normal walk, relaxed body) and goes to his desk and continues to work at his screen. His face is again neutral, his body relaxed, he is moving his hands to type/click

Lunch <Recording stops>

Aristoteles and I exchange a work-related joke and we both laugh and settle at our desks.

Aristoteles is working at his desk as usual.

I inform and express my disapproval of Georgia's attitude during an incident that happened last Friday (where with a rather louder tone of voice on the phone she almost demanded that I do something work-related, which however had an impact on 2 appointments that I had arranged after work and had to be cancelled) and Aristoteles confidentially describes two similar incidents that happened (where again she demanded that some other colleagues do something) and seemed to agree with my opinion as he said 'Her behaviour is sometimes sharp'. His face is neutral, he doesn't move his hands much, eye contact, relaxed body, nodes his head and his eyes are slightly wider when he wants to put emphasis.

Aristoteles is working at his screen. His face is neutral, his body relaxed, he moves his hands only to click/type

Aristoteles walks (normal) and works at the screen at the back of the room

A colleague enters and starts speaking with Aristoteles regarding work. Aristoteles has neutral face, relaxed body, not move hands. Colleague and Aristoteles exit the room (normal)

The phone rings and is his wife. She tells me if it is possible to tell him to phone her back as it is quite urgent. I go and find Aristoteles in the nearby office and so, both he and the colleague come in the room. Aristoteles is walking a lot faster but his face is neutral and he isn't anxious, just eager to go. He calls his wife back and it sounds as if she is telling him about the operation as he only says calmly with neutral face and relaxed body (while writing something down) 'So, it is Wednesday then, okay' and hangs up. Then, he turns and says to the colleague with a surprise 'I went last week to the doctor for and normally you have to waitfor the operation but now they called and said Wednesday (smiles)! I have to tell this to Georgia' (anxious look). The colleague advises him that he shouldn't worry and that even though the ops are short of staff at the

moment, he (Aristoteles) has to take care of himself. Then, Aristoteles (with an anxious look) quickly dials and phones Georgia:

-A: Hi Georgia, I just got a call about the operation (seems that they have spoken about it sometime today when I either out of the room or lunch time). I have to do the operation this Wednesday. And the doctor says that this is very painful and I have to be off for a month andfor 2-3 months (his voice is slightly louder than normal, he looks anxious/concerned)

-G:.....(he is not moving, listening, looks anxious/concerned)

-A: I think I will just have to go. (face neutral, relaxed, not move) Okay? (smile, relaxed, nod head slightly)

-G:.....(relaxed, neutral face, no move)

-A: Bye

The moment he puts down the phone, he turns to the colleague and in a relaxed way, normal voice, no move hands much and neutral face explains what Georgia told him: that his health is the most important and he shouldn't worry about work. Then, he comes near my desk (normal walk) and he explains the same things with a smile. Then, he goes back near the colleague and they both exit the room (normal way)

Aristoteles enters the room in the same way and works at his desk (neutral face, move only hands to click/type, relaxed body).

John calls to speak to Aristoteles:

-A: Hi John

-J:(Aristoteles not move, listening, relaxed body, neutral face)

-A: I had a call [explains all in detail about the operation and its implications] (his voice is his normal low slow, he doesn't move, his face neutral and only smiles in the end when he says a joke)

-J:.....

-A: I could do that tomorrow. I (and a long technical discussion starts about tomorrow's work where John and Aristoteles are speaking in a dialogue, in the same manner as before: Aristoteles is relaxed, neutral face, no move)

..... (sometimes his voice is slightly lower than usual and so it is inaudible to me but don't know if intentional (ie commenting about something in confidence) or coincidental)

-A: Okay, thank you, bye bye (small smile)

Aristoteles goes back to work in the same manner as before.

TUESDAY 25th SEPTEMBER

I enter the room and no one is in. Socrates is ill as he would have been here otherwise.

Aristoteles enters and after we greet each other, he settles at his desk and works in his usual way: neutral face, relaxed body, move hands to click/type

2 Meetings <I am in audios but I can see that Aristoteles is at his screen and occasionally he is going in and out of the room. His face is neutral, his walk normal, his body relaxed

Aristoteles is working at the computer at the back of the room. His face is neutral, his body relaxed, his hands are moving not only to type/click but also more as he is repairing something. He appears calm; however, twice I heard him exhaling loudly. Looks as if he is physically relaxed but the problem is puzzling/slightly annoying him.

Lunch <Recording stopped>

Aristoteles is working at his desk in the same manner as before.

Aristoteles and I are speaking about my holidays and his operation (I am away from work for 4 days, starting from Thursday the 27th Sept whereas he will be away for a month, starting from tomorrow). Aristoteles is smiling, relaxed body, moving his hands sometimes, eye contact, sometimes nodding his head at the end of the phrase when he jokes. Then, after the greetings and wishes, I leave to go at the other office

I am at the other office <No recording>

WEDNESDAY 26th SEPTEMBER

I enter the room and after greeting and briefly speaking to Socrates (ie how he is feeling), I settle at my desk. (Aristoteles will be off for a month)

Socrates is working at his desk in his usual way: neutral face, move hands only to click/type, relaxed body

1 meeting <I have a meeting at the back of the room with 2 colleagues who entered the room. Socrates is repeatedly going in and out of the room; briefly checking his screen and then going out to the nearby room to work (normal walk, relaxed body, neutral face). At some point Mary enters the room and settles at an empty desk. As we have a meeting, she just smiles to me and Socrates and we smile back. Socrates goes on working in the same manner as before (in and out of the room). Mary leaves.

Lunch <No recording>

Socrates is working at his desk in the same manner as before. I describe him the incident between Georgia and myself last week. He listened calmly with a neutral face and not moving and when I finished and I said 'Can you believe this?!' he just smiled and nodded so as to indicate 'yes, I can!'. Then we briefly spoke about non-work related things and we went back to work.

An operation crashed and we can't work a particular program on our screens. Socrates and I speak and joke about work and non-work related things. He is often smiling or laughing, he is sometimes moving his hands, eye contact, relaxed body.

The operation is still down but we work on other things on our screens. Socrates is working as before.

Leaving time. Socrates wishes me a nice holiday and we exchange some jokes.