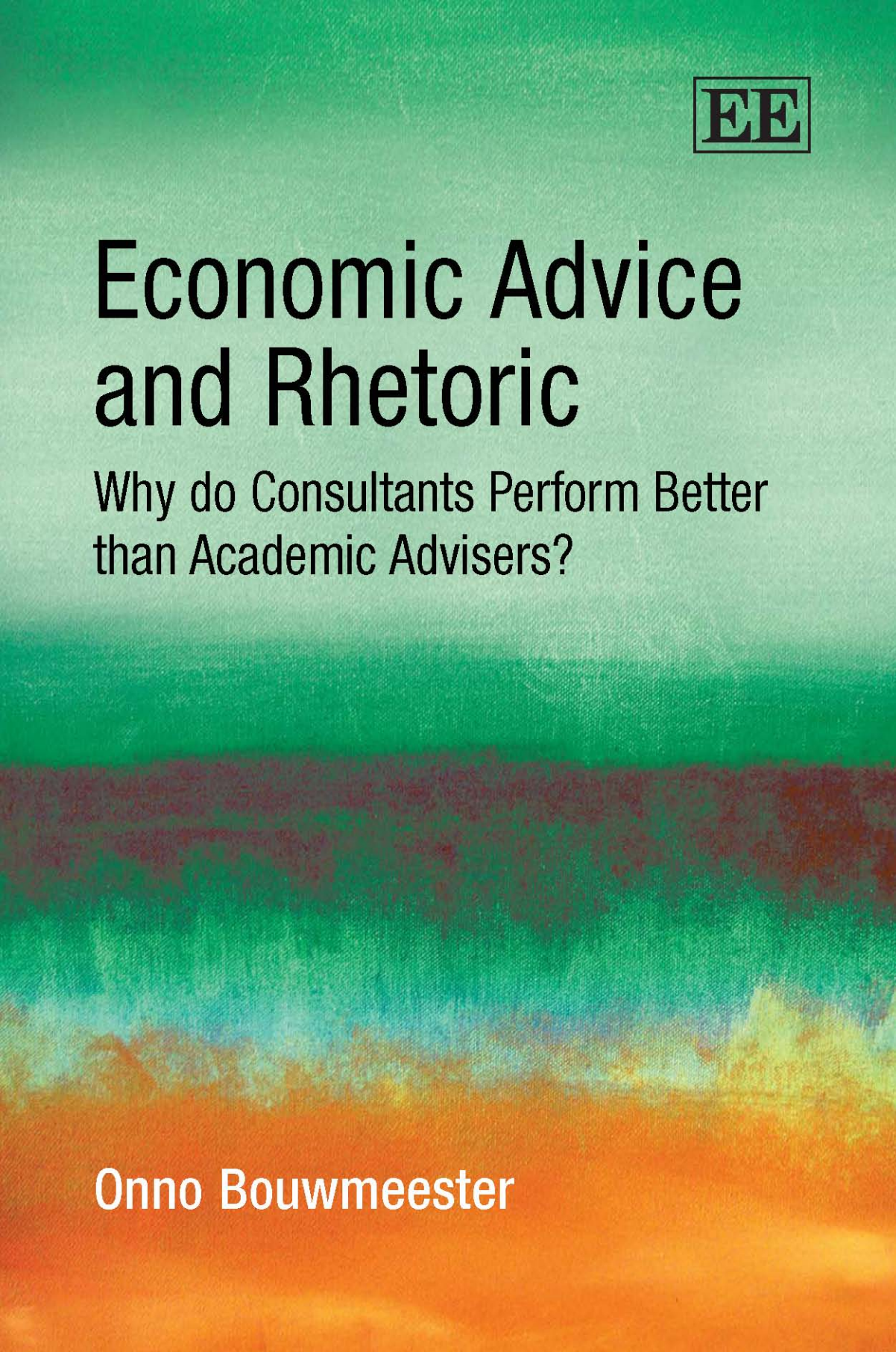
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Economic Advice and Rhetoric
Why do Consultants Perform Better than Academic Advisers?
Onno Bouwmeester

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Onno Bouwmeester

Associate Professor in Management Consulting, VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands

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About the author

Onno Bouwmeester (born 1966) is Associate Professor and responsible for the Master's specialization Management Consulting at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, VU University Amsterdam, where he has worked since 2001. He received Msc degrees in economics and philosophy from the University of Amsterdam (UvA). After graduation he worked as a management consultant at KPMG Bureau voor Economische Argumentatie for six years. In January 2008 he defended his dissertation 'Advice as argument' at VU University. He has published about 50 policy reports during his consultant years, and more recently several academic articles and book chapters on consulting, combining insights from philosophy, economics and organization science.

Preface

As a young consultant I wondered why my colleagues were so skeptical about the research methods I had learned in academia. 'Don't trust academic methods in the context of consulting' they warned me. 'Economic theory won't help you much. Talk with your client or with experts instead. They will give you more relevant knowledge than 20 scientific articles together.' These and other consultant "lessons" conflicted with the beliefs and expectations I had as I left university with a Master's degree in economics and philosophy. I believed in the importance of universal standards of morality and had developed a sense for complexities. I had learned to respect theory, the rigor of research methods and the importance of legitimizing conclusions. I was used to the time needed for reading and thinking. However, I considered the detached scientific attitude as problematic. I could not identify with that, nor could I recognize many assumptions of economic theories by introspection. Working as a consultant was an opportunity to see economic theory and academic methods with new eyes. Let me summarize some of my consultant experiences at KPMG Bureau voor Economische Argumentatie to give you a first impression of the professional ethos of consultants. The same experiences inspired me to undertake the "applied" philosophical research that resulted in this book.

MANY MORALITIES

The first assignment I had to work on was about the economic impact of addiction treatment. The Dutch government regularly questions if addiction treatment is worth the price. Most addicts relapse after treatment. The interest of our client was to show that addiction treatment could reduce social costs such as criminality or low labor productivity despite its limited effectiveness. This economic argument would convince the government to support addiction treatment in the future.

I liked this assignment, since I was eager to show reduction of social costs. I considered addiction treatment a useful institution in society. Soon I became the "expert" on addiction. This often happens after one assignment in most consultancies. Therefore I was given a second assignment on gambling, since gambling caused addiction problems as well. We had to

estimate the economic impact of a new law concerning gambling. The government had invented new restrictions to reduce the number of addicted gamblers. I personally agreed with the purpose of this new law. Because the restrictions would result in a loss of sales and, in turn, lower the sector's employment, we were asked by a branch organization of private casinos to investigate the negative economic consequences for the sector.

I had problems arguing this case. I did not like private casinos at all, and I knew that addicted gamblers stole my bikes even more often than drug addicts. I had to do economic research in a context of conflicting interests and values. This kind of economics was part of a social world. The academic economists who trained me had been silent about these interests and values, as if they were not subject to economic deliberation. That was strange, since I really had to tell an economic story. The story was about the assessment of effects perceived from different points of view. It was not that I had ignored courses about values in economics, but they were about scarcity, utility, welfare or the importance of egoism for the economy, and these values and motives were always discussed on a high level of abstraction and treated as if they were universally applicable. Now economic deliberation had to do with real and different interests, real and diverse purposes, real restrictions and the estimation of concrete measures with real impact. They were related to the many moralities and interests in the economic world.

I became personally involved in these two assignments. I was bothered by and enthusiastic about them. Real economics was concerned with clean and dirty hands. It was about concrete utility for real organizations or interest groups. It was not a thing to analyse and describe while remaining an outsider. In this economic world I played a role and therefore had to take responsibility for the reports I wrote.

My firm accepted the gambling assignment as a case of economic advocacy. In such cases the ethos of my company was to provide a client with valid arguments, since no client would benefit from false or wrong arguments. That gave some basis for my misgivings. It was a guarantee that I would not be pressed to sell nonsense for truth.

While I carried out this assignment critically, the consequence was that I changed my views. I learned to understand the interests of the private casino owners. They were not treated like their main competitor, Holland Casino. The national government had a financial interest in Holland Casino, so equal treatment was not in the interest of the government. It was strange indeed that the proposed new restrictions affected only the private casino owners, not Holland Casino. The private casino owners had a case. To me it seemed even better in the end that Holland Casino had a strong competitor, regarding their addiction prevention program.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

As junior consultant I learned that consultants write such that their advice should not take much time to understand. Their presentations should make clear to the client the practical relevance of the analysis. Recommendations should be presented in such a way that clients are encouraged to implement their advice. Advice should be helpful. For these reasons I had to write as transparently, concretely and simply as I could by avoiding complex sentences and by illustrating concepts, relations or changes visually using graphs and figures.

As a junior I wrote a proposal to convince a prospective client that we could help them. My project manager was really angry with my proposal. I did not understand. I had worked hard and developed an interesting perspective for our prospective client. It was too good for the wastepaper basket. So I got angry too, and my project manager invited our managing director to mediate. I explained to him that my point was in the middle of the fourth page, after three pages of explaining why several other perspectives would not work. The managing director told me that, however interesting my point, the project manager had become angry at having to read three useless pages and then had given up reading the rest of the proposal. In consulting, start with what you really want to say. This lesson was exactly the opposite to what I had learned at university.

Factual writing is another way for consultants to keep an analysis simple and convincing. A client can respond to facts or concrete numbers directly: most clients can judge whether they are presented correctly or not because they have specific knowledge about their field. A consultant report can present arguments one step ahead of the facts derived from interviews, inquiries or statistics. Predictions are more like expert guesses based on direct evidence. More speculation makes a report too complex and too risky in its consequences. So I learned that a consultant report should be strongly related to notions of common sense.

USE KNOWLEDGE MORE THAN THEORY

The ultimate purpose for consultants is to give advice. Economic theory, statistical information, observations or knowledge by experience are all means that can contribute to your advice. Knowledge that is close to observation is often more useful than a theory that relates variables. It is knowledge about what the case is, what is wrong and what can be improved.

During an assignment to improve ethno-marketing of small and medium

enterprises we used Kotler's marketing mix as the concept. The mix (product, price, place, promotion) explains to some extent the success of a marketing approach, but that was not what we looked at. Our question was to identify what elements of the marketing mix could be used to reach specific ethnic groups. The employees in the shops, not just the products, were ethno-sensitive; both were culturally embedded. We thus used the marketing mix as a checklist to identify elements of the mix that could be ethno-sensitive by talking to business people, considering their strategies, discussing expectations by reflecting on experiences, and by pushing the limits of a category like promotion. To consider employees as part of this category requires some interpretation.

If knowledge already exists a consultant will use it. Many economic and business statistics were part of our library. We used them to look at unemployment rates and demographic developments, but we hardly looked at correlations. Theories like Porter's Five Forces, or market typologies like monopolies or oligopolies were sometimes a point of departure for further discussion, but often these rather simple or global theories were too general, abstract or idealized. The more specialized theories had even less relevance. Since the cases that an adviser has to cope with are interdisciplinary, a microscopic approach often fails. My colleagues were cautious about economic models that described dependencies or causal relationships and I developed the same suspicions after some years of experience. In real life we cannot use a ceteris paribus argument. We tried to imagine possible scenarios instead. Different things can happen and as a consequence an economy and its actors can go in different directions.

QUICK AND DIRTY RESEARCH METHODS

Only if we could not find relevant knowledge in documents, in our own track record of assignments or at the client's office did we do research, but never more than necessary. If three semi-structured interviews were enough to draw conclusions in combination with our experience and some desk research, we left it at three. If we could give sound advice that way, it was fine with us. Our clients agreed most of the time if we discussed the proposal.

I had difficulties accepting this research style at first, and had animated methodological discussions with my project manager. "We cannot say this," I would protest as we made a proposal. My project manager replied, "Academics cannot say this, but we can. That's why our clients ask us instead of academic advisers". We had better opportunity to deliver at least some results by our "quick and dirty" methods. Some indications are

often enough to draw tentative conclusions, and tentative conclusions are better than no conclusions at all in the minds of most clients: in practice, we often can only decide in this way.

It is hard to convince junior consultants who have left university that they have to use non-academic standards to assess knowledge. They have to learn that in the context of consulting the production of general valid knowledge is no longer the ultimate purpose. I learned that research should be done only if it is useful in the local context of your advice. If 80 percent of the information can be uncovered with 20 percent of the effort, then leave the last 20 percent of information to the academics. Consultants know their style is quick and dirty from an academic point of view. They have their own means, though, to correct flaws in their approach if necessary. These are common sense experiences of similar situations, and a kind of intersubjective testing based on critical discussion of their findings with clients, stakeholders or colleagues.

START THINKING SOON

When one of the founding managers of our consultancy left us, he mentioned some of the lessons he had obtained from his experience as manager and consultant. One was that a consultant has to formulate conclusions as soon as possible. It makes it easier to write a report when the conclusions are at least tentatively known. You can test your conclusions in interviews and in conversations with the client and client stakeholders. It proved to be one of the most important lessons I learned from an experienced consultant, and it took years to make progress in this respect. This ability depends on experience. It is an ability to "see" directly what a management situation is like and what is needed to improve it for your client, rather than analysing all problems in detail. It is like learning to read: first, you have to spell each word; later, you recognize words and sentences as a whole.

Knowledge by experience and tacit knowledge are key terms concerning the ability to draw the right conclusions fast. It is part of seniority, which means something to consultants. Seniority also includes personal strength and authenticity. Can you take responsibility for your conclusions? Can you criticize or correct your client? Can you confront a client with unpopular conclusions? Do you have the ability to push a client gently and yet firmly? Consultants are actors in a social world, where interests are powerful forces. They need personality along with experience. These abilities are not academic, but they are needed to act in the social context of economic life.

BE OPEN TO CRITICISM

Teachers at different universities had familiarized me with critiques and criticism. I considered myself a critical academic. After all, I studied philosophy. When I started consulting, my project manager warned me that if I asked for a critical reading of my pieces, I would get them back decimated: "We take criticism more seriously than you're familiar with." My colleagues took their time and I got my experience. The reason: failures are expensive for consultants. "It takes 20 good assignments to compensate the damage to your reputation by one failed project", one manager told me. Even now, as an academic, I consider consultants more critical than academics in reading their colleagues' work. The only exception I know is the anonymous scientific review of an article. The open kind of face-to-face criticism that consultants regularly endure is rare in my department, at seminars and conferences. I have experienced consultants as more involved and more social characters, resulting in a different attitude toward criticizing and being criticized.

Academics seem to prefer leaving their colleagues in peace by responding: "It is not my field; that is not my expertise." Compared to consultants academics seem rather indifferent. They work more in isolation. Consultants do not leave the world in peace. They like drama. They challenge each other. That consultants are more critical than academics stems from their social involvement. In the end you have to give advice. You are responsible, you engage.

However, academics are not necessarily more friendly characters. They are able to give a harsh kind of criticism as well, like their criticism towards consultants or criticism meted out during some PhD defenses. This harsh kind of criticism often results from a clash between the criteria of different professions, disciplines, schools or paradigms. The criticism of consultants is different, it is more involved and more close to the recipient.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR CLIENT

Consultants can criticize their clients in several ways. Rarely do they accept the formulation of an assignment at once. A client often has a biased view regarding the reasons that make advice necessary. I learned how to convince a client that the real problem could be different, or that the assignment had to be formulated differently to get a more valuable outcome. I also learned to invest in an open atmosphere, necessary for an open and critical dialogue. As a consultant I had critical and analytical abilities, but no ready solutions. We could not tell a client what to do

immediately, but we could help a client understand the proportions of the problem, what matters and what does not, what solutions are possible and which choices would be helpful. One of my colleagues once asked me to know within the first three days of working with my client the setup of the client's organization, the jokes, the kind of conversation and the atmosphere in order to know how to approach and remain close to the client and establish the required relationship.

A consultant needs some intuition of the bias in the client's understanding of their situation, like a psychotherapist. The sooner a client is confronted with a faulty formulation of the assignment, the better. This has consequences for client expectations too. Clients cannot leave their problem entirely to a consultant, though many like to do exactly that. Therefore a consultant has to critically manage the expectations of a client. A client expecting too much will be disappointed in the end, a poor outcome for both consultant and client.

Academics seem less aware of their clients' interests. In one assignment we subcontracted an academic adviser from the Faculty of Law. It was hard to explain to him what our expectations were and what contributions would be in the interest of the client. It took several rounds of feedback to point him in what we considered the right direction. He had difficulty internalizing the interest of the client in his work. Another experience was an interview with two academic advisers who were working for an organization of private casinos. During the interview I sensed that the academic advisers were willing to limit the scope of their research to those questions that were most likely to support the preferred conclusions of their client. We discussed how far one can go in this client-pleasing direction. Strangely enough, the academics were willing to phrase their research question in any direction: the client defines what knowledge has to be delivered. As a consultant I wondered about this approach, especially since this client had critical stakeholders. It would not be in the client's long-term interest to present a one-sided argument. I felt that something strange was happening, something paradoxical, which I could not quite understand. Was there a more fundamental problem with academic standards and what was this? How did academic advisers do their work compared to consultants?

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For writing this book I owe a lot to the conversations I had with colleagues during the six years that I worked as a consultant. I learned on the job how to become a consultant and what are the necessary consultant skills and values. As important was the opportunity to do academic research in this

field, first offered to me by Arjo Klamer as my PhD adviser. The project resulted in a PhD thesis ten years later (Bouwmeester, 2008). The discussions we had illustrated differences between consultants and academics. I had internalized consultant standards, but worked on an academic PhD project, following academic rules. My first idea to start the PhD project was to conduct interviews and review advice reports right away, in order to find out more about the differences between the professional groups of consultants and academic advisers. However, that approach seemed too quick and dirty: there was already research in this area. "Read your literature" was the comment I received from my PhD adviser. As consultants we preferred talking rather than reading. However, consultants and academics had already expressed much of their views in their writings. Interviews were first postponed and later even removed from my research design. Instead I have reviewed or "interviewed" literature by consultants and academic advisers about their understanding of their work in order to compare these views with what they both have "done" in their advice reports.

I am grateful for the conversations I had with members of Arjo Klamer's weekly seminar, first as a consultant and later as assistant professor working at VU University Amsterdam. That I left the consultant world behind during my PhD project helped me to better internalize academic standards from the perspective of a researcher, by talking and working with my colleagues at VU University Amsterdam. The university also gave me more time for my research than I could afford as a consultant. Barbara Czarniawska, Tom Elfring, Pierre Guillet de Monthoux and Ard-Pieter de Man have contributed significantly to the final version of this book with their enthusiastic support. I would very much like to also thank the anonymous reviewers for their many helpful comments. And Tibor, Frank and Phoebe, I am always happy to meet you after a day of work.

Onno Bouwmeester,
Amsterdam, June 2009

1. Introduction: consultants and academics in competition

EMPTY RHETORIC OR QUESTIONABLE RESEARCH?

Sometimes we need advice. Say you are a member of a works council and the CEO wants your advice about a reorganization project that will cost many colleagues' jobs. Is it really necessary? The works council does not have the requisite expertise, so you need help from an adviser. After all, these are your colleagues and you have a responsibility to treat the issue with care. A consultant can help to articulate and legitimize your views towards your colleagues and towards your CEO. Or you are the CEO of an international airport and think growth is in order, but you are aware of some negative effects. Can they be managed? What are their sizes? Will the positive effects outweigh the negative? You need help to answer these questions in order to legitimize your decision. Or you are a minister and want to make public transport (distribution of electricity, the delivery of post) more market competitive. What degree of liberalization is appropriate? What steps are needed to introduce liberalization? What conditions have to be monitored? Often the questions that require advice are so complex, the consequences so big and the interests involved so different that careful deliberation is needed. Consultants and academic advisers both offer their services in such situations, but which should you ask? Who can give you the guidance you need? Who has enough authority to legitimize your views? Who can inform you most adequately? Who can help you to decide in the midst of many dilemmas? Who can give you the confidence you need? And who can best challenge your views? In the end you need to make your own decisions, but with an adviser you hope you are better prepared.

Academics have a strong reputation regarding theoretical knowledge and quality of research. They claim they can provide clients with useful theory that may help them reach their ends. Consultants do not have this reputation and are even treated with suspicion by academics. For example, Fincham (1999, p. 341) cites the characterization that a consultant is 'the guy who borrows your watch to tell you what time it is'. Bloomfield and

Danieli (1995, p. 39) mention in their discussion that: 'consultants are charlatans . . . they simply tell organizations what they already know'. Van Aken (2001, p. 314) argues that consultants should develop a 'body of knowledge' to free themselves from the accusation of charlatanism. Clark and Salaman (1996, p. 85) characterize consultants as 'witch doctors'. Alvesson and Johansson (2002, p. 229) write that academics criticize consultants for lack of deep knowledge, for being shallow, overpaid and immoral, and even for causing major corporate problems. Economists like Goodwin (1988), Peacock (1992) and Thornton and Ward (1999, p. 104) characterize the consultant as a 'hired gun' as opposed to the neutral, independent academic expert. These characterizations are supported in research by Van Dalen and Klamer, who compare the authority of consultants with academic economists in a questionnaire answered by 478 Dutch economists, 58 percent of them working for universities and business schools, the others for governments (14 percent) and in business (24 percent). The authority of academics is ranked highest, above foreign policy institutes. Consultants are positioned at the bottom of the ranking (van Dalen and Klamer, 1996, pp. 261, 265, 270). Academic respondents rank consultants lowest. However, they are not the only ones who are critical. Consultants like Ashford (1998), Argyris (2000), Pinault (2000), de Sonnaville (2005) or Ardon (2009) make jokes about their colleagues, they challenge them or are self-critical. However, they do not show disdain like academics do. Armbrüster (2006, p. 5) characterizes this academic view as critical, sometimes even showing the distaste of the academic community.

Consultants respond to these academics. Czarniawska and Mazza (2003, p. 277) cite consultants who claim that 'Academics are only able to talk; we do the real stuff! That's what we are paid for.' Some academics agree. Clark and Majone (1985, p. 6) argue that academic advice often lacks relevance: 'For in practice, scientific inquiry cannot discover most of the things that policymakers would like to know.' Frey and Eichenberger (1993, p. 192) expect the relevance of European economics for the economy to continue to decrease in the near future. International academic journals publish 'institution-unspecific research' and no research about local or national economic questions. More recently Frey (2006, p. 307) claims that 'economists in their scientific capacity should be careful about making claims about the influence of economics on the economy'.

Academics such as Kieser (2002) and van Baalen (2001) are interested in the phenomenon that academics show disdain for their competitors but at the same time are outperformed by them in competition on economic assignments. Economists consider the price of a service an indicator for the economic value of that service. They rely heavily on money as an

indicator of value, but are resistant to measuring their own services in these terms (Cordes et al., 1993, pp. 461–5; Friedman, 1986, p. 8; Kieser, 2002, pp. 220–1). Academic advisers are paid less than consultants for the same service. How can that be?

In *Critical Consulting,* edited by Timothy Clark and Robin Fincham (2002), consultants' advice is considered a discipline that has to be taken more seriously as an object of research because the academic community does not really understand what consultants are doing. Consultants gained the attention of academics with the growth of their business in the 1990s. The great riddle for many academics is how it is possible that consultant knowledge seems flawed and superficial from an academic perspective, but influential and well accepted enough for clients to pay for it (Kieser, 2002, p. 212; Salaman, 2002, p. 249). Academics wonder how consultants can do so well (Armbrüster, 2006, p. 41; McKenna, 2006, p. 7). That academics should outperform consultants due to their research abilities is the implicit assumption of the critical academic view. And since that does not happen when academics do contract research, should we formulate the hypothesis that consultants are better researchers?

In *Management Consulting,* edited by Matthias Kipping and Lars Engwall (2002), several contributions show that: 'consultants have managed to establish themselves as "legitimate" knowledge carriers in addition to, and in competition with, academia' (Engwall and Kipping, 2002, p. 13). One indication of their strong competitive position is that consultants are more cited than academics in *Manager Magazine*, one of the major German periodicals for managers (Faust, 2002, p. 159). This proposition is also supported in a case study by Engwall et al. (2002), who show that the Swedish professor Rhenman with an academic consultancy (SIAR) could not combine academic standards with a competitive market proposition. His consultancy became like others, due to market pressure. Some academics therefore start to question academic methodology owing to the problems they experience when applying academic knowledge (Alvesson and Johansson, 2002, p. 230; Argyris, 1996, p. 393; van Baalen, 2001, p. 70; Berglund and Werr, 2000, p. 652; ten Bos, 2001, p. 45; Kieser, 2002, p. 222; Salaman, 2002, p. 251; Weggeman, 2001, pp. 112–15). They question their secluded position, their distrust of personal experience, their lack of interest in practical relevance and their preoccupation with timeless, value-free knowledge and general universal principles.

Few academics have explored whether consultants are better researchers, or if academic advisers can improve their research methods by learning from consultants. On the contrary, a popular academic solution claims that consultants are only successful by their empty rhetoric. Salaman (2002, p. 250) refers to the characterization that 'consultants

trade in performance and empty rhetoric'. Clark (1995) argues their success depends on impression management. This includes the suits they wear, their PowerPoint presentations, their image, and so on. Fincham (1999, p. 338) also refers to this view in which 'the sheer force of rhetoric is emphasized'. Though consultants say nothing new, they say it so nicely that most clients are satisfied and even motivated to carry on with consultants. Rhetoric makes the difference, and academics should not be associated with that practice: 'they should be distinguishable from consultants' (Kieser, 1997, p. 70). This interpretation of rhetoric comes close to the popular accusation of charlatanism. In *The Expansion of Management Knowledge*, edited by Sahlin-Andersson and Engwall (2002), Ernst and Kieser (2002, pp. 69–71) even argue that managers become 'addicted' to consultants, which implies they have a low opinion of managers as well.

Academics who conclude that consultants are successful only by their empty rhetoric seem to abandon their own norms of a serious and profound study when they start to analyse the work of consultants from a rhetorical perspective. Their analysis excludes differences in the use of arguments and in the use of knowledge, which should be part of a more serious rhetorical analysis of the riddle. Even Clegg, et al. (2004b, p. 36, 2004b) who consider consulting a 'discursive practice' without disdain, do not analyse consulting as a rhetorical phenomenon. Clark also argues that rhetoric is important for consultants. He is considered the main proponent of a rhetorical view on consulting (Sturdy et al., 2009, p. 7). His analysis is of a general type though. He does not consider rhetoric as something academics have to deal with as well, as something with different faces and with a relation to content. Berglund and Werr (2000) explore the kind of consultant rhetoric in more detail, and also in contrast to academic rhetoric. Cordes et al. (1993, p. 476) and Klamer (2007, p. 171) have provided an example of a content-based rhetorical analysis, with attention to arguments. They have analysed why politicians do not adopt the economic terminology of their academic advisers, claiming that politicians and consulting economists are divided by a rhetorical gap. This is different from valuing the rhetoric of politicians as empty and the rhetoric of academics as meaningful. These authors have analysed rhetorical differences rather than impede the discussion with the simplistic "solution" of some academics that consultants are successful on the basis of their empty rhetoric.

This book investigates rhetorical differences between consultants and academics. It contributes to the debate on consulting by showing what consultants and academic advisers do with their words in the context of advice, and how they use them. A related objective is to contribute to a deeper understanding of advice practices, based on what advice is derived from: specific words and arguments spoken to clients with real demands.

The analysis does not assume that "empty" rhetoric explains consultants' success, but intends to unravel the rhetorical nuances that make the difference. Compared to consultant advice, advice by academics is discussed even less and their superiority is only assumed, based on their critical attitude towards consultants. To compare both characters as competitors is new. The book also contributes to rhetorical analysis in a social-economic context by offering a detailed investigation of the argumentation practices of consultants and academic advisers involved in advice assignments.

ACADEMIC ADVISERS OUTPERFORMED IN COMPETITION WITH CONSULTANTS

Academics concerned with the suitability of their methodology in the context of practical economic and management advice are not alone. Since the early 1980s the issue of the relevance and use of academic knowledge has occupied policy makers in the Netherlands. Academics have been pressured by the government to offer advice by means of contract research. The expertise available at universities should help solve technological, economic and social problems. Economists and management scientists must leave their ivory towers to help clients just as consultants do. Academics are thus challenged to demonstrate the usefulness and applicability of their knowledge.

In the early 1980s contract research contributed less than 10 percent to the total income of Dutch universities (Overlegcommissie Verkenningen, 1996, p. 26). More recently it has risen to 15 percent of their income or 750 million euros in 2004, almost 30 percent of the budget for all research activities of all Dutch universities (VSNU, 2006). It is reasonable to expect that economic faculties, which in the Netherlands include departments for business administration, earn about 30 percent with contract research. For technical faculties the share may be higher, for the humanities possibly lower. Exact figures are hard to obtain.

The growth of academic contract research is an indication that academic advisers do well, but compared to the performance of consultants their success is less convincing. The consulting market grew about 19 percent each year in the late 1990s, which is more than twice as fast as the growth of contract research by universities. The volume of the Dutch consultant market was about 1.4 billion euros in 2000 (Twijnstra et al., 2002, pp. 32, 40). Issues that belong to (business) economic disciplines, including business administration, dominate the market for advice. Less dominant branches of advice are communication, information technology (IT) consulting and other more technical issues that belong to management

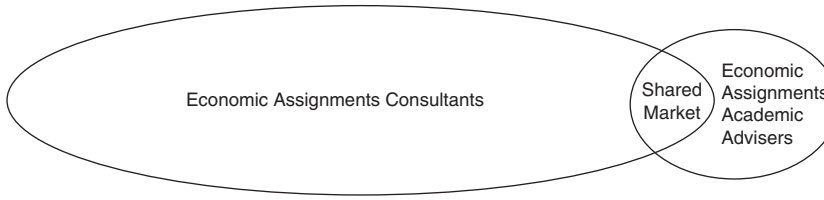

Figure 1.1 Academic advisers and consultants on the Dutch market for economic advice

consulting. IT consulting is growing rapidly, however, and has even acquired traditional management consultancies in recent years (Kipping, 2002, p. 38).

Since the Dutch consultant market in general exceeds that of academic contract research, and since the share of economic consulting as part of all management consulting exceeds the share of economic contract research as part of all contract research, we can conclude that consultants dominate the Dutch market for economic advice. There is also a shared market, where both consultants and academics work on similar assignments for similar clients (Figure 1.1).

Van Hoesel and de Koning (2005, p. 121) estimate the total market of policy research at 300 million euros. Universities' market share is 10 percent; consultancies and firms specializing in policy research have 80 percent. They also distinguish other small suppliers. Since Van Hoesel and de Koning count a part of the research by universities in the group of specialized firms on policy research, the share of university research is somewhat larger, say 15 percent compared to consultancies' 75 percent. These "educated guesses" are for the period shortly before 2005 although the authors do not mention which year. It is likely that these shares approximate the market shares for economic advice.

Academic advisers and consultants sometimes serve the same clients or win the same kind of assignments. Differences between consultants and academics can be identified most clearly here because different assignments require different approaches. On this shared market of economic assignments (Figure 1.1) are questions such as whether Amsterdam Airport should grow, or to what extent and under what conditions should the electricity market be liberalized. There are also clients that ask both consultants and academic advisers for advice, such as the Ministry of Economic Affairs. It is thus possible to neutralize subject and client influences by comparing the style of advice. We can study rhetorical differences between consultants and academic advisers by means of text analysis of the reports

written for similar clients on similar questions. These conditions have led me to formulate the following research question:

In advising on economic questions, what differences in argumentation account for the market success of consultants versus academic advisers?

The consultants and academics I distinguish between have a degree in economics or a related academic discipline. The difference is that consultants work for private consulting companies such as Berenschot, Accenture or McKinsey whereas academic advisers work at universities as full-time researchers or as academics who sometimes participate in contract research. In my comparison the institution defines the role. For those who combine roles, if they write that their role is as a consultant for a consultancy, I consider them consultants. If they work on an assignment for clients in the context of academic contract research, I consider them as academic advisers.

Because the comparison is between consultants and academic advisers, my research does not apply to assignments with a strong repetitive character, such as implementation of business models or IT systems. A characterization that fits this kind of management consultant is the 'creative' consultant (Visscher, 2001, p. 69) or the research consultant who aims at advice. Their advice has little to do with 'routine' (Feltmann 2001, p. 133). Creative or research consultants often answer questions where a repetitive practice falls short or when questions are relatively unique. The big consulting firms involved in implementation try to standardize their consulting practice (Bolweg, 2001, p. 192). Limiting my focus to creative or research consulting excludes many assignments of management consultants: on those markets they do not compete with academics.

Though the academic adviser and the consultant are the main characters in my comparison, there are variations within these characters. Not all academics work as advisers. Many do not, actually. These pure academics cannot be classified as academic advisers; they are different characters. They do not write for clients but by their own initiative publish on self-defined questions, or are involved in teaching. Pure academics can, however, serve as a point of reference for academic advisers. It is likely that pure academics influence the attitude and professional values of academic advisers, since the status of pure academics is high at universities. The academic adviser character must devote a serious amount of time to contract research. Like pure academics, they can also lecture, hold seminars and publish in academic journals. Some are successful in both kinds of research.

Another character is the "hybrid" who is both consultant and academic. Hybrids can, for example, work three or four days as economic

consultants and one or two days as professors at a economic (business) or business administration department. Other examples are academics with consulting experiences or consultants with a PhD. The hybrid can write a report as a consultant, but be an academic as well. In theory it is also possible that they write a report as a contract researcher while also being a consultant. This possibility is somewhat theoretical though. Hybrids combining the role of academic adviser and consultant are rare. Most combine consulting with teaching or with writing academic publications.

It is likely that the hybrid is looking for opportunities to connect both roles, or to learn from consultants as an academic or to learn from academics as a consultant. Argyris and Schön are well-known examples of this hybrid character. There are more examples of a successful combination of both roles. Weggeman mentions leading academics and successful consultants such as Fayol, Sloan, D'aveni, Davenport, Ghoshal, Hamal, Porter, Prahalad, Senge and Tichy. He also cites intense cooperation between universities and consulting firms such as Stanford and MIT in the USA (Weggeman, 2001, p. 108). He argues that it is not necessary for the academic and consultant worlds to be so different and that they can benefit from each other. The question is if the competitive relationship is a Dutch, a European or even a more general phenomenon. Khurana (2007, pp. 305–12) describes similar developments towards academic specialization and an increasing lack of practical relevance at US business schools, which make characters like Porter still positive exceptions. Similar developments are reported from Sweden (Engwall, et al., 2002). Although there may be more positive exceptions in the USA, the overall picture resembles the Dutch situation. Recent developments towards academic specialization in the Netherlands result from the academic policy to imitate the US system.

The experiences of hybrids are an interesting source for both the academic world and consultancies since they know both worlds thoroughly. They can change roles from the academic character to the consultant character. They often publish in academic journals about the consulting discipline. In these journals they compete "as academics" with the pure academics who write about consultants. These hybrids do not have personal experience with academic advice though; as consultants they compete with academic advisers on the shared market of economic assignments.

DISCIPLINES RELATED TO ECONOMIC ADVICE

University economists specialize in an economic subdiscipline in research and teaching, such as microeconomics, economic marketing, industrial economics or internal organization. Consultants will identify less with

Table 1.1 Actors and their different positions in the consulting process

Clients	**External consultants**	**Academic advisers**	**Academic disciplines**
Managers Policy makers Internal consultants	Management consultant Marketing consultant Policy researcher	Management scientist Marketing scientist Business economist Industrial economist Institutional economist Welfare economist Macroeconomist Microeconomist	Management sciences Marketing science Business economics Industrial economics Institutional economics Welfare economics Macroeconomics Microeconomics
Influences on consultants/ academics by interests/ assignments	Interaction of influences on the market for advice		Influences on consultants and academics by ethos within discipline

these academic specializations. However, there are many of them, some are interdisciplinary to some degree, such as institutional economics or organization studies, with more or less economic legacy. As consultants are less specialized than academics, their clients are usually even less familiar with the disciplines relevant to economic assignments.

Table 1.1 presents the main actors on the market for advice on economic (business) questions, starting on the left with clients and ending with examples of pure academic disciplines on the right. Consultants and academic advisers are positioned in the middle of the table. The table suggests that clients are closer to consultants and will thus have more influence on them than on academic advisers: the latter remain more in their discipline than consultants. Similarly academic disciplines are closer to academic advisers and will have more influence on academic advisers than on consultants.

The distinction between clients/managers, consultants and academics is made by van Baalen (2001, p. 54) from a Dutch perspective and by Kieser (2002, p. 206) from a German perspective. Neither distinguishes between academic advisers and pure academics, but Weggeman (2001) does. He leaves out the group of clients/managers and compares consultants, academics providing services and academics providing scientific work.

Van Balen and Kieser mention differences between consultants and academics in terms of social relations that influence their work. Weggeman (2001, pp. 103–5) argues that although academic advisers and consultants are in the same position providing a service to clients, their client relationship is different: academic advisers work according to their own scientific methods like an indifferent supplier. Consultants work in a more dependent way with their clients. Compared to clients, consultants and academic advisers both have a more reflective position, but are not as reflective as pure academics. Consultants are more involved with clients whereas academic advisers are more reflective and are inspired by discussions in academic disciplines.

Academic advisers asked to give advice on economic (business) issues often belong to a department of the faculty of economics or business administration. These faculties are organized in departments along the lines of academic subdisciplines such as those in Table 1.1. However, it is hard to translate all subdisciplines in economic departments. Some, such as institutional economics or transaction-cost economics, come close to schools, such as neoclassical economics. Economics in this book is understood quite broadly, including social science interdisciplines with a strong economic component such as management studies, organization science, economic sociology, institutional economics and so on. Frey and Eichenberger (1997, p. 38) go as fas as to expect that economics as it was understood traditionally will 'flourish in other faculties' due to current trends like specialization and mathematization within economic faculties. Augier et al. (2005, p. 88) have documented the increasing importance of economics in organization science for example. This causes a language problem: what is meant by economics? This book follows the broad definition of economics meant as the counterpart of economic (business) questions posed by clients in contrast to a more narrow neoclassical view. This includes simple neoclassical economics, especially in assignments about liberalization of markets, but not exclusively so. The question of whether a large national airport should grow is considered as economical as well.

Economic subdisciplines can differ a lot. They are characterized by a body of literature, specific journals, preferred research methods, and even different epistemological and ontological assumptions. The field of management sciences or organization studies, for example, uses more qualitative research methods such as case study research or narrative analysis while marketing research favors more statistical analysis. Micro- or neoclassical macroeconomists prefer economic modeling and mathematics to build their models and they often rely more on "stylized facts" than on direct observations.

Reputation within one subdiscipline is the most important goal of

academics (Frey and Eichenberger, 1993, pp. 191–2; Overlegcommissie Verkenningen, 1996, p. 19). Specialization within a subdiscipline is necessary for an academic career (Bergeijk et al., 1997, p. 4). Disciplines and subdisciplines thus develop without much contact. Could we therefore expect that consultants have a more homogeneous character and that there are more differences between academic advisers due to the stronger influence of economic subdisciplines?

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE

Consultant knowledge is more embedded in common sense discussions, close to the knowledge clients refer to, whereas academics are more embedded in the discussions of their discipline (Kieser, 2002, p. 212). At the same time, the work of consultants is better accepted than academic contract research by "practitioners" like managers or policy makers, according to indicators such as market share and market value. Academic responses to this phenomenon vary from surprise to hostility towards consultants. Many academics judge the work of consultants by their own academic standards, and their judgment is devastating. Other academics start to question their own methodology. They argue that one should investigate consultant approaches in more detail. Little research is done, however, to analyse how academic advisers perform in competition with consultants when they serve the same clients.

Philosophy has a long tradition of discussing different forms of knowledge. Theoretical knowledge as produced at universities is not the only kind of knowledge. Practical decision making regarding what to do this evening, how to organize your life or what present to buy for a friend is hardly in need of scientific knowledge. These decisions are based on knowledge though. We apply the knowledge about our friends to decide what present will suit them. Could the knowledge orientation of consultants and academic advisers contribute to explaining the hostility between consultants and academic advisers?

Aristotle (1985, p. 1140a) differentiates between theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge (phronesis). These forms of knowledge are complementary. Practical knowledge is based on experience and allows us to cope with changing realities. Theoretical knowledge investigates the stable, unchanging part of reality. Theoretical knowledge remains valid for a long time, whereas practical knowledge loses relevance if the situation changes and the knowledge has to be renewed. Aristotle argues that we need to argue and deliberate to make sense of practical situations. We cannot refer to universal and general scientific knowledge if a situation

is changing. In *The Uses of Argument,* Toulmin (1994) refers to this view of Aristotle, arguing that the orientation of scientists and logicians is too general to make sense of argumentation in practice.

More recently Polyani (1967, p. 4) has introduced the concept of tacit knowledge to explain that 'we can know more than we can tell'. We can recognize somebody, but we cannot explain why. We can recognize someone's mood, but we have difficulty explaining by what signs we know it. Therefore humans seem to be able to know and learn more than can be expressed in the explicit terms of science.

Bourdieu (2002, p. 3) stresses the differences between theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge in a different way, claiming that it requires a theory of practice to reflect on the way objective or scientific theory influences practices. One has to shift the focus to practices to analyse theoretical practices vis-à-vis other practices. From the perspective of practices Bourdieu (2002, p. 123) argues that different fields of practice have their own universes of meaning, which often obey a 'fuzzy logic of approximation'. He claims that agents socialized within these different practices make use of more than the classical five senses:

> The sense of necessity and the sense of duty, the sense of direction and the sense of reality, the sense of balance and the sense of beauty, common sense and the sense of the sacred, tactical sense and the sense of responsibility, business sense and the sense of propriety, the sense of humour and the sense of absurdity, moral sense and the sense of practicality, and so on. (Bourdieu, 2002, p. 124)

Bourdieu thus argues in line with Polyani that we know more than what we can learn from our five senses. The results of our other senses are needed to perform well in non-scientific practices. Similar arguments are made by Weinberg (1972, p. 213) who claims that many question are transscientific, meaning they are unanswerable by science, or by Habermas (1988a, pp. 38–45) who distinguishes between five different domains of knowledge, where the domain of theoretical knowledge refers to academic knowledge and the domain of aesthetic knowledge to matters of fashion, local social practices and cultures.

These general philosophical distinctions might apply to consultants, since consultants with philosophical backgrounds like Argyris and Schön have wondered what consultants do or should do in order to be effective. They stress the specific characteristics of thinking in the context of practice. Argyris stresses that theories have to be simple and sound to be applicable in practice. They should not be dependent on too many conditions and manipulation of these conditions should be part of the theory. Although Argyris (1996, p. 403) admits that scientific models can be helpful in organizing thoughts, they are often not useful in practice:

'The unhelpfulness came when I attempted to apply the models to creating behavior. The model is well beyond the complexity that the human mind/brain can cope with.' Argyris argues that the attention necessary to understand scientific models or theory interrupts the 'flow' that belongs to action in the context of practice.

Schön has also criticized the applicability and relevance of textbook knowledge in the context of practice. He introduced the concept of the reflective practitioner to overcome the crises of confidence in professional knowledge. Professional knowledge is in the book; it is general and can be taught, although in the context of practice the result of this knowledge is professional incompetence: 'the situations of practice are characterized by unique events' (Schön, 1983, p. 16). This 'unique case calls for an art of practice' (Schön, 1983, p. 17). Argyris (2000, p. 6) argues likewise by stressing that professionals suffer under 'skilled incompetence'. Their focus is on knowledge generated in the past, in experimental situations, and it prevents professionals from seeing what is happening now. The criticism by Argyris and Schön might apply to both academic advisers and consultants, but one could expect that consultants take theoretical knowledge less seriously, and that they are more involved in the practical way of applying knowledge. The "art of practice" addressed by Schön is learnable, and with this claim Schön paraphrases Polyani by arguing that we can learn more than we can tell or write down.

The philosophical clues presented above open an academic perspective to consider the practice of consultants compared to the practice of academic advisers. Apparently not all academics agree with the common prejudice that consultant knowledge is 'flawed, fashionable, glib and at odds with expert, scientific academic knowledge' (Salaman, 2002, p. 250). From a philosophical point of view one can expect that consultant knowledge is at odds with scientific academic knowledge, but not because it is flawed. That criticism is made too easily. Consultant knowledge is different from academic knowledge, but not necessarily inferior.

RIGOR AND RELEVANCE

The comparison of consultants and academic advisers also relates to the rigor and relevance debate as discussed in the *Academy of Management Journal* (2001, **50** (4), 2005, **48** (6), 2007, **44** (2). The idea is that academics pay more attention to the rigor of their findings, whereas consultants consider relevance more important. In this debate many scholars agree with the criticism made by Thomas and Tymon (1982) that academic research often lacks relevance. They describe five criteria important for practitioners

such as managers and consultants. Research should better describe phenomena relevant to the practitioner by increasing external validity. The investigated phenomena should be recognizable in the context of practice (descriptive relevance). Research should be instrumental: it should be related to the goals of the practitioner (goal relevance). Research should be operational. Practitioners should have control over the independent variables (operational validity). Findings should be new, they should add to common knowledge (non-obviousness) and they should be there in time (timeliness). Academic research too often does not meet these criteria. Could that explain the lower market value of academics? Not necessarily, since academics defend the rigor of their methods. Rigor is a precondition for relevance, one could argue. Lack of rigor could thus undermine the relevance of consultant research. Or are there also problems with the rigor of academic research? Argyris (1996), for example, argues that if causal relations do not apply to the context of the practitioner, or if he cannot control the conditions, the research not only lacks relevance, but lacks rigor as well. This criticism relates to operational validity.

The common criticism is that scientific knowledge should become more relevant to society and to practitioners (van Aken, 2004; Gulati, 2007; Rynes and Shapiro, 2005; Rynes et al., 2001; Tsang, 1997). Khurana (2007, p. 345) shows how American business schools try to develop a good value proposition for their students based on scientific knowledge, and measured in terms of the salaries their students can earn later in their career. The original objective was to train managers, but in the 1980s a growing number of those with MBAs were starting as consultants (Khurana 2007, p. 328). Similarly Augier et al. (2005, p. 92) argue that organization studies at American business schools strive towards relevance of research, in opposition to the more disciplinary fields such as psychology, sociology or economics at universities. In the last decades they were able to increase academic recognition, at least within the interdisciplinary field of organization studies. However, at the cost of relevance: 'gaining recognition in the academic reputation system became the main emphasis' (van Aken 2004, p. 222).

The criticism of timeliness is central. Consultants, for example, take weeks or months on their projects: they aim at timeliness, whereas academics are used to a much longer time horizon (Allen, 1977; Auerbach, 1992, p. 239; van Aken 2004, p. 238). Academics take more time to read about relevant theoretical developments in order to be rigorous. They strive to be credited for being reliable, honest and learned, in accordance with a tradition of centuries that has shaped their professional ethos.

Most reflections on the rigor relevance gap are theoretical, or based on anecdotal evidence (Rynes et al., 2001, p. 341). There is a need for more

empirical research of an inductive kind in order to discuss hidden assumptions behind the work of academics and practitioners like consultants. Rynes et al. (2001, p. 349) argue that this kind of research may help to make tacit knowledge explicit. By comparing argumentation strategies of academic advisers and consultants when they give advice, this book contributes to an understanding of consultant use of theory compared to academic use, and how they both integrate theory in their arguments. It opens up possibilities to reflect on the different kinds of rigor, preferred by consultants and academics while helping their clients make the right decision, assuming that there is at least some relevance in this comparison: a client pays for the service.

PRELIMINARY EXPECTATIONS ABOUT THE PRACTICE OF BOTH PROFESSIONS

Consultants have developed their profession in the market from the start. Although it is criticized if consulting is a true profession with shared professional standards (Khurana, 2007), many still talk about it as a profession, and even a quite successful one with growing dominance (McKenna, 2006). Their ethos is the product of many experiences with many assignments. They follow the demand of the market in a way they consider most appropriate for their clients in the long run. Part of their expertise, however, is the result of their academic education; they are able to integrate the academic elements they consider valuable in practice. But their focus is to respond to client demands in a way that best serves the client. What they learned at university is not the primary orientation.

Academic advisers have a background that is mainly rooted in the academy. Krugman (1995, p. 7) characterizes academic advisers as 'the professors' and consultants as 'policy entrepreneurs' (p. 10). The professors are working for clients like the entrepreneurs: 'A professor can try to play entrepreneur – after all, the rewards in both money and a sense of importance can be huge. Ultimately, however, she is at a disadvantage, because she is too constrained by her obscure professorly ethics' (p. 12). Krugman thus argues that academic rules and habits give academic advisers strong guidance in their work. For that reason I consider academic advisers a profession as well, without assuming beforehand that both professions really earn this label.

Because academic advisers not only believe in their professorly ethics, but also disdain the style of consultants, we could expect that they would not integrate consultant elements in their practice. Academic advisers work as knowledge providers, and they guarantee that this knowledge is

based on academic research methods and theoretical knowledge. That is their strength, and they distinguish themselves from consultants this way: a differentiation strategy.

It could be perilous for academic advisers to imitate consultants because their consulting experiences are not commensurate with consultants' knowledge by experience. Consultants also have had an academic education, but academic advisers have had no training in consulting – safer for them to remain in academia. They hardly know what consultants do, so they can hardly imitate them successfully.

We should thus expect academic advisers to stay close to their own ethos and strengths. The service of academic advisers would then be more independent, more critical and less sympathetic towards their clients. This expectation leaves room for an optimistic and even romantic explanation of why academic advice has a lower money value. The arts market manifests similarly. Popular music serves the demands of the market better than classical music, but who would measure the worth of classical music in terms of its money value? Like the arts, academic advisers could feel superior as suppliers of classical music compared to consultants as suppliers of popular music. It would even suggest a more homogeneous character of consultants compared to academic advisers. How can we examine these expectations in more detail?

THE BENEFITS OF A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS

Doing research is a human project, but there is a long tradition of suspicion towards the human elements in science. Plato and Aristotle were critical about personal elements in discussions. The force of an argument, not the personal characteristics of an author, should persuade; the argument by authority is thus avoided. Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1992, p. 161) discuss this argument under the heading of fallacies, showing little respect for personal expertise. Today most mainstream social scientists prefer the positivist rhetoric of impersonal objectivity. It is only acceptable to use experiences as inspiration for research. If experiences are used to justify claims that pretend to some extent to be valid, they are considered problematic (Popper, 2002, p. 5), since experiences lack objectivity.

However, a growing number of policy scientists, organization theorists and even some economists argue that positivism excludes valuable personal knowledge from science, such as values, experiences and opinions (McCloskey, 1983, p. 510). They consider the claim that economists can be truly objective in a positivistic sense to be flawed. McCloskey says about the economic discipline: 'Humanists dislike it for its baggage of

antihumanist methodology. The scientists dislike it because it does not in reality attain the rigor that its methodology claims to achieve' (McCloskey, 1983, p. 513).

Experiences and personal valuations matter in economic research as they do in economic reality. McCloskey (1983, p. 513) explicitly refers to the possible improvements of science by means of integrating humanistic elements such as personal experience, introspection or common sense. Exclusion of experiences as a source of information means exclusion of an important part of the subject of economics and the subject of economic advice as well. Advice is not only based on instrumental scientific arguments about how to reach goals, but also on other elements of talk and conversation (Alvesson, 1993, p. 1007; Clark, 1995; Clegg et al., 2004a, p. 36). A rhetorical analysis can acknowledge all knowledge elements as subject of analysis by its humanist methodology since rhetoric studies all means of persuasion. Analysis of these means of persuasion is relevant in the context of giving advice: we are unsure of what to do if we ask for advice, and need good arguments or good legitimization to decide.

The first argument in favor of a rhetorical analysis, therefore, is that giving advice demands arguments. Advice is about appropriate future action in a personal, social, economic or political context. There is no certain knowledge about complex future situations; advice always has to be supported. This motivation requires deliberative inquiry and in the end sound or convincing arguments for legitimization. In this context, a hard proof or a big truth concerning future situations is impossible. It is even more difficult to deliberate about action in the future than to argue that some action happened in the past, as lawyers and judges have to do. The degree of certainty a consultant can offer in his claims is therefore different from the degree of certainty scientists aim at. Consultants do not have the time for this degree of certainty. Companies would miss their chances and new policies would be too late with this approach. The alternative is deliberation, finding good arguments and rhetorical talent to generate convincing advice. Since a consultant cannot offer certainty, the bottom line is that advice should be well supported. If the subject under investigation is obviously a rhetorical practice of argumentation and deliberation, rhetorical analysis is the most promising way to uncover that practice. Toulmin (1994) offers a framework to analyse argumentation in more detail and guides me in this analysis, along with authors who have applied or enriched his analytical framework. Rhetorical analysis also helps me distinguish between different kinds of arguments, such as the argument by cause, argument by authority or a motivational argument, which is based on attractiveness or desirability. These analytical distinctions help reveal how consultants and academic advisers use and back these arguments in their advice.

The second and related reason to apply a rhetorical analysis is that a traditional scientific analysis seems to ignore or disapprove of normative discussions about what actions or decisions are better or worse in a social and economic context. In deliberations about a future course of action normative or motivational arguments can have a strong convincing power. Traditional positive scientific methodologies lack the conceptual language to discuss these normative issues. A rhetorical analysis can investigate them.

The third argument is that economic advice often requires research approaches that do not meet the standards of traditional scientific censorship. This experience-based knowledge, these rough estimations and these expert guesses give necessary indications to formulate advice. Consultants prefer interviews and group discussions to identify and discuss possible conflicts in values, preferences and interests, to collect relevant experiences, or to test tentative estimations or expert guesses. Consultant approaches require personal contact, involvement and a kind of compassion. These accounts of knowledge do not fit well into a traditional academic investigation. They get labels such as unscientific, fashionable and flawed, which imply a disapproval of pre- or trans-scientific knowledge. Pre-scientific and scientific grounds and claims can both be analysed from a rhetorical perspective as long as they are part of an argument or means of persuasion. Therefore my analytical perspective to investigate differences in practice between consultants and academic advisers is rhetorical.

The fourth argument to apply a rhetorical analysis of advice practices is that the comparison between academic advisers and consultants should be impartial. This objective is problematic, since there is a communication gap between consultants and academic advisers. The rhetoric of academics is hardly able to generate an understanding about what consultants do. Accusations and questions for better understanding dominate academic contributions to the debate. Klamer (2007, p. 154) would characterize this as the 'stupidity problem'. Academics cannot respect what consultants do, and consultants cannot take seriously what academic advisers do. It seems that the rhetorical gap results in dividing academics from consultants. A rhetorical analysis can subsume the communication problem in its investigation.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The views about consultants in the academic literature are diverse: academic self-esteem and skepticism regarding academic advice compete with each other. In addition there is no clear academic view about what advice

should be, or how it should be practiced. Given the different views about the character of academic advice and consulting, explorative research seems most appropriate to investigate the rhetorical differences between the advice practices of consultants and academic advisers in more detail. Case study research is one way to do explorative research.

My research design is based on triangulation, which is a common research strategy in case study research (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 538; Yin, 2003, pp. 14, 98–99). Triangulation means using different data sources or different theoretical perspectives to offer insight into the same phenomenon. Data triangulation in this book is based on views on advice practices of consultants and academic advisers expressed in books and articles written by consultants and academics as a first kind of source, compared with accounts of these advice practices in advice reports. Overlap between the results based on these different data sources indicates that the results are more reliable.

The conclusions from case study research can be generally valid by means of 'analytic generalization' according to Yin (2003, p. 32). A case study should be based on theoretical research to establish general claims or propositions that can be explored in the cases. In this book general claims about consultants and academic advisers are partly based on academic theory on advice and advice roles distinguished by consultants (Chapter 2), and partly on reflections on consultants' and academic advisers' practices (Chapter 4). These reflections are derived from academic researchers' statements about consultants and academic advisers, and practitioners' statements about their own experiences in the academic literature and practitioner books. The kind of books and articles used for this review are characterized at the start of Chapter 4. The analysis of the literature explores the espoused argumentation style of consultants compared to academic advisers and their preferred research and advice approaches. The analysis will reveal the professional ethos of consultants and academic advisers regarding their use of arguments in advice. The Toulmin's framework to explore these argumentation styles is presented in Chapter 3.

The results from the literature review serve as a general starting point for an in-depth argumentation analysis of 20 reports divided equally between two economic debates in which consultants and academic advisers give advice about growth of Amsterdam Airport (Chapter 5) or liberalization of the electricity market (Chapter 6). The reports that I use as data are described and introduced before each of the case descriptions. At that point I also elaborate on how the reports were analysed. Reports written by consultants and academic advisers are the sources used to analyse their contribution to the debates. The reports show how consultants and academic advisers argue in practice, and what research approaches they

carry out. Frey (2006, p. 304) claims that case study research is a fruitful approach to analyse 'how and to what extent economics and economists influence the economy', a closely related question.

The two economic policy debates were selected because they had more than five advice reports written by academic advisers and by consultants over a period of about ten years, criteria which were difficult to fulfill. Therefore only major public debates were appropriate. Within these debates the representativeness of the reports is high, especially on the academic side. In most debates I considered for selection there were too little academic reports. For each report how the advice is supported and how these contributions convince are analysed. The double case study design enables me to compare the results of both cases by cross-case analysis, which enables a more general interpretation of the results. The question is whether academic advisers and consultants do in practice what they say in their reflections on their practice, and if their ethos is thus reflected in their advice reports. Words and deeds do not always match, even if the deeds – the written reports – consist of words again.

The two main sources of knowledge, advice reports and literature about advice practices, suffice to back my conclusions within an academic context. However I feel free to refer to some of my experiences as a third source of knowledge. My experiences will have an influence on my position in the debate about consulting and academic advice, but they cannot legitimize conclusions without the support of the two other sources. They mainly help awareness of flaws in my theoretical discussions along the way. My experience tells me, for example, that empty rhetoric by consultants is the exception instead of the rule. I cannot rely on that experience as an indication of some general truth, but it makes me aware of generalizations in the academic literature that were made too fast.

The outcomes of my analysis are therefore to some extent "experience proof". The proof means that my analysis does not conflict with my personal experiences, even though these experiences cover a mere fraction of the research domain. I consider it in any case a valuable addition to academic methodology. Though experiences or personal observations can be biased and harm the objectivity of the results, my suspicion of experience-free knowledge overrides the risk. It is the moment where the consultant within me starts to criticize academic habits. Consultants consider experiences necessary to legitimize advice. They are usually not sufficient grounds due to their local validity, but they are necessary to take personal responsibility for recommendations.

Finally, I have to make a confession. The consultant report of KPMG Bureau voor Economische Argumentatie (1998) in the liberalization debate, analysed in Chapter 6, is the result of a project under my super-

vision. It is a risk for my objectivity in the sense that I could have difficulties in criticizing this report like the others. Due to the time passed that has I feel a great distance to the report. It is also only one report out of ten consultant reports, so it cannot influence the outcome that much and it has not been a reason for selecting the debate. It is a coincidence. The bigger risk for my integrity could be that I have been a consultant for six years. On the other hand, I work as an academic now, so my current loyalty is academic and only my research interest concerns the field of consulting. For this interest I consider it an advantage that I know one of the debates from the inside and that I have experienced consulting practice as well.

OUTLINE OF THE ARGUMENT

The previous sections show that in certain cases academic advisers and consultants work under the same conditions: they work on similar assignments for similar clients. That opens up the possibility of comparing the consulting practices of both groups. Such a comparison could reveal what the professions do differently and why clients are willing to pay consultants more for their services. The relevance of these research questions is acknowledged by Salaman, who argues that when consultant advice is relevant to senior executives, the work by consultants is relevant to academics as well (Salaman, 2002, pp. 250–51).

Answering these research questions will help to investigate whether the quality of academic advice can be improved. To do so, it will be necessary to analyse the criteria that academics and consultants use to judge their own work. It is not my purpose to use the criteria of one profession to judge the other profession. That approach is good for jokes and accusations. Consultants will not meet criteria of universal validity; academic advisers will not meet criteria of immediate practical relevance. A clear understanding of the differences in professional criteria is necessary, however, if one wishes to investigate the possibility of cross-fertilization between the two professions. Any recommendation made to academic advisers must result in improvements that can be judged as such by academics.

The focus in this investigation is on differences in advice argumentation and the professional legitimization of these differences. How do consultants convince their clients? How do academic advisers? What kind of claims do they make, and what kind of arguments do they use? What kind of knowledge do they integrate in their arguments and what kind of questions do they accept? Since I intend to make recommendations as an academic to academic advisers, my approach should be in line with my own recommendations. The proof will be in the pudding. I will, therefore,

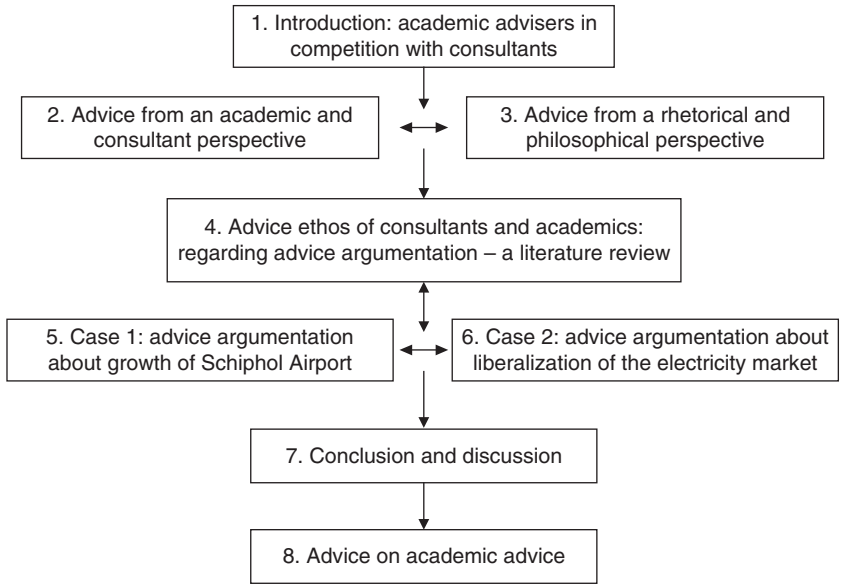

Figure 1.2 Line of argument in outline

not conclude with advice 'in private' as traditional academic economists suggest (Robbins 1952, p. 150; Hennipman, 1977, p. 89), but I will make explicit how my analysis and my advice in the last chapter are connected during my argument, which is briefly summarized below.

A discussion about the nature of advice will be the starting point of my analysis in Chapters 2 and 3. Consulting economists define advice differently from philosophers and language scientists. Economists consider economic advice a scientific, instrumental and value-free enterprise. Philosophers and language scientists stress the deliberative and normative aspects in advice and decision making. They also argue that giving advice is a speech act. Since the rhetorical practices of consultants and academic advisers will be analysed, my understanding of economic advice will be inspired by philosophers, philosophical minded social scientists and language scientists.

Since it is my intention to take both professions seriously, I will continue my analysis in Chapter 4 with a characterization of the ideal types of academic advisers and consultants according to academics and consultants themselves. Consultants, for example, consider the relationship with their clients as very important. They will maintain this relationship 'at all costs' (Ashford, 1998, p. 101), since for them it is the most important

precondition for the acceptance of any kind of advice, critical or not. Academics appreciate a distant, independent relationship and are critical of the consultant–client relationship because it implies too much dependence. These differences translate to the way both professions make their argument.

After this analysis of consultant and academic ethos I analyse the differences in practice to see if both professions meet their own criteria, or even some criteria of the other profession. That is the purpose of the report analysis in Chapters 5 and 6. The outline of the argument is summarized in Figure 1.2. A double pointed arrow indicates that the chapters have to reconfirm each other, an indication of triangulation in the research design.

Chapter 7 concludes the research by comparing differences in argumentation practices between both professions and across the two cases. The chapter will also show that consultants act more in accordance with their ethos than academic advisers. Academic advisers come close to consultants in some respects, but their adapted approach still differs from the consultant approach. Their adaptations are so fundamental that it is problematic that they still pretend to work according to their academic ethos.

In the last chapter the academic adviser in me is challenged most extremely: what can I recommend in the end after so much research? What are the implications of the current practices for clients? Can the academic discipline claim advice as one of its provinces? How should it be conceptualized and performed? It is a test in itself.

2. Consultants' and academics' views on advice

Consultants and academic advisers compete on the Dutch market for economic advice. Academics wonder why consultants enjoy success despite what they consider weak methodology, empty rhetoric and superficial analyses. Academic economists are paid less and have a smaller market share. Riddle-solving suggestions vary from the ironic – attributing supernatural powers to consultants by characterizing them as witch doctors (Clark and Salaman, 1996) – to the disrespectful – calling consultants "charlatans" (van Aken, 2001; Armbrüster, 2006, p. 2; Bloomfield and Danieli, 1995, p. 39).

Consultants have distinguished different advice roles to serve their clients. Some suit academics: the expert role or the mental adventurer. Others, such as the process role, the docter role or the advocate, better fit consultants. If consultants consider someone a mental adventurer, their interest in research is great, but the relevance of that research is questionable, especially from the perspective of the client. Therefore analysts and researchers are ranked relatively low in the consultant hierarchy, which is expressed in their fee.

Academic economists have also established a hierarchy in which pure academic research is ranked higher than academic advice or applied research (Frey and Eichenberger, 1993; Klamer, 2007, p. 42). A sign of this phenomenon is that theoretical academics do not cite academic advisers but academic advisers freely cite theoretical academics. Academic indicators of quality are citations by others and publications in peer-reviewed A-level journals. Theoretical academics thus work for an academic audience and strive to meet academic standards. These pure academics are successful at pure academic work, because the research topics of academic advice are too local and too institutional to be published in A-level journals. The importance of A-level publications is still growing, especially at European universities due to American influences. As a consequence, the scientific relevance of academic advice and applied research is debatable at universities. For most academic scholars giving advice is a 'waste' of time (Frey and Eichenberger, 1997, p. 38).

Discussing academic advice has long been a tradition within the

economic discipline. The academic advice role has been considered as problematic. Some economists think about it as an activity that theoretical economists should only perform in private (Alvey, 2000). Others regard it as part of related academic disciplines such as normative economics or even social philosophy (Friedman, 1970, 1986), but most economists take the view of Robbins (1952) or Tinbergen (1956): academic advice is a scientific economic activity that is part of applied economics. According to this traditional and most dominant view (Nelson, 1987, p. 53), economic advice can only be labeled "science" if it is limited to positive instrumental or technical research. In policy sciences the same instrumental line of thought dominates the concept of academic expert advice (Majone, 1989; Weinberg, 1972). The client, manager or policy maker defines objectives or preferences and the adviser identifies the most efficient or effective means to realize them.

ACADEMIC ADVICE IN ECONOMIC THEORY

Within the limits of possibility, academic economists figure out how the economy works, identify economic cause–effect relations and develop theories about the economy. These are positive theories, models about "what is". Academic advisers thus know economic causalities that may identify how to realize intended consequences. That is interesting for clients who need advice. If the client's objective is to improve profits, the economist can propose, for example, the means to cut costs or to increase sales. The question is: what advice can academic economists give while remaining within the limits of scientific advice?

The Positivist View: Economic If-then Advice

Today the positivist view in economics still dominates. Nelson (1987, p. 52) characterizes this positivist perspective as 'progressive' in the sense that it 'introduces scientific methods and techniques' that can contribute to human progress. There are many well-known economists who illustrate this view, such as Robbins, Tinbergen and Friedman.

In the second edition of *An Essay on the Nature and Significance of Economic Science* (first published in 1935), Robbins (1952, p. 16) claims: 'Economics is the science which studies human behavior as a relationship between ends and scarce means with alternative uses.' Robbins argues that scarcity gives products economic relevance. With this definition he criticizes the preceding materialist approach that focuses on wealth without acknowledging the importance of scarcity. A second

essential characteristic of Robbins's view is the introduction of an economic "choice" between alternative means to reach a preferred end.

According to Robbins, "economic" as an adjective means: 'the securing of given ends with least means' (p. 145), which implies efficiency. He claims that his definition of the economic approach fits all economic questions, including: 'questions of "internal" organization and administration' since 'factors of production are distributed between the production of different goods by the mechanism of prices and costs' (p. 71). As a consequence economic advice could recommend which alternative scarce means would be most appropriate to realize the most preferred end.

Robbins (p. 149) argues that the applied economic argument always has the following structure: '"if you want to do this, then you must do that". "If such and such is to be regarded as the ultimate good, then this is clearly incompatible with it."' When an economic adviser works along these lines, the "if-then" advice is value-free and also 'scientific' (p. 121). The if-then relation in the advice argument refers to a causal relationship, which should be part of accepted positive economic theory. Robbins is a classical positivist in his characterization of scientific statements: he refers to 'verification' as the way to prove the scientific character of knowledge (p. 149).

Robbins argues that: 'Ends as such do not form part of this subject-matter. Nor do the technical and social environment. It is the relationships between these things and not the things in themselves which are important for the economist' (p. 38). Economic "if-then" advice according to Robbins should take the ends of a policy or strategy as given since 'there are no economic ends' (p. 145). Robbins's approach is therefore neutral with respect to ends. Ends, values and preferences are a starting point for economists. They are not a result of scientific economic inquiry.

Tinbergen claims likewise that political goals cannot be the result of applied economic research. They have to be input for an economic argument. He therefore argues that economic policy advisers can contribute to an economic policy by:

- description of the process of economic policy;
- methods for judging the consistency of the aims and means used in a number of types of economic policy;
- methods for indicating the optimum policy to attain given aims (Tinbergen, 1956, p. 1).

These three contributions are both economic and scientific. However, the discussion about the aims of a policy 'is based on intuition' and therefore no longer a scientific contribution (Tinbergen, 1956, p. 1). Although part of the development of economic policy, the economic adviser should not

take responsibility for the reflection on policy objectives as such. The politician has to decide these themself, just as a manager has to decide about a business policy.

Blinder (1997, pp. 3–4) supports the organizing power of the instrumental view of Tinbergen from his perspective as central banker. He considers it 'enormously useful' to think along the lines of defining objectives, selecting instruments, defining a model that relates instruments and objectives, and applying the model by estimating its variables. As a central banker he knows academics do not want to specify the goals, but he still sees many areas where academics could contribute to the process of policy making, such as estimating variables, investigating causalities and presenting the bigger economic picture.

The positivist view on advice is adopted by policy scientists as well: 'the scientist and science provide the means; the politician and politics decide the ends' (Weinberg, 1972, p. 209). Traditional scientists who give advice to governments or firms thus aim to deliver expert knowledge. The knowledge should be 'usable', but also neutral and value free (Haas, 2004, p. 573).

Normative considerations about goals and preferences are the inputs for an economist responsible for applied research or economic advice. Nelson characterizes this as the view accepted by most economists: 'the proper role for an economist is typically regarded as that of a professional expert who advises government in technical and scientific matters and takes social values and political preferences as given' (Nelson, 1987, p. 53). Clients state their preferences and economists identify the most efficient way to realize them. The client has to decide if the end is worth the sacrifice.

Tinbergen (1956), Robbins (1952), but also contemporary economists such as Blinder (1997), Eizenstat (1992), Heine and Mause (2004), Porter (1997) and Stiglitz (1997, 1998) still advocate the position that economic advice should answer positive research questions. They claim that it is the responsibility of politicians, managers and consumers to define their ends and articulate preferences. The academic adviser's task is to determine the consequences of alternative policies. Stiglitz (1997, p. 110) therefore argues in favor of specialization on positive economic advice rather than giving political advice as economic advisor. He adds that political objectives and interests are articulated better in policy discussions than within economics.

Robbins (1952, p. 152) gives as motivation that concentration on positive scientific economic questions enables economists to concentrate on the consequences of different alternatives in light of the most desired end. Robbins considers it: 'worth while [to delimit] the neutral area of

science from the more disputable area of moral and political philosophy' (p. 151). Advice that includes discussion of ends thus belongs to this "non-scientific" or controversial area.

However, not everyone agrees with Robbins's proposition. In Kirzner's (1976) overview of economic perspectives the institutional or social economists would be most critical. Much more than the praxeological view of the Austrian school, since the Austrians build on Robbins's view (Kirzner, 1976, p. 173). In current debates on economic advice in economic journals the neutrality of economic advice is criticized by scholars such as Klamer (2003), Mandel (1999), Nelson (1987), Peacock (1992), Rivlin (1987) and Weinstein (1992). They show examples where economists influence objectives and values, or even defend specific interests such as advocates.

The social economic or institutional view considers the economy an organization, or part of a social system, and harks back to the views of Adam Smith. Institutional economists consider Mill's "homo economicus", for example, a 'fictional man' who follows a fictional economic principle (Blaug, 1980, p. 62; Kirzner, 1976, pp. 74, 87). The institutional view argues that the results of such a fictional economic analysis always have to be interpreted in a broader social context, the economist's major task. It includes reflection on motives, interests and social institutions. In the hierarchy of economists, however, institutional economists figure marginally (Frey and Eichenberger, 1993).

Robbins's view therefore remains central. Certainly not because of its originality: it is more the articulation of an understanding shared by many economists. Therefore it is the starting point for both mainstream and alternative views on economics (Kirzner, 1976, p. 119). Mainstream economists and traditional policy scientists embrace Robbins's positive view on scientific advice. Alternative views such as institutional economics take it as the starting point for their criticism. Consultants with an economic background would probably feel most sympathy for the ideas of the institutional school, since institutional economists are most willing to give advice in response to the various demands of a client (Frey and Eichenberger, 1993).

A Classic Solution: Normative Advice as Activity "in Private"

Lucas, a theoretical economist, once said he was uninterested in the political influence of a position on the Council of Economic Advisers: 'One reporter once asked me what I'd do if I were on the council. I told him that I would resign' (Klamer, 1983, p. 54). This skepticism goes back to classical economists such as Ricardo, Mill and Marshall. They have argued that

theoretical economists are bad advisers. Theoretical economists, it seems, are skeptical of getting involved in political questions.

Ricardo argues that it is not the task of an economist to give moral advice to enrich a particular person or group. They should not recommend what to prefer (Alvey, 2000, p. 1238). Mill claims that a theoretical economist who tries to give normative advice will fail (Alvey, 2000, p. 1240). Both authors make their claims in the first half of the nineteenth century. Marshall admits that economists sometimes are asked to give normative advice in practice, but if they do they have to step outside their discipline and give it in private (Alvey 2000, p. 1243). Alvey has found these statements in letters and other historical documents written by economists.

The willingness of economists to give advice or make moral statements is thus limited. Economic research should focus on facts, not values. John Neville Keynes (1963, pp. 31–6) explicitly argues in *The Scope and Method of Political Economy* (4th edition, first published in 1917) that such a distinction is possible. Marshall argues in his *The Principles of Economics* (8th edition) that economics can help politicians to think about only some of their policy objectives:

> [Economics] aims indeed at helping [statesmen] determine not only what that end should be, but also what are the best methods of a broad policy devoted to that end. But it shuns many political issues which the practical man cannot ignore: and it is therefore a science, pure and applied, rather than a science and an art. (Marshall, 1930, p. 43)

We can conclude that Robbins is not the first economist intending to restrict the domain of economic science to positive scientific questions, but his position is more extreme than the position of classical economists. Robbins tries to exclude the entire moral or goal-setting dimension in economic activities from the scientific domain of economic analysis and advice. He knows, though, that there is a demand for these normative deliberations. To solve this dilemma he argues like Marshall in his letters: that economists should reflect on concrete and specific values and ends "in private" but not as professional economists, thus departing from the view of 'J.S. Mill that "a man is not likely to be a good economist if he is nothing else." But we may at least agree that he is not as useful as he otherwise might be' (Robbins, 1952, p. 150). So, according to Robbins, an economist who reflects on moral questions in private is not a better economist, but he is a better person. Mill, however, argues that such a person would be a better applied economist as well. Marshall probably partly agrees with Mill, due to his intention to pay some attention to the discussion of ends.

In a practical context the demand for advice often goes beyond the limitations of the domain of positive economic advice. Hennipman argues that no economic discipline relates economic theory to real life questions of economic actors. Practical economic policy advisers can, though, be asked to value the aims of a policy (Hennipman, 1977, p. 89). Hennipman agrees with Robbins that such a judgment crosses the borders of a scientific economic investigation, but considers the crossing legitimate for the practical economic adviser, however again dealing with moral aspects of these economic questions "in private".

The demand for economic advice thus cannot equilibrate with the supply side of academic theory on advice. Economists have to agree that ignoring the demand side is ironic. Clients often ask for advice to learn what should be done relative to the objectives, not just how to reach their objectives. The positivist meaning of Robbins's economic advice denies these normative elements in the demand for advice.

Normative Economics as a Different "Science"

Not all economists who argue in favor of the development of a positive economic science consider normative economic considerations unscientific like Robbins and Tinbergen. Friedman (1970, p. 7) argues in his *Essays on Positive Economics*, first published in 1953, in favor of the development of an independent positive economic science, but he also explicitly assumes the possibility of normative economic judgments with a scientific character. Friedman has even been active as a normative policy adviser: 'I have attempted to persuade the Federal Reserve System that it was doing the wrong thing and that it ought to adopt a different policy' (Friedman, 1986, p. 2).

Friedman argues that positive economics has to give input to the deliberations of normative economics, making normative science dependent on positive economics:

> Normative economics and the art of economics, on the other hand, cannot be independent of positive economics. Any policy conclusion necessarily rests on a prediction about the consequences of doing one thing rather than another, a prediction that must be based – implicitly or explicitly – on positive economics. There is not of course a one to one relation between policy conclusions and the conclusions of positive economics; if there were, there would be no separate normative science. (Friedman, 1970, p. 5)

Friedman claims that positive economics can develop as an independent science without the help of normative economics, but normative economics cannot be practiced without positive economics. Normative discussions

have to be fed with all kinds of positive if-then relations, which inform us about the effects of our actions. Normative economics thus has to oversee the connection between positive and normative judgments, and has to mediate between positive economic science and economic policy.

Friedman's view regarding the independence of positive economics legitimates the approach of Robbins and Tinbergen: develop a positive economic science that can contribute to policy decisions. Though Friedman argues in favor of positive economics, his position is different from the traditional positivist view because he acknowledges that normative economic advice can have a scientific character. He thus argues in line with an economic tradition dating back to Adam Smith: 'economists have followed the same dual goal: to improve our understanding of how the economy works and to influence public policy' (Friedman, 1986, p. 1).

Friedman's main concern, however, is to contribute to the development of positive economics. Economic science should not dwell on values or what is economically good. Friedman argues that political differences can best be eliminated by the development of positive economics because differences in opinion among politicians mainly stem from different estimations of the economic effects of a policy, 'rather than from fundamental differences in basic values, differences about which men can ultimately only fight' (Friedman, 1970, p. 5).

The relevance of the positive economic if-then investigations for real life situations can be questioned, however, when it is not inspired by normative discussions. The argument to do positive research in isolation even undermines Friedman's idealistic proposition that positive economics can help solve normative discussions (Friedman, 1970, pp. 6–7). Positive research may create a common opinion about the effects of a policy, but will likely fail to find all cause–effect relationships that are relevant to policy makers. It is unrealistic to expect that the body of positive economic knowledge can encompass all possible economic relationships, or that it can concentrate solely on the relationships that are relevant to clients. Thomas and Tymon go so far as to characterize the belief in a rigorous positive science that can focus on relevant relationships for practical use as 'pathological' (Thomas and Tymon, 1982, p. 346).

Not surprisingly Cairncross argues that: 'the questions on which advice is sought from economists have very little to do with conventional economics' (Cairncross, 1985, p. 8). Blinder too has many suggestions to redirect the research agenda of economists, starting from the needs for knowledge as central banker (Blinder, 1997, pp. 13–16). Conventional positive economists formulate their own research questions based on their own interests or those of their academic community. As long as they ignore normative economic discussions of practitioners, they are going to be blind to the

relationships that are relevant to policy makers. If positive economists care about the social relevance of their science, it is up to them to look for the connection with normative economic discussions.

Economists such as Friedman, Robbins and Tinbergen unanimously acknowledge that the social world of economic action depends on valuation, interests, objectives and preferences. They all delineate positive economics such that reflection on those interests and valuations is excluded. These activities are part of another science, the responsibility of economic actors and economists in private, or the domain of normative economics. Robbins refers to disciplines such as ethics (Robbins, 1952, p. 148) and moral and political philosophy (p. 151). Friedman refers to normative economics (Friedman, 1970, p. 5). That implies a division of labor. However, any division of labor generates a need for coordination; too many theoretical economists seem to forget this. Positive and normative views need each other: they are both relevant for economic action. Again economists seem to assume that economic principles do not to apply to their own work, such as denying that the money value of their advice is an indication for the quality of their work, or ignoring the demand for advice by their clients.

APPLICATION OF THE CONCEPT

The traditional concept of academic advice still has supporters, but there are critics as well. They can be found outside the mainstraim in economic schools such as institutional economics, in interdisciplines such as organization theory or related disciplines such as policy science. How useful is the view of traditional economists?

Can Clients Articulate their Preferences?

The normative economic tradition is time-honored. Classical economists like Smith and Malthus reflected on the relation between economic and moral issues. Alvey (2000, pp. 1237, 1239) recognized a revival of this moral economy approach at the close of the twentieth century, prompting him to propose that the dominance of technical and positivist approaches in economics is a temporary twentieth-century phenomenon (pp. 1231, 1246). He may have a point, given the ongoing attacks on positive economics despite its popularity.

Peacock (1992) presents a line of argument that illustrates Alvey's expectations. Peacock is an experienced economic policy adviser and active theoretical economist. He discusses the question of economic advice

from an 'outside' or client perspective. The character of advice differs from case to case, he argues, due to client demands. He considers the technical or economic if-then advice as 'less interesting' from this outside perspective. More interesting is a recommendation that is 'associated with policy recommendations to be presented for public discussion' (Peacock, 1992, p. 1215). Peacock argues against what he calls the conventional view of positive economics that advisers should only 'consider the implications of objectives but take no part in their formulation' (p. 1217). It means that the economic adviser should not discuss values, preferences or policy objectives. His experience as policy adviser made him reject this conventional view because it harms the credibility of economic policy advisers: 'The economist who wishes to maintain credibility with his clients will certainly not do so by refusing to engage in the discussion on the practicability of alternative policy packages' (p. 1219). An adviser thus has to discuss alternative policies, not just the instruments to realize a policy. Peacock illustrates his claim with a case on economic advice that discusses the future of the British retirement system.

Hamilton supports Peacock's view, but from the perspective of the politician. He asks economists who advise policy makers: 'Tell us what is known and with what degree of certainty, where there is important disagreement and why, and the pros and cons of particular courses of action. Then offer your best judgment about the proper course of action' (Hamilton, 1992, p. 64). He explicitly requests in the last sentence of his article to participate in decision making by suggesting what to do. Hamilton asks economists to make 'value judgments', but in such a way that they can be distinguished from 'scientific truths' (p. 63). He also criticizes economists for showing too little compassion (p. 62). Also van der Ploeg (1992, p. 90) argues that advisers make normative economic judgments based on positive economic analysis.

Klamer (2003, p. 201) refers to his experience as a 'consulting economist' like Peacock (1992). He illustrates how advisers are involved in processes of valuation, evaluation and valorization. The latter is the process of value or norm creation and integration of new values in one's view (Klamer 2003, pp. 199–201). These processes are at the heart of decision making, and economic investigation should include a discussion of these values. They are never "just given" in economic decision processes, as economists assume in their preferred method of theorizing. That approach does not suffice if the objective is to analyse the process of economic decision making (Klamer 2003, p. 209) and policy advice (Majone, 1989, p. 26). Schein (1990, p. 59) – a consultant – likewise questions the assumptions of the positivist expert model of advice, since these assumptions 'often cannot be met'.

Blaug (1980) shares these criticisms, probably due to his own experiences as policy adviser. Clients often need advice regarding their preference function. Blaug (1980, p. 150) argues that asking clients about preferences or objectives 'will usually produce a blank stare'.

The Issue of Bounded Rationality and Ill-structured Problems

Mainstream economists argue along the lines of Robbins, Tinbergen and Stiglitz for a non-normative approach. According to this traditional view, an adviser only has the responsibility to relate the proper economic "if-then" rule to the objectives and preferences articulated by the client. If the input lacks quality, the client is responsible for flaws in the economic recommendations. Positive economists assume that clients are able to articulate their own preferences and objectives. That is a basic assumption of economic decision and planning theory. After all, they might ask rhetorically who else would know better?

However, the traditional consulting economist will have a hard task being useful to a client if he cannot discuss preferences, criteria, goals of an economic policy or business strategy. He cannot help the client articulate them properly. Therefore the necessary input for if-then advice is going to be flawed, incomplete and swayed by issues of the day. A traditional academic adviser thus has a poor chance of adequately responding to the market.

Clients always have to contribute to advice by articulating their objectives and preferences, but they often need help. March and Simon (1958, p. 138) have convinced many scholars that economic actors are bounded rational human beings, which means their rational powers are limited, as discussed to some extent in the standard economic textbook by Samuelson and Nordhaus (1985, p. 538) for instance. March and Simon therefore argue that one cannot expect clients to be able to formulate their preferences and objectives in a way that enables optimization calculus. Thompson, referring to the 'Simon-March-Cyert stream of study' (2004, p. 9) also criticizes the proposition that ends can be given and preferences are known (Thompson, 2004, pp. 8–9). Well-known preferences are the exception in the context of both human and organizational decision making. Thompson adds that preferences are seldom one-dimensional, a necessary requirement to start optimization calculus (p. 85). Preferences are often ambiguous: you cannot have your cake and eat it too. Anderson (1983, p. 201), Lane (1993, p. 43), Mason (1969, p. B403) and Mitroff and Mason (1981, p. 2) likewise criticize the assumption that clients have sufficient knowledge of their own preferences and objectives.

Though it is problematic to exclude normative discussions from positive

if-then advice, let us accept this division of labor between positive economists and their clients for the sake of argument. Cases where clients know exactly what they want, although exceptional, do exist (Thompson, 2004, pp. 84–87) and we could thus make the case that they deserve attention. If we assume that some economic decision makers are fully aware of preferences and can unambiguously define their ends or problems, clients could ask the economic adviser for the least-cost realization of the most preferred ends.

However, there is a second improbable assumption of economic decision theory, which implies that alternatives of action are given and have known consequences or effects. March and Simon (1958, pp. 136–42) and Thompson (2004, p. 85) argue that organizations and individuals have limited knowledge about the effects of possible alternatives of action, again due to what they call 'cognitive limits of rationality'. As a consequence most problems are ill-structured in practice, which means that objectives are not well defined (first problematic assumption), but also that the effects of alternatives to realize the ends are largely unknown (second problematic assumption).

To handle ill-structured problems, March and Simon propose a more realistic model of decision making: the decision makers define a preferred situation by means of simplifications. They define minimum criteria that acceptable alternatives must meet: 'Most human decision-making, whether individual or organizational, is concerned with the discovery and selection of satisfactory alternatives; only in exceptional cases is it concerned with the discovery and selection of optimal alternatives' (March and Simon, 1958, pp. 140–1).

Thompson follows the approach advocated by March and Simon. He argues that even in the exceptional case where preferences are unambiguous, an organization having sufficient knowledge about the effects of the alternatives of action is still exceptional: 'In complexity then, some consequences of action may be known, some suspected but not proved and still others unnoticed' (Thompson, 2004, p. 85). Most discussions in practice do not rest on the efficiency criterion ('optimizing'), but whether an alternative meets necessary standards or helps reach a proposed end ('satisficing'). Questions concerning the appropriateness of alternatives are thus most often decided by estimations of the effectiveness of alternatives, which indicates that they are satisfactory, and not by real efficiency calculus. Blaug (1980, p. 151) adds that optimization calculus in practice is too time-consuming and thus too costly: 'Decision making, particularly public decision making, never achieves more than a third best solution, if only because the time required to collect adequate information to secure improvement in "fine tuning" is the ultimate scarce resource.'

Even though many economists admit that scholars such as Thompson, March and Simon are right, most still like the principle of optimization calculus, probably because of its indisputable character (Thompson, 2004, p. 87). All other criteria to evaluate alternatives provoke discussion. Thompson argues that when a satisfying alternative is chosen, 'there always is the possibility that a better way exists' to reach the end, and if tests based on expert opinions are used 'differences of opinion are possible' (p. 87).

Academic Advice: No Logical Gulf Between Means and Ends

Like Robbins (1952, p. 148), most economists believe a 'logical gulf' exists between normative and positive considerations, or between discussions about means and discussions about ends. The discussion about ends is normative and not scientific. The discussion about means to realize given ends is positive and scientific. Some theoretical economists such as Blaug (1980, pp. 150–2) and Peacock (1992, p. 1217), who have experience as advisers, criticize the methodological assumption that economic advisers have to take the objectives of clients as given. But even the distinction between positive and normative advice is problematic (Buchanan, 1991; Cordes et al., 1993; Coughlin, 1989; Fuchs et al., 1998; Hamilton, 1992; Hausman and McPherson, 1993; Klamer, 2003; Nelson, 1987; Peacock, 1992; Rivlin, 1987; Weinstein, 1992). Others add that even neutral expert advisers are often biased. They are not open to the better argument as one would expect (Jones and Cullis, 1993, pp. 73–4; Mandel, 1999, p. 119).

Social scientists such as Anderson (1983, p. 203), Churchman (1962, p. 73) and Mason (1969, p. B404) argue that a policy adviser has a critical task both with respect to the choice of means and formulation of ends. It makes them normative scientists, following the distinction made by Robbins, Tinbergen, Friedman and most textbooks (Blaug, 1980, p. 149). Blaug argues that since the 1930s normative economics has been about the domain of 'controversial values', whereas positive economics considers 'non-controversial facts and values' (p. 129). Science has to contribute to a non-controversial body of knowledge. In the context of economic advice, however, facts and values are rarely non-controversial.

The distinction between positive and normative economics is problematic, like the distinction between means and ends. In a practical context means and ends change with a particular perspective. Means and ends belong to teleological chains, where ultimate economic ends can be very general, such as realizing welfare or gaining profit. And if gaining profit is a means to later invest, is it a means or an end? Positive economists should be able to enter this discussion instead of defining everything that is part

of their science as a means. Between the most basic action, the most basic means, and the ultimate end are many means and intermediate ends. They can be both considered as means or ends, depending on the perspective. There is thus no logical gulf between means and ends as Robbins argues (Robbins, 1952, p. 148). From a logical perspective both means and ends are connected and the labels are interchangeable. There is only a relative difference between the two. Weinberg therefore argues that 'means and ends are hardly separable . . . The relationship between the scientist and the politician is thus far more complicated' (Weinberg, 1972, p. 209).

In practice most economic decisions require a discussion about the consequences of different alternatives or means to assess the desirability of objectives. These discussions often change preferences and thus the goals of action. Positive economists ignore this reality, which is commonly accepted among sociologists and psychologists (Kirzner, 1976. p. 129). The dichotomy between means and ends has thus long been criticized from many perspectives (p. 125), since both are relative concepts. Means are not neutral with only instrumental values but are 'often valued as such' (Clark and Majone, 1985, p. 9).

Anderson (1983) has studied the connectedness of means and ends in a complex process of decision making by analysing the well-documented Cuban missile crisis. He points to the deliberative character of the decision-making process. It is not a rational process where the goals are defined first, like most theories assume; rather they are defined and discovered during the process of decision making (Anderson, 1983, p. 214). Articulation of possible consequences of the alternatives is helpful to identify the desirability of the realizable ends of these means, as the ends become more realistic and more concrete. The obvious connection between means and ends is the reason that Anderson argues: 'Goal discovery is a social process in which the causal texture . . . links objectives, constraints, and imperatives with alternatives and their consequences through discussion and debate' (p. 211).

Anderson (1983) argues for a dialectical approach to discuss political and strategic issues because the meaning of means and ends is so interdependent. Weinberg adds to this argument that the positive scientific perspective is 'inadequate simply' because many policy questions require a trans-scientific approach that includes 'moral and aesthetic' discussions, as well as approaches that can be characterized as "quick-and-dirty" because a scientific approach would be 'impractically expensive' (Weinberg, 1972, p. 213). If they are right, this should be reflected in the reports of consultants and academic advisers.

Economic advice does not require an either/or positive/normative economics, but both in an interactive relationship (Majone, 1989, p. 34). It

needs an approach that crosses borders between normative and positive discussions to perform fact-finding activities, norm creation and valuation in interaction. A dialectical approach, embedded in a rhetorical tradition, might offer a promising perspective to develop a methodology to bridge the artificial gap between means and ends, or positive and normative judgments.

The irony of the standard economic models of decision making is that they influence how economic agents make decisions: economic students are more rational in their behavior than non-economic students. Different experiments have shown that economic students focus on economic optimization instead of the more general human process of deliberative decision making in which values and motives of different kinds are taken into consideration as illustrated by van Houwelingen and Bouwmeester (2008). The positivist economic model of decision making thus generates a "selfish" view, which has a strong moral impact on decision making (Alvey, 2000, p. 1232; Ferraro et al., 2003, p. 14). That renders even positive economics a normative science, and even more "dismal" than classical economics after Smith, again an argument that the logical gulf between means and ends, or the distinction beteen normative and positive economic advice is rather artifical.

Dialogue

How would academic advisers explain and legitimize their positive approach to critics such as institutional economists or even consultants?

Academic adviser proposition: The contribution an academic adviser values most is the objective, critical and independent investigation of an economic situation, possible alternatives and the alternatives' effects. The client has the best knowledge to decide which alternative meets her objectives, values or interests. At that point an academic adviser cannot offer help.
Critics' view: Presentation of mere facts does not suffice. Assignments do not follow the distinction between facts and values. Economic decision makers have to consider values, preferences and interests, which are not usually "positive facts".
Critics' proposition: Clients can be confused about their interests, objectives and preferences because they are often conflicting. Economic advisers should try their best to discuss objectives critically and guide clients independently. Neutrality and distance serve as barriers to this kind of help.
Academic response: Economic advisers should not promise more than

they can offer. Clients like to believe these offers, and get seduced, which is morally wrong. An academic adviser should promise less, and offer a service with academic quality.

ROLES THAT FIT THE ACADEMIC ADVISER AND THE CONSULTANT

Consultants are willing to perform many activities, if their clients ask for this. Their role definition is much broader than the academic expert role described above. Kubr has formulated a much cited definition, which covers the possible tasks of a consultant. The definition can be compared with the proposed neutral advice contribution of academics:

> Management consulting is an independent professional advisory service assisting managers and organizations to achieve organizational purposes and objectives by solving management and business problems, identifying and seizing new opportunities, enhancing learning and implementing changes. (Kubr, 2002, p. 10)

Competing academics and economic consultants are both on the expert side of the definition. Both usually do not help with implementing recommendations and they also do not focus on enhancing learning directly. They mainly help to achieve organizational purposes by solving problems and identifying and seizing new opportunities. Their advice is based on research, which implies that they do not offer standard solutions. They most often help clients with unique questions. Given these limitations academic advisers mostly perform the neutral expert role. What are the roles for consultants in solving problems and what are the benefits of these roles as viewed by consultants?

Edgar Schein has had a great influence in the debate about consultant roles, originally defining three roles of the consultant (Schein, 1969, pp. 4–9). Schein (1990) reiterates these roles as: (1) the expert providing information, (2) the expert in a doctor role and (3) the process consultant. Schein argues that consultants should be able to change roles if necessary, which implies that only the expert role is too narrow for consultants. Since Schein there has been a growing awareness of the importance of the process role among consultants (Kubr, 2002, p. 72).

Schein's information expert embodies the academic view on economic advice. The role assumes that clients know their problems and objectives. They also know that solving the problem is necessary to reach the objectives. The consultant only provides expertise and useful knowledge (Schein, 1990, p. 59). Others refer to this model as the 'purchase model',

because it is like shopping. The client knows exactly what he needs (Pellegrinelli, 2002, pp. 344–6). The expert presents conclusions as a result of an 'esoteric' process (Alvesson and Johansson, 2002, p. 235).

The doctor-patient model assumes that consultants can help identify the problem by means of a diagnosis. The client has to give information about the problem. The doctor expert thus helps identify objectives. After the diagnosis the consultant can change roles and become a provider of expert information (Schein, 1990, p. 60) to help the client reach the identified objectives by means of expert information. However, the doctor role does not fit the ideas of the consulting economist; the latter does not want to interfere in defining objectives.

Process consultants work together with their client. They feel unable to make a diagnosis on their own, because they know too little about the problem area. Unlike the doctor, they do not assume that clients can give the right information to lead to a diagnosis without their involvement. Schein claims that a process consultant aims at a 'mutual inquiry process' that helps with 'figuring out what is wrong and how to fix it' (p. 60). A process consultant thus wants the client to remain the problem owner and solution finder. The consultant is more like a coach. That is a role which does not fit the ideas of the consulting economist at all; it implies contributions on all levels of the problem-solving process, including discussions about objectives and without doing the research in a way the academic might like.

After Schein other authors contributed to the debate about consultant roles. Academic advisers are characterized as 'mental adventurers' by Nees and Greiner (1985, p. 77). Nees and Greiner mention that McKinsey exemplifies the management physician and characterize the Boston consulting group as 'strategic navigators' with a focus on strategic objectives and planning. Both roles resemble Schein's doctor role. They authored the additional role of 'systems architect', devoted to organization design and implementation of mainly IT solutions. Their 'friendly co-pilot' role most resembles the process consultant.

Lippitt and Lippitt (1986, pp. 61–2) identify eight roles. Compared to Schein their main contribution is discussing the degree of influence that consultants and clients have in decision making. Their most directive role of advocate has two versions: a content advocate and a process advocate. On the expert side they further mention the 'information specialist' and less directive expert roles such as the 'alternative identifier', the 'fact finder' and the 'observer'. The latter two may fit the character of the academic adviser best, because academic advisers do not want to be directive: they deliver useful knowledge. The 'alternative identifier' establishes and applies criteria for judging alternatives and identifying

the best one, but is not participating in the decision. They differentiate the process consultant into 'process advocate' and the less directive 'joint problem solver' and 'process counselor', similar to Schein's non-directive process consultant. A role not quite fitting Schein's taxonomy is 'trainer and educator'.

The debate about consultant roles is still alive (Alvesson and Johansson, 2002, p. 234; Ashford, 1998, pp. 45–61; Pellegrinelli, 2002, pp. 353–5). Some academics are even trying to characterize the entire profession through role metaphors like "impression manager" (Clark, 1995) or "witch doctor" (Clark and Salaman, 1996) or they characterize consulting as "story-making" (Johansson, 2004). The implied frame of reference in these metaphors seems critical: the academic who characterizes those who betray the truth. There is little difference with the characterization of the consultant as charlatan as refered to by van Aken (2001), Armbrüster (2006, p. 2) and Bloomfield and Danieli (1995). For all of these academics, however, the consultant is intriguing.

Referring to the concepts of Schein and Lippitt and Lippitt, academic advisers fit the role of an adviser that provides expert information in a non-directive way. The expert claims to be neutral, fitting the instrumental advice approach advocated by Robbins, Tinbergen or Stiglitz and can concentrate on the delivery of usable expert knowledge. Economic consultants can provide expert information as well, but they perform more roles such as the content advocate, doctor expert and alternative identifier eventually combined with a process role. Kubr (2002, p. 72) argues that currently 'more and more consultants feel comfortable in both roles': the content and the process role. Consultants change roles if the situation or client demands it. They do not claim to deliver value free or scientific knowledge; they strive to help their client, as Schein argues. In some cases the quality of knowledge will even benefit from a collaborative process approach, where the client remains the problem owner involved in the research (Schein, 1990, pp. 60–61).

Dialogue

How would consultants and academic advisers legitimize their preferred consulting role to each other?

Academic adviser proposition: Economic advice should help clients make better decisions by providing the information or expertise they do not have. It is not meant to influence the purpose of a policy or strategy. Clients are best able to determine preferences and objectives themselves.
Consultant response: Even though your position seems noble, that all

the conditions of this role can be met is too exceptional to allow your approach to be successful. Our experiences do not support your view.
Consultant proposition: Advice requires most of all that the client becomes able to perform better. Often it is not enough to give expertise. A mix of roles is necessary to help the client. It includes discussing objectives and processes that may help clients solve their own problems.
Academic response: We are not qualified to offer a service beyond our own expertise, and we wonder what consultants have to offer. They are, after all, proud of their academic title. We cannot help but think they offer little more than their common sense. Are we more gifted with common sense than our clients? On the contrary, clients have proved themselves in their work already.

3. Advice analysis and rhetoric

According to positivist economists such as Robbins or Tinbergen, economic advice has to be a scientific activity. It has to be value free and limited to the application of economic principles and regularities that are the result of positive scientific inquiry. The economic adviser offers a client "if-then" advice. It is the client's task to state preferences, values and objectives. If the client articulates objectives, the economic way to reach these objectives would be the result of economic advice. This is exceptional in the market for economic advice though. Clients often need help articulating preferences and objectives because of ill-structured problems. Without this help, advice is based on the wrong articulation of objectives and therefore worthless. In practice it is also problematic to distinguish neutral means from objectives, since means or instruments are rarely neutral. They are often objectives themselves, so the discussion of appropriate means touches on the discussion on objectives. Economic advice thus demands more than its science proposes to cover.

How is advice characterized from a philosophical perspective? Economists focus on positive questions in the context of advice, leaving ethical questions to the philosophers. What normative elements of advice exist in philosophical discussions? How do philosophers reflect on the kind of knowledge that is needed in the context of advice? Because advice is always presented by means of language, how do language philosophers and rhetoricians reflect on it? Aristotle (1991), Toulmin (1994), Toulmin et al. (1984) and Habermas (1988a), for example, argue that advice is a rhetorical genre with specific characteristics.

The second question in this chapter is methodological and discusses how to analyse advice practices. Within the academic community a growing number of academics criticize the dominance of traditional positivist/modernist approaches. This criticism also applies to the strong belief in the legitimacy of the positivist or progressive view on economic advice. Post-positivists like Habermas and postmodernist philosophers like Lyotard (2001) question the belief in the "grand narratives" of progress that belongs to the positivist view on science. They argue that many important decisions are based on every day deliberation, a pre-scientific kind of thinking. A traditional scientific or positivist analysis is of little help in

knowing your friends better, but you can know your friends pretty well by experiencing them. Post-positivists argue that the more complex decisions in life are based on argumentation, persuasion and intersubjective agreement or consensus. They thus take the arguments or deliberations of managers and consultants seriously even from their academic perspective. They know that managers rely on every day deliberation to support and criticize major decisions. They know that managers are critical about the usefulness of scientific knowledge in the context of decision making. They understand if universities ask consultants rather than academic advisers to help them with strategic or organizational questions. Baldridge et al. (2004, p. 1072) show that few examples of research in the field of general management are both high in scientific quality and considered relevant by practitioners, a central dilemma in the rigor and relevance debate.

Scientific legitimization of conclusions for an academic audience and practical legitimization of recommendations in the context of consulting are both rhetorical activities, albeit the rhetoric differs. That makes a rhetorical analysis a promising perspective to analyse the differences between economic advice by academics and consultants. A rhetorical analysis offers the necessary concepts to analyse these advice practices. Advice requires sound argumentation and personal involvement on a moral and emotional level. Rhetoricians would not consider empty rhetoric in the context of advice just because it does not meet the requirements of positivist scientific analysis, but a rhetorical analysis could also acknowledge the force of scientific arguments. That makes a rhetorical approach more neutral or open-minded than a positivist or modernist approach, which excludes attention to pre-scientific knowledge beforehand. A rhetorical analysis offers a perspective to analyse and possibly bridge the rhetorical gap between academic advisers and consultants, instead of reconstructing it. That may contribute to an explanation of the riddle of consultants' higher fees and larger market share despite their 'quick and dirty' approaches.

CONSULTING AS DIALECTICAL PRACTICE

An Historical Perspective

There is a striking resemblance between modern consultants and the Sophists of ancient Greece. Academics today characterize consultants much like Plato and Socrates characterized Sophists. They are (were) both accused of empty rhetoric. Plato criticized Sophists for their advanced technical but immoral rhetorical approach (Plato, 1922a, 1922b, 1922c, p. 272St). Platonists consider the rhetorical approaches practiced by

Sophists misleading (Bubner, 1990, p. 9). Plato and Socrates could not accept persuasion at the cost of truth.

Aristotle may also have been critical of Sophists but he investigated their practice, such as how they sold their knowledge, eloquence and influence to help people argue well in a political context (Aristotle, 1968b, p. 165a1). Aristotle tried to acknowledge the influence and relevance of Sophists, but maintained the notion that their persuasive aims often cost them their integrity (pp. 165a1–165b1). But the use of rhetoric is not necessarily immoral: it can be a sign of social engagement. Instead of fighting rhetoric like the Platonists, Aristotle devoted a book to it. In *On Rhetoric* (Aristotle, 1991) Aristotle cleverly learned about rhetoric from Sophists rather than shun it. In contrast, many modern academics seem to follow Plato.

Quintilianus argues like Aristotle that rhetoric is not necessarily the enemy of sincerity. Quintilianus (2001, book II.15.24–28), however, questions whether Plato was really so negative about rhetoric, and argues that this view may merely be an interpretation of Plato. The interpretation by Quintilianus has merit: Plato argued that it requires a strong sense of justice or integrity of the speaker to make rhetoric an honorable discipline (Plato, 1922b, p. 508St) and he even tries to contribute to the development of this honorable discipline (Plato, 1922c, pp. 271St–272St, 276St–277St). Quintilianus underlines this normative requirement. He defines rhetoric as the art or 'science to speak well', especially in a moral sense (Quintilianus, 2001, book II.15.34).

Rhetoric has been part of the curriculum since the advent of European universities and it was considered an important discipline (Vico, 1990). Along with dialectic and grammar, it was part of the liberal arts trivium within which rhetoric was the art of speaking or writing well. Dialectic was the art of argumentation. The subdivision into seven liberal arts goes back to Martianus, who wrote a treatise in the fifth century that was the most important source on rhetoric and dialectic during the Middle Ages (Leeman and Braet, 1987, p. 44).

Rhetoric lost its central position as an academic discipline due to rationalistic enlightenment ideals and vanished from the university curriculum by the end of the nineteenth century (Schmidt and Schischkoff, 1982, p. 589). At that time dialectic was still developed in philosophy departments. Hegel especially treated dialectic as a philosophical discipline. But even dialectic lost its academic position; like rhetoric, it was no longer considered a scientific activity in a modernist sense. Statistics and mathematics became the general courses for teaching methodological skills (van Baalen, 2001, p. 64).

Rhetoric and dialectic were disqualified by modernist scientific

traditions before economics became the positive scientific discipline we know today. The connection between rhetoric and the domain of political and economic decisions as suggested by Aristotle in *On Rhetoric* (1991, p. 1358b) lost academic attention the moment that political economy gained recognition from the work of Adam Smith. Although he devoted some attention to rhetoric (Toulmin, 2001, p. 56), Smith did not make the connection with political and economic advice like Aristotle.

A fusion of positivist and modernist traditions in the twentieth century quite excluded rhetoric as well as moral- or personal-type valuation from scientific practices in the social sciences. The economic discipline was no exception. In courtrooms, political discussions, strategic business cases and other real life debates, however, dialectical and rhetorical practices have remained dominant. In the second half of the twentieth century philosophers such as Perelman and Obrechts-Tyteca (1971), Toulmin (1994) and Habermas (1988a, 1988b) revived academic attention to rhetorical practices. Toulmin's *The Uses of Argument* (first published in 1958) and *The New Rhetoric* by Perelman and Obrechts-Tyteca (1971) are classic works. Since then attention to rhetoric has been growing in the social sciences that relate to consulting, such as economics, management and policy sciences.

Rhetoric and the Classical Means of Persuasion: Logos, Ethos and Pathos

Aristotle defined rhetoric as the art 'to see the available means of persuasion' (Aristotle, 1991, p. 1355b) and because dialectic is a means of persuasion, it connects closely to rhetoric from an Aristotelian perspective. The main subjects of rhetoric are speaker, subject and audience, which together frame the rhetorical situation. The three means of persuasion relate to those three subjects, or domains: ethos (the character of the speaker), pathos (the empathy for preferences of the audience) and logos (the argument itself) (p. 1356a). Logos is thus the most "dialectical" means of persuasion because it is about the reasons or arguments that support a claim. Followers of Aristotle like Cicero (1989, p. 139/ II, 115) or Quintilianus (2001, book V.1-14) consider dialectic a major subdiscipline of rhetoric.

Logos, ethos and pathos are interdependent. The ethos of the truth-loving character of a scientist or philosopher supports a preference for rigorous arguments that are proved to be valid or true. The ethos of professions that see themselves as a helping profession such as consultants or therapists (Schein, 2002) could support the preference for other arguments, like those that are compelling because they are useful to a client. These can be arguments that appeal to common sense instead of academic

rigor. The character or ethos of the speaker therefore influences logos or the choice of arguments.

Pathos relates to the sensibilities of an audience. Like ethos, pathos provides a background for an argument's acceptance. Persuasiveness depends on both the author's ethos and the audience's feelings or preferences. These also influence the choice of argument. In a passive version pathos means that the speaker is aware of the beliefs and preferences of an audience and tries to stay close to them to evoke sympathy. A more active pathos means that the speaker arouses the necessary emotions in the audience to gain an argument's acceptance. Few speakers have such a faculty, but good playwrights do. They write plays that arouse happiness, fear or anger. The rhetoric of warfare is a good example of the use of pathos as a means of persuasion. If we can argue convincingly that a country or "terrorists" are killing babies, we increase acceptance of war. Examples of such cruelty arouse strong feelings.

For the comparison of the style of argumentation between consultants and academic advisers ethos is more relevant than pathos. Not the audiences, but the authors have to be compared. We should be aware of the character of the audience, however: differences in argumentation can result from the different sensibilities and preferences of clients, influencing the assignments and their supervision. That would be an indirect influence. Ethos identifies the character of the author directly. Academic advisers and consultants belong to different groups or communities, have different characters, different preferences, different professional backgrounds, different professional codes and, as Klamer argues, different professional conversations (Klamer, 2007, pp. 180–3). Since pathos, ethos and logos are interrelated, ethos can direct the preference for specific arguments and whether the author takes the interests of the audience into account.

Borders Between Rhetoric, Dialectic and Discourse Analysis

My treatment of rhetoric stems from Aristotle, characterized by Kennedy (1999) as philosophical rhetoric, but according to Kennedy the most common form is technical rhetoric. He mentions sophistic rhetoric as a third kind. Philosophical rhetoric includes ethos, pathos and logos as the means of persuasion. Speaker, audience and speech are the three elements of the rhetorical situation.

Philosophical rhetoric is not separated from dialectic, since dialectic and deliberation are major parts of philosophical rhetoric. Eloquence is part of it too, but it is of minor importance. Aristotle (1991, p. 1356a) and Cicero (1989, p. 139/II, 115), fathers of philosophical rhetoric, both define dialectic as the specialized art of argumentation and rhetoric as the general art of

persuasion. The second kind of rhetoric is developed by Sophists such as Gorgias. Sophistic rhetoric is less ethically involved, and less deliberative than philosophical rhetoric. Sophistic rhetoric concentrates mainly on the character of the speaker; it is ceremonial and cultural. Technical rhetoric mainly considers speech, eloquence, style and tropes like metaphors (Kennedy, 1999, pp. 13–14).

In *On Rhetoric* Aristotle treats dialectic as part of rhetoric, but he also writes in more detail about dialectical practices in *Topics* (*Topik* in the German translation by Rolfen). For Aristotle (1968a, p. 101b) dialectic is 'the art of invention', useful to philosophical insight, and developing scientific disciplines because the fundamentals of these disciplines are thought of in terms of likelihood and best guesses. He argues that no higher principles can help decide the truth or usefulness of the first principles and axioms of a discipline. This understanding of dialectic strongly resembles the practice Plato demonstrates in his dialogues, in which he confronts different philosophical arguments to examine differences in opinion.

Dialectic is not necessarily a subdiscipline of rhetoric and has different interpretations. Philosophical dialectic is an independent discipline because argumentation is also part of clarification in a scientific and philosophical context (as Aristotle argues). Plato and especially Hegel refer to the philosophical meaning of dialectic. Dialectic from this perspective is the philosophical discipline of reasoning, arguing and deliberation. Rhetoric is the subjective and often manipulative counterpart of dialectic. This interpretation resonates with the sophistic and technical interpretations of rhetoric. The interpretations of dialectic from the perspectives of philosophical rhetoric and philosophical dialectic are not necessarily in conflict however. Aristotle together with current rhetoricians and dialecticians consider the disciplines 'twins' (van Eemeren and Houtlosser, 2002, p. 3).

Dialectic assumed a third meaning with Marx, neo-Marxists and their audiences. They relate it to social processes that can be "dialectical", which often means that reciprocity in these processes can influence outcomes in unexpected ways. The unexpected outcome of dialectical deliberation serves as a metaphor for social processes. This Marxist perspective is most different from dialectic in the interpretation of philosophical rhetoric.

The confusion about the interpretation of rhetoric and dialectic earned a new dimension with the introduction of concepts such as discourse analysis and narrative analysis. Gill and Whedbee (1997, p. 157) consider rhetoric as 'a type of instrumental discourse'. Putnam and Failhurst (2001) subsume rhetoric, discursive or dialectical analysis, and narrative analysis under the concept of discourse analysis, domains of analysis that have belonged to rhetoric since Aristotle.

The reason to invent a new name could be that rhetoric still suffers from the negative connotations of sophistic and technical rhetoric. I will refer to rhetoric following the philosophical tradition, although I do not consider it fundamentally different from discourse analysis. I will use the concept discourse as belonging to a well-defined community, such as the discourse of theoretical economists, economic consultants, politicians and jurisprudents, or to distinguish a practical versus a theoretical discourse. Differences between forms of rhetoric in these discourses is what intrigues both rhetoricians and discourse analysts.

Advice as a Rhetorical Genre

Aristotle explicitly makes a connection between dialectic and advice in his characterization of rhetorical genres in stating that advice about a future course of action belongs to the deliberative genre (Aristotle, 1991, p. 1358b). Indirect evidence for the connection is that dialectic is a method of 'drawing conclusions from likely arguments' (Aristotle 1968a, p. 100a), where "likely arguments" are considered as such by experts (p. 100b). Giving advice depends on likely arguments, and experts are often asked for advice. Advice is also about suggestions for future improvements. Imaginations of the future can be likely, but rarely certain.

Aristotle argues that dialectical arguments relate to "topoi", or groups of general strategies to build an argument such as 'what is true for all is true for some' (p. 109a). Likewise other topoi could be formulated: "what is possible for the weak is possible for the strong". For a consultant it could be a field-specific argumentation rule such as: "one always has to select the alternative with the greatest benefit". Aristotle develops these general arguments in *Topics,* a book on dialectic. As dialectic is more general, field-specific argumentation is the subject of Aristotle's rhetoric. In both field-specific and general arguments uncertainty is part of the deliberations. Political situations, for example, are uncertain because of the uncertain character of the future. In the context of law, crimes are always historic; we do not have full knowledge of the past to perfectly reconstruct them.

The influence of specific content areas on argumentation is characterized in the second chapter of *On Rhetoric*, where Aristotle stresses the similarities between rhetoric and dialectic (Aristotle, 1991, p. 1358a). The connection between rhetoric and advice is articulated most pointedly in the characterization of the political domain, which is a subject of the deliberative genre. Table 3.1 characterizes the three rhetorical genres as deliberative, judicial and demonstrative (Aristotle, 1991, p. 1358b).

Aristotle would say that consultants and academic advisers practice a "deliberative genre" in giving economic advice. Sometimes their audiences

Table 3.1 Three rhetorical genres

	Deliberative genre	**Judicial genre**	**Demonstrative genre**
Timeframe	• Future	• Past	• Present
Argument or claim	• Advice	• Accusation/ defense	• Praise/ blame
Role audience	• Judge	• Judge	• Spectator
Example audience	• Politician	• Judge, jury	• Subject of praise
Objective	• The advantageous	• The just or unjust	• The (dis) honorable

are indeed politicians, but managers also make decisions to influence the future. Aristotle argues that the genre's argument is based on a conception of the advantageous, which certainly applies to economic advice.

Similarities in rhetorical genres include the degree of uncertainty of the arguments or attention to exceptions or conditions regarding the conclusions. These general topoi or elements of argumentation belong to all three genres (Aristotle, 1991, p. 1359a; Kennedy, 1991, p. 15).

Advice as a Field of Argumentation

Toulmin (1994, p. 112) has revitalized Aristotle's rhetorical approach. He argues that argumentation is field dependent as in Aristotle's rhetorical genres and should not be treated in an abstract way like logic. The arguments and backings in a judicial debate are different from those in political debates. Judicial argumentation refers to laws or specific circumstances; political argumentation usually refers to local or general interests, or to Aristotle's advantages or disadvantages. Field dependency means that the assumptions used, for example, in economic argumentation – like efficiency as an objective, maximizing utility or rational behavior – do not necessarily convince an audience from another field.

Like Aristotle, Toulmin (1994, pp. 7–8) argues that there is a close connection between the logic of argumentation and the practice of judicial discourse; judicial discourse is the mother of dialectic. Toulmin (p. 96) also integrates the Aristotelian technique of argument analysis into his own analytical frame by relating traditional concepts, such as conclusions with claims, minor premises with grounds and major premises with warrants. But he also criticizes the classic conception of an argument as being too general in its application to differentiate between specific fields or domains of argumentation.

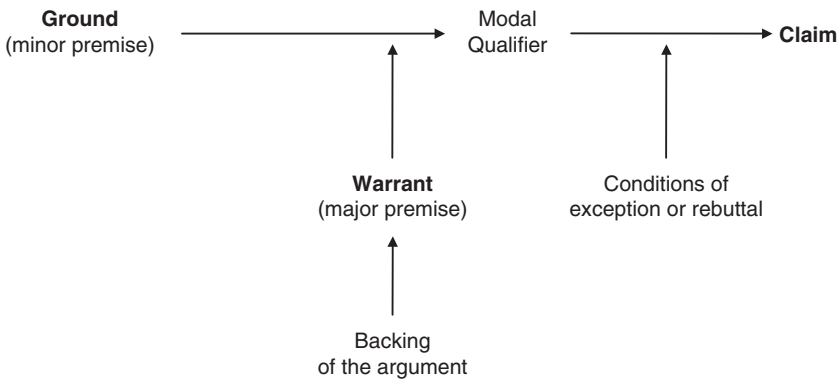

Figure 3.1 Pattern of an argument based on Toulmin

A warrant from an economic argument will not necessarily be accepted in a judicial argument whose audience is unfamiliar with its economic backings. Different fields or domains themselves establish the backings of warrants and determine the likelihood (modality) of arguments. Most warrants are not general in an absolute sense as assumed in classic examples like "all men are mortal" or "all babies need sleep". The latter case already introduces differentiation in the amount of sleep needed. And babies waking from a nice nap have different needs. Toulmin argues that the context of an argument determines conditions of exception that have to be taken into account in argumentation analysis. Figure 3.1 presents elements of a single argument based on Toulmin (1994, pp. 99–107).

In advice on the degree of liberalization in the electricity market, an example of a claim (or conclusion) could be to "increase market coordination". The ground would be that "market coordination is more efficient than government regulation" and the warrant that connects the two could be the principle that "more efficient coordination is better". The warrant's more general character "guarantees" that the ground of an argument leads to the claim. The warrant also explains the character of the connection between ground and claim. If the conclusion is presented first, words like "since", "because of" or "due to" follow. When grounds are presented first, words like "therefore" or "then" follow. Arrows between grounds and claims also function as these connectors.

The grounds and claim can each have a more general or more specific character. The ground in the example above ("the market is more efficient than government regulation") can be seen as a general claim itself, supported by an inductive or statistical argument that compares different markets and concludes that as regulation increases, efficiency decreases.

The warrant in that argument is the generalization based on the statistical argument. Toulmin (1994, p. 99) and Brockriede and Ehninger (1960, p. 45) argue that the warrant answers the question: 'How do you get there?' – or how to get from the grounds to the conclusion. The grounds can be found by asking: 'What have you got to go on?' or 'What evidence do you have for your claim?'.

For Toulmin the classical pattern of an argument is useful, but insufficient to analyse practical deliberation. One could question the certainty of the claim and in some cases the claim is more probable than certain. Therefore Toulmin introduces the "modal qualifier" to describe the degree of certainty or probability of the conclusion. For example, a claim that liberalization will always increase market efficiency may be untenable, but claiming the likelihood of the relationship is not.

Toulmin's criticism goes further by questioning the validity of the claim. In a practical context many conditions have to be fulfilled to guarantee the outcome. Unmet conditions will render the conclusion optimistic or even wrong. For Toulmin conditions or well-defined exceptions are the "rebuttals". That explains why there are exceptions to the claim that "government regulation decreases efficiency". Examples of such conditions or rebuttals in the electricity market could be that criteria for the level of quality and accessibility of electricity have to be met. Only if these conditions – high quality and uniform accessibility – are fulfilled will the market be more efficient than pure government regulation. The claim holds only if the quality or accessibility of the service is unharmed and only if it is not an exceptional market in which government regulation is more efficient.

The third additional element is the "backing", which supports the warrant. In a practical context warrants are often problematic and thus need backing. Think about the principle "we should choose the most efficient coordination". Why should we apply this principle? How many would accept an economic principle? Could other principles be applied? Why not choose fairness over efficiency? Backings should assure that the warrant is reliable and strong enough to refute rebuttals. The backing therefore has to refer to scientific evidence, practical evidence, shared opinions and so on.

Though many scholars in the social sciences use Toulmin's additions to the classical pattern of argument, some try to improve the analytical framework. Dunn (1993) gives a more specific list of warrants and rebuttals, and Fisher (1995) identifies new kinds of backings for evaluative policy argumentation. Habermas (1988a) differentiates between fields and subfields of argumentation. These contributions do not cross the boundaries of Toulmin's model but try to enrich it.

Advice and Communicative Action

Habermas (1988a, pp. 36–7) is probably the most influential philosopher who uses the ideas of Toulmin (1994) and Toulmin et al. (1984) to discuss the '*Argumentationspraxis*' in his theory of communicative action. This deliberative practice aims for universal consensus about factual statements and universal norms, but Habermas also offers insight into the local deliberative processes necessary to support evaluative statements in cultural, human and personal discussions. Using deliberation as the means to reach intersubjective consensus in social and societal issues is essential to Habermas's theory of communicative action.

Though Habermas takes Toulmin very seriously, he criticizes Toulmin for not further differentiating between the different rhetorical or dialectical fields (Habermas, 1988a, p. 61). Habermas argues that it is necessary to distinguish between five 'meta-fields' which he calls '*Formen der Argumentation*': a theoretical, practical and explicative discourse with the possibility of universal agreement, and further the fields of aesthetic and therapeutic criticism. The latter can only lead to local or intersubjective consensus (pp. 38–45). The concept of communicative action is subject to many preconditions to get a free and unbiased discussion (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2000, p. 117–8; Habermas, 1989, p. 177–8). The more preconditions fulfilled, the better the outcomes of a discussion.

The universal discourses are the fields of scientific inquiry because of their aim at timeless and universal knowledge, although this might be criticized as too modernistic. The *theoretical* discourse is about facts, causalities and theory. Discussions are about truth and the effects of teleological action. A *practical* discourse is about principles or norms concerning the appropriateness or morality of social action. The *explicative* discourse refers to the appropriate understanding and expression within a debate or discourse. It aims to clarify the concepts in use, and offers the possibility to discuss a conversation's quality or fairness.

Habermas's consensus theory of truth explicitly claims the possibility of the universal validity of deeply discussed *theoretical* and *practical* claims. This ideal is rarely possible because the necessary preconditions to reach unbiased consensus can never be quite fulfilled. Postmodernists such as Lyotard (2001, p. 167) criticize Habermas in this respect. Habermas has to agree with this criticism given that he claims that the preconditions to reach an unbiased discussion are 'counterfactual'. He admits they can only be fulfilled to some degree in practice (Habermas, 1989, p. 180–3). Consensus can even be the result of power: some participants often have less opportunity to speak, and some positions are thus given unequal weight. However, to be aware of the necessary conditions for consensus is

helpful in tracing influences that generate discussion outcomes that result from forces external to the argument.

Aesthetic criticism refers to criteria to evaluate human creations or activities within a cultural perspective and is thus culturally bound. It changes from time to time and from place to place. A culture influences judgments about appropriateness of values or the direct evaluation of a situation (Habermas, 1988a, p. 41). Aesthetic criticism is the less universal counterpart of the practical discourse in which accepted norms are applied in the deliberative process. Aesthetic criticism is part of the work of a consultant, who has to criticize or establish values within the client's social context.

Therapeutic criticism questions the authenticity or truth of personal expressions. This criticism belongs to the personal sphere of friendship or family relations. It also applies to the relationship between consultant and client. Both face human issues in which integrity and authenticity are important values.

In these five meta-fields of argumentation different arguments are practised, different criteria for good arguments are applied, and persuasion varies. Rationality is in all cases the ultimate value to distinguish the better arguments, although the kind of rationality is different. In the context of advice the theoretical discourse is not as dominant as in scientific debates. Otto (2007, p. 20) makes a similar argument by differentiating between four fields with different standards to judge arguments. He refers to Wilber instead of Habermas to support his argument. He distinguishes two (inter)subjective domains based on individual or social judgments and two objective or scientific domains based on knowledge about individual and collective realities. Validity criteria for claims in the subjective domain are authenticity or truthfulness (subjective) and justness (intersubjective). Validity criteria for the objective domains are truth or correspondence (individual external reality) and functional fit (collective external reality). The two subjective domains show a resemblance to Habermas's fields of therapeutic and aesthetic criticism. Otto adds them to the two scientific domains to stress that discussions are also based on subjective forms of knowledge in the context of advice: 'the four domains are interrelated in the reflections of the professional' (Otto, 2007, p. 37). Otto is a consultant (hybrid) with a professional academic interest in the knowledge processes behind consulting.

Though Habermas draws a strict line between the universalistic discourses and culturally embedded criticism, I will argue that the theoretical and practical discourses are also culturally embedded and thus to some extent local. Habermas correctly claims that arguments referring to general norms or rules are different from arguments referring to criteria that

concern local quality or beauty. Usually moral or practical norms are less disputable, more generally accepted and less controversial than culturally embedded criteria. Aesthetic criteria are less general and therefore have to be established. They can even be fashionable. However, Habermas's claim of universality concerning the theoretical, practical and explicative discourses has to be taken with care because moral convictions and scientific insights also change over time and between cultures. They can only be considered *more* universal and *more* generally accepted. Postmodernists rightly criticize Habermas for his claim of universality but must admit that more local and more universal kinds of knowledge still have differences in degree. The results of scientific debate (theoretical discourse) are among the most universal and most widely accepted claims.

Toulmin does not define five meta-fields of argumentation like Habermas, but illustrates different theoretical and practical fields with different arguments. Toulmin's approach is flexible enough to integrate Habermas's differentiation and also to further differentiate Habermas's fields. Toulmin's approach becomes a useful model to analyse advice argumentation with Habermas's additions. Without that Toulmin's approach is limited to a critical discussion of general theoretical arguments or practical principles. These are the domains in which Toulmin looks for examples (Habermas, 1988a, p. 62). Even though Toulmin refers to argumentation about art (Toulmin et al., 1984, pp. 358, 360), the examples are technical and not evaluative or aesthetic in the sense that Habermas introduces. Habermas (1988a, p. 61) aims at a stronger dialectical and rhetorical approach: 'Toulmin treibt die Logik der Argumentation nicht weit genug in die Bereiche der Dialektik und Rhetorik vor' ('Toulmin does not stretch the logic of argumentation far enough in the field of dialectic and rhetoric').

Aesthetic criticism enables discussions about values. Culturally embedded appraisals of good or bad, ugly or beautiful, and useful or useless demand observations that can be upheld by appropriate value judgments. These evaluative observations have to be discussed critically, because local rather than general norms inform us of the appropriateness of the evaluation. Acceptance of norms is established through critical discussion and evaluation. Social acceptance of the evaluative observation can serve as backing in an argument. In the same sense we can challenge the evaluation by socially shared criticisms.

Evaluations of quality, appropriateness and efficiency are an important part of advice. As Otto (2007) claims, consultants are involved in these kind of discussions. Aesthetic criticism is therefore a major activity of a consultant. Academic advisers with an economic background are accustomed to the theoretical discourse. While academics in technical

disciplines can be familiar with the normative discussions of practical discourse, aesthetic criticism is external to their profession in general. Aesthetic criticism and therapeutic criticism can be relevant in private, not in their professional academic life. A consultant does not have the academic's professional resistance to the more local discourses. She is accustomed to judging an organization as badly structured, or a strategy as inappropriate. The next step would be to suggest an improvement of the structure or the strategy. The evaluative activity is analogous to the judgment that "the food is too cold". Rather than an objective and exact rule, it is an aesthetic consensus.

Advice and Speech Act Theory

What kind of thing advice "is", what kind of reality it is part of or what kind of substance it has are questions of ontology. The ontological question of what advice is could be answered from the perspective of speech act theory, since advice is expressed in language. It would be a matter of definition to separate language from elements like meaning or intention. If language includes these elements that go together with its use, advice can be seen as a speech act with a performative character.

Speech act theorists such as Austin (2003, pp. 4–7) and Searle (1996, p. 68) distinguish between performative and constative elements in language. The common understanding of language mainly considers constative elements. The definitions of language in dictionaries stress this constative or descriptive character. Language expressed by humans means more than representation or description. Speech act theorists therefore stress the performative elements in the use of language, which complement the constative elements. With the performative character they stress that language creates social reality; it is more than a means of describing an existing reality.

Though there are situations in which the common descriptive understanding of language is enough to explain what happens, advice certainly is more than the neutral or constative expression of a meaning. A recommendation purports or intends to influence. It is meant to be advantageous and leaves the advice-getter with the responsibility to consider the advice seriously. Neglecting good advice can be foolish and must have at least some convincing reasons behind it. Advice thus creates a new social reality with new expectations. The world is not quite the same as before. That makes it a performative speech act. The performative elements make it most obvious that we 'do things with words', a view introduced by Austin in 1955 (Austin, 2003). After Austin other philosophers embraced this concept of language as a force to realize action, such as Searle and

Habermas. Habermas integrated the idea of speech acts in his theory of communicative action.

Speech act theorists claim that the use of language implies an act. That even applies to "locution" (getting a meaning across). They thus argue that every locution implies an "illocution", which adds the dimension of an act to the descriptive meaning of language:

> To perform a locutionary act is in general also to perform an illocutionary act. Thus in performing a locutionary act we shall also be performing such an act as: asking or answering a question, giving some information or an assurance or a warning, announcing a verdict or an intention, pronouncing a sentence, making an appointment or an appeal or a criticism, making an identification or giving a description and the numerous like. (Austin, 2003, pp. 98–9)

It is thus a fundamental change of perspective, which is relevant in the context of advice. From the perspective of speech act theory, giving advice is considered a performative speech act, an 'illocution' (Austin, 2003, p. 102, 156). We realize an action with words when we apologize, warn, order, promise or recommend.

In so far as a speech act realizes an effect it can be characterized as a 'perlocution' (Austin, 2003, p. 109; Petrey, 1990, p. 13). Advice is therefore always an illocution, but not necessarily a perlocution. Perlocutions have the effect to surprise, to convince, to persuade or even to mislead. Perlocutions do not imply that the author or speaker cares about truth or integrity. Perlocutions are thus not necessarily conventionally embedded (Austin, 2003, pp. 121–2); illocutions are. We all know how to apologize, warn, promise and formulate advice.

Austin and Searle agree that giving advice is an illocutionary speech act because the words of advice perform the act of advice, and because advice refers to the authority and expertise of the adviser and the client's need for advice (Searle, 1996, p. 67). Advice is different from, say, orders or commands, because advice leaves acceptance up the client. The intention is that the advice is helpful.

Habermas (1988b, p. 112) argues in line with Austin and Searle but he adds that advice is a diffuse or multidimensional kind of speech act. It is an illocution that refers to some norm or practice, but often also to a prognosis of causes and effects (locution). Common to characterizations of illocutionary speech acts is that they get their meaning and force in a social context. Illocutions refer to social codes and practices. Habermas agrees that this character applies to advice. To consider advice as an illocutionary speech act implies reference to cultural and socio-economic conventions. Though Habermas relates illocutionary speech acts to culture (p. 113), he does not explicitly connect aesthetic judgments with speech acts such as

giving advice. The connection is implied though: illocutions refer to social conventions in a socio-historical context, which belong to the aesthetic or cultural meta-field.

There is a difference, however, between the level of abstraction of advice as a speech act and a concrete recommendation. Speech act theory considers the preconditions necessary to realize the performative character of any kind of advice. Searle mentions the conventional necessities of need (of advice) and expertise (to give advice) (Searle, 1996, p. 67). More specific preconditions should also be met in order to allow a recommendation to work. Speech act theory offers a general perspective to analyse advice, but still calls for an awareness of the local social and cultural contexts in which the advice is embedded.

THE ANALYSIS OF ADVICE ARGUMENTATION

Enriched Toulmin Analysis

Many scholars in management science or policy analysis apply Toulmin analysis; some also reflect on the limitations of Toulmin's analytical framework. They suggest additions that stem from their analysis of policy debates. Toulmin's approach is also discussed critically in the field of argumentation theory. Toulmin (1994, pp. 1, 254) would welcome this discussion: he considers his own contribution an 'essay' to be taken as a starting point for further developments.

The first criticism against Toulmin is that he only considers micro-argumentation and not complex argumentation (van Eemeren et al., 1997, p. 198; MacRae, 1993, p. 294; Von Werder, 1999, p. 676). Van Eemeren and colleagues consider integration of a backing as a first step to relate the warrant to underlying arguments, but it is obviously not enough to analyse more complex structures of arguments. The criticism is relevant because analysing complex argumentation is necessary in the context of advice.

Toulmin et al. (1984, p. 77) argue that grounds can be the conclusion of a previous argument and that a conclusion can be supported by more than one ground. In that respect the criticism that Toulmin only considers micro-argumentation seems to be a straw man. Toulmin also mentions the need for backward support if the grounds or facts that support a claim are contested: 'Of course we may not get the challenger even to agree about the correctness of these facts, and in that case we have to clear his objection out of the way by a preliminary argument' (Toulmin, 1994, p. 97).

Toulmin applies his analytical model for micro-argumentation to large

and complex structures of many connected arguments. Toulmin argues that claims and grounds can be connected in longer chains of arguments. In his analysis of complex arguments, however, he isolates single arguments. The rest is a "lemma". If the argument under consideration is proved to be without flaw, the analysis could go on to other levels in the complex argument. It is most reasonable to start with the main conclusion, and look for support by grounds, warrants and backing and to discuss modality and rebuttals. This approach corresponds to Hoppe's and Peterse's (1998b, p. 237) use of Toulmin's analytical framework.

Complexity of argumentation has different faces in the case of advice. Often more than one recommendation is formulated in practice, and often a recommendation has more than one ground. In cost-benefit analysis many kinds of costs and benefits are considered as grounds to assess alternatives. With the help of Toulmin's categories the argument can be analysed on different levels, such as what motivates the choice of alternatives, the choice of cost categories and the method of cost estimation. The criticism that Toulmin's analysis cannot analyse complex argumentation is therefore not very convincing. Toulmin's framework enables a rich analysis of single arguments in connection with other arguments, even though his analytical focus is on micro-argumentation.

A second criticism draws attention to the need for backing of the grounds, which Toulmin presents as unquestionable facts or data. If they are not, as illustrated in the quote above (Toulmin, 1994, p. 97), they need more detailed grounds as support, not backings like the warrants need.

Toulmin's grounds are shared observations or accepted knowledge. The quality of these facts or data, however, depends on the quality of observation, measurement and appropriate registration. Valid data from observations and interviews require the certainty that the questions leading to them were the right ones. Integrating the issue of acceptability of grounds in Toulmin's framework is possible only with a backing of the grounds.

The need for backing of grounds in a Toulmin analysis is argued by different authors such as Rieke and Sillars (2001, p. 116), Benson et al. (1995, p. 1648), van Eemeren et al. (1997, p. 191), Neutelings (1996, p. 201) and Schellens (1985, p. 73). Few grounds have the character of an indisputable observation. And what is the difference between the observation of data that serve as grounds compared to the observation of regularities or causalities that serve as warrants? Scientific observation of facts or data or of scientific laws all demand a sound methodological backing. In both cases the scientific discipline dictates what is considered sound. Therefore the backing of warrants is as field dependent as the backing of grounds.

Toulmin considers a backing as a statement of fact that equals the character of grounds or data (Toulmin, 1994, p. 105). Its function is to back

the assumed relation (warrant) between ground and conclusion. The need for backing a warrant can be illustrated by a legal example: a crime or an offence against the Road Traffic Acts leads to a certain punishment by reference to an act or jurisdiction. The backing would be the exact reference to the act or relevant accounts of jurisdiction (Toulmin, 1994, p. 99; Toulmin et al., 1984, p. 307). This kind of backing is even culturally field dependent, given that nations have their own laws and jurisdictions. But how can we back the ground? In this case, the ground can be backed by a statement of fact that validates the observation, for example, a reliable registration of clocking the speed of a car at a certain time in a certain place.

An additional argument for the importance of backing grounds could be derived from the criticism that van Eemeren et al. (1997, p. 199) formulate with respect to Toulmin's differentiation between grounds and warrants. They argue that in practice it is difficult to decide how arguments are delegated to grounds versus warrants. Toulmin agrees: 'the same English sentence may serve a double function: it may be uttered, that is, in one situation to convey a piece of information, in another to authorise a step in an argument, and even perhaps in some contexts to do both things at once' (Toulmin, 1994, p. 99). But Toulmin underlines the different functions of grounds and warrants within a single argument. Warrants function as logical authorities that connect grounds to claims. Grounds give information necessary to apply the warrant that allows the conclusion. However, that the same statement can assume a different function is an argument for the equal need for backing of grounds and warrants. This need does not depend on these functions, but on the acceptability of the statement itself. There is thus no good reason to argue in favor of Toulmin's approach that only the warrant has to be backed. The grounds can also need this kind of backing.

A third criticism draws attention to the diverse character of grounds in real life debates. Grounds can be more than objective facts or data. Toulmin acknowledges that warrants are diverse such as warrants that refer to causal relations, laws, principles, criteria, values or motives, which require field-dependent backings. Since grounds and warrants are interchangeable as statements, then why cannot grounds refer to emotions, values or moral intuitions too, such as: "you cannot harm him (claim) because you would regret it (ground)". Ground and claim can be connected by a motivational warrant like "people feel sorry if they hurt someone".

Management decisions can offer examples of these emotional arguments. Von Werder (1999, p. 676) argues that grounds in real life debates often are not factual in the sense of scientific grounds. Grounds often can be an evaluation of success, profitability or effectiveness of a strategy. The grounds that appraise a situation will be even more disputable than the

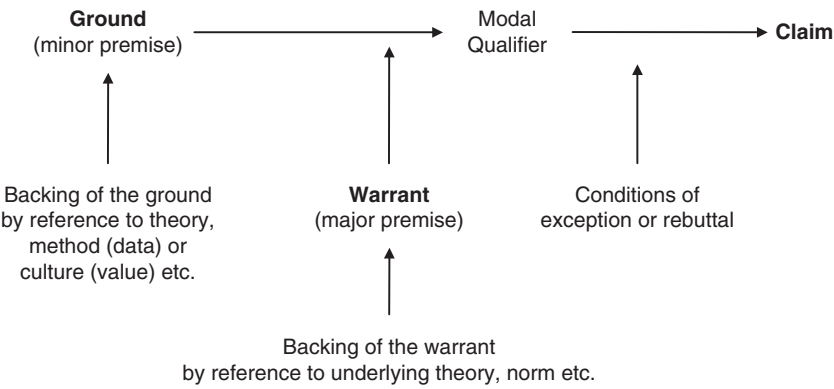

Figure 3.2 Enriched Toulmin analysis

gounds that state objective data. A consultant often has to value management situations by means of personal judgments to make an argument and, like personal observations, they can be subjective, biased or wrong. The need for backing of these grounds will thus even grow, compared to more "factual" or "objective" grounds based on measuring speed or counting. The type of backing (legitimization) will be different for the more intersubjective or subjective grounds that are based, as Habermas argues, on aesthetic or therapeutic judgments.

Mitroff and Mason (1980, p. 334) argue likewise in their reflection on the use of Toulmin's grounds because managers often decide based on personal evidence, like feelings, intuition and personal valuations. These judgments belong to the fields of aesthetic and therapeutic criticism as Habermas defines them. They generate evidence in the context of advice, but have only a local validity and are thus even more field dependent than the warrants.

The criticisms presented thus far demand some additions to Toulmin's analytical model, in the same sense as Toulmin did with respect to the classical syllogism of claim, major premise and minor premise. The proposed additions are the backing of grounds and the acknowledgment of the field dependency of grounds. The need for backing of grounds certainly applies to the field of advice where unquestionable grounds are rare. Figure 3.2 presents the enriched analytical model, which will serve as an analytical framework to discuss advice argumentation.

The enriched Toulmin model analyses the six aspects of micro-argumentation and adds the backing of grounds. Backing is considered the documentation or direct proof of the existence of a ground or warrant. The model is also sensitive to the variation in grounds. Data, appraisals,

estimations and other representative statements need backing if they refer to social realities that are partially obscured, culturally dependent or even specific to social groups or fields like organizations or markets. Observation of social situations and interpretation of action depends on shared valuation. We could also refer here to organizations' unwritten rules, specific professional conventions, and profession-specific values or differences in perspective between those who serve different roles within a profession, such as prosecuting and defense attorneys. Here the "truth" of observations requires a social consensus as backing. The model also supports an analysis of complex argumentation.

Dialectic and Relativism

The additions to Toulmin's model thus far make it a sensible approach to the field dependency of grounds. However, the increased field dependency makes this view on argumentation and deliberation more vulnerable to the criticism of relativism by MacRae, (1993, p. 294) and van Eemeren et al. (1997, pp. 259–60). MacRae, argues that Toulmin cannot present higher level criteria to judge competing arguments between fields or to appraise the quality of arguments in different fields. If that criticism holds, how could we then compare economic advice argumentation by consultants and academic advisers? In this area academic advisers may follow different rules, prefer different arguments or participate in an economic conversation because they are academics; consultants belong more to the practicing field, and participate in conversations with managers and other consultants.

MacRae's criticism is less fundamental than he suggests though. A comparison between conflicting criteria or arguments in different fields requires deliberation, argumentation on a higher level of abstraction. A comparison can result in a claim, which has to be supported by grounds, warrants and backings. It is like reasoning in the field of ethics, comparing the merits of economic and political propositions. The economic value of efficiency can conflict with the political value of employment. Conflicting values can then be discussed from the perspective of a more general field of argument, such as ethics.

While Toulmin does not necessarily define all his fields "horizontally", he uses academic disciplines as examples (Toulmin, 1994, pp.14–22). There are traditional disciplines such as economics or sociology, but across these disciplines there are "vertical" fields such as methodology, ethics and guidelines for presentation. Likewise Habermas distinguishes five meta-fields of which the explicative discourse refers to the general rules of deliberation in the four other fields.

MacRae makes an interesting contribution to this debate by pointing to

the necessity to compare the merits of different values and value systems in different fields. His claim that this cannot be done in Toulmin's approach lacks support however: a nice feature of Toulmin's approach is that general criteria to decide between fields have to be discussed and deliberated as well. As a consequence a claim of universal standards cannot be posed lightly. Also general standards have to be supported.

The challenge that MacRae, formulates requires a dialectical interpretation of Toulmin's field dependency in a Hegelian sense. Hegel argues against relativism as well as abstract universalism. The dialectic he argues for should refer to "content", what Toulmin tries to realize with his arguments' field dependency as opposed to formal logic. Both philosophers thus argue against abstract syllogisms and for more concrete understanding. In Hegel's original words: 'Der Mangel des formalen Schlusses liegt daher nicht in der Form des Schlusses . . . sondern dass sie nur als abstrakte, daher begriffslose Form ist' ('the shortcoming of formal reasoning is not its form . . . but that it is abstract and thus empty reasoning') (Hegel, 1986, p. 377). It cannot be a coincidence that Mason (1969) referred to Hegel's dialectic at the start of his intellectual career and later became attracted to Toulmin's *Uses of Arguments* (Mitroff and Mason, 1980, pp. 332–5; Mitroff et al., 1982, p. 1392).

Van Eemeren et al. (1997) consider it inappropriate and confusing to discuss Toulmin's logic with its field dependency in relation to Hegel's dialectic. According to them, Hegel's understanding of dialectic has nothing to do with the new rhetoric or dialectic that Perelman or Toulmin helped develop (van Eemeren et al., 1997, pp. 61, 117). That conclusion, however, is drawn too easily and without backing. Toulmin especially tries to connect elements of formal logic to a content-based inquiry and even to common sense knowledge of the world, like Hegel did. Both try to get closer to the logical or dialectical processes that the human mind is able to perform in the context of concrete knowledge creation. That means that they both cross the borders of formal logic in a similar way.

Advice in practice is a complex intellectual construct, which has judgments and syllogisms as argumentative elements. These elements have to make sense, which is also the ultimate criterion to decide if the argument is right in the end, and to decide if the advice is acceptable as well. It is complex argumentation that has to move beyond the relativity of single judgments or arguments and of field-dependent argumentation. Argumentation in the context of advice often has to be interdisciplinary, relating arguments from different fields to reach a more integral and less relativist understanding. Relativism is a necessary step in argumentation, however, to prevent absolutism. Integral and concrete understanding is a challenging but idealistic objective, due to the limitations of the human

mind. We never reach complete understanding, not of our lives, our closest friends or the social world, but aiming for it is a worthy objective.

The Rhetorical Turn in Policy and Management Sciences

If the connection between philosophical rhetoric, dialectic and policy decisions is as obvious as Aristotle claims, there should be modern evidence. Anderson (1983), Mitroff and Mason (1981) and Von Werder (1999) argue for this connection explicitly in political as well as business policy concepts. Other contemporary scholars study management advice from a dialectical or rhetorical perspective (van Baalen, 2001, p. 55; Hattersley, 1998, p. 22; Jackall, 1989 p. 142; Kieser, 2002, p. 215; Minto, 1995, p. 23; Weggeman, 2001, p. 128). They discuss the connection between rhetoric and advice, presented as an explanation for the success of consultants (but not on behalf of "empty" rhetoric).

Toulmin, Perelman and Obrechts-Tyteca are to a large extent responsible for the revival of rhetoric in the second half of the twentieth century, but not until the 1980s did rhetoric get broader attention in the social and human sciences. Nelson et al. (1987, p. x) asked Toulmin to help with planning a symposium that resulted in *The Rhetoric of the Human Sciences: Language and Argument in Scholarship and Public Affairs*. Parallel developments in policy analysis, economics and management science accelerated towards the end of the twentieth century.

Those who argue for more rhetorical awareness in economics and related disciplines such as policy science or organizational studies often cite McCloskey (1983). She argues that arguments count more than official economic epistemology tells us, therefore heavily criticizing the current 'received view' of modernism in economics that promises 'knowledge free from doubt, metaphysics, morals, and personal conviction' (McCloskey, 1983, p. 488). Instead McCloskey argues that modernism 'cannot, and should not, deliver what it promises. Scientific method is no different from other personal knowledge.' McCloskey argues that economics would improve if economists applied rhetoric more seriously. It would allow them to discuss relevant economic issues such as introspection, experience or common sense that are currently ignored by the received view (p. 513).

Shortly after, Klamer illustrated the point made by McCloskey in *Conversations with Economists* (1983): economics is about arguments, debates and persuasion. Klamer analysed the different economic opinions of leading economists, concluding that they build their theory on different basic claims, different theoretical arguments and even different empirical arguments. Klamer concluded that there are major differences of opinion in the field of economics with respect to the analysis of what "is". None

of the arguments are strong enough to resolve differences of opinion (Klamer, 1983, p. 244): 'Just as there is no definitive theoretical argument there is no definitive empirical argument.' The consequence is an ongoing economic debate. Economic disagreement seems structural. Economists thus need rhetorical skills (Majone, 1989, pp. 36–7; Theeuwes, 1997, p. 94), and rhetorical analysis offers insights into the differences between their opinions and arguments. Klamer and McCloskey have pushed their argument for a rhetorical perspective further in a number of books and articles: McCloskey (1985, 1992, 1994), Cordes et al. (1993), van Dalen and Klamer (1996) and Klamer (2001, 2007).

Also scholars in the field of management science show sympathy for rhetorical and dialectical approaches. Alvesson and Kärreman (2000), Barry and Elmes (1997), Boje (2001), Czarniawska (1996, 2004) and Morgan (1986) advocate different narrative approaches as a means of analysis. Putnam and Failhurst (2001) have investigated a number of discourse-analytical approaches in organization theory. Kolb and Putnam (1992, p. 319) argue that the existence of negotiations between organizations, or managers and employees, or within management teams are an argument to focus on deliberative processes within organizations. Huff argues for a rhetorical analysis of strategic change, since the 'strategy of an organization is rarely, if ever, non-controversial' (Huff, 1983, p. 167). Anderson (1983), Cheney (1983) and DiSanza and Bullis (1999) write about argumentation in organizational decision making.

Toulmin's analytical model is applied by Mitroff and Mason (1980, p. 336; 1981, p. 87) and Mitroff et al. (1982, p. 1392) to improve strategic decision making. Also Von Werder (1999) uses Toulmin to analyse the arguments supporting two strategies of Daimler Benz in Germany. He found that the argumentation for Daimler Benz to become an integrated technology group was not very rational. If the argumentation had been more balanced and deeper it could have prevented Daimler Benz from making a mistake resulting in big losses. Von Werder (1999, p. 674) claims that Toulmin has developed the most influential argumentation theory applied in recent management theory.

In the field of policy analysis there has also been awareness for rhetoric since the 1980s. Majone (1989), for example, is well known for his argumentative and rhetorical understanding of the policy process. Majone characterizes the policy adviser of governments or businesses, therefore, as a 'supplier of arguments' and a 'propagandist of values' (Majone, 1989, p. 34). A positivist/modernist adviser in the tradition of Robbins and Tinbergen would be offended by such a characterization. Majone claims that this provocative characterization is necessary to illustrate how an outdated methodology makes it impossible to discuss the benefit of the

subjective and rhetorical aspects of advice (1989, p. 35), and difficult to contribute to real life questions (Clark and Majone, 1985, p. 6). Majone (1989, p. 40) adds that rhetorical aspects in policy advice are not harmful, but not discussing them is.

Fisher agrees in *Evaluating Public Policy* (1995). He refers to Majone (1989) as he elaborates on the deliberative character of the policy process (Fisher, 1995, pp. 17, 209). Two years earlier he and Forester edited *The Argumentative Turn in Policy Analysis and Planning* (1993). In it a number of policy scientists argue for a more deliberative approach in their discipline. In this book Dunn (1993, pp. 255–6) argues that the substantial logic of Toulmin can make sense of the policy process because it can assess both scientific claims and everyday knowledge.

Dunn criticizes the artificial border between everyday knowledge and the "superior" scientific knowledge in the context of policy analysis, like McCloskey (1983, p. 488). The distinction between scientific knowledge and ordinary or common sense knowledge is 'exaggerated and facile' (Dunn, 1993, p. 283). Dunn argues that the superiority of scientific knowledge is challenged by its inappropriateness to solve practical social questions. We are confronted with a paradox: the social sciences that 'owe their origins to practice rarely produce any knowledge that enlarges our capacity to improve that practice' (p. 255).

After *The Argumentative Turn* Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993), Hoppe and Peterse (1998a) and Hajer and Wagenaar (2003) edited books that continued the argumentative turn in policy analysis. The contributions refer to argumentation, deliberation and the process of persuasion. Hoppe and Peterse (1998b, p. 235) refer to Toulmin (1994) and Fisher (1995) for methodological backing of their analysis of political debates. They support a discursive approach because of the debate's ill-structured problems and because values, principles and motives are necessary to the discussion (Hoppe and Peterse, 1998b, pp. 222–3). More narrative approaches are practiced in the field of policy analysis, such as in *Dialogues of the Deaf* (1999) by van Eeten and *Narrative Policy Analysis* by Roe (1994). This list is by no means exhaustive, lending even more support to the claim that in management theory and policy sciences there is plenty of evidence to support Aristotle's claim that policy advice is a rhetorical genre.

EPISTEMOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS OF ADVICE ANALYSIS

Consulting is an activity in which personal valuations, experience and personal liability are necessary ingredients. An analytical approach

appropriate to analysing advice has to be sensitive to these knowledge elements and the epistemology behind this analytical approach should allow identification of elements like knowledge by experience or valuation, elements that should not be dismissed as unscientific beforehand. The question of epistemology thus addresses what kind of knowledge can be discussed in the context of advice analysis. A rhetorical analysis seems best suitable for this purpose: it allows discussion of all arguments, including those normative and personal, as well as ethos and pathos. The latter are sensitive to values and interests.

The purpose of this section is to discuss the epistemology of a rhetorical analysis of advice practices. First, I will discuss modernist approaches and the arguments of postmodernist and post-positivist authors disqualifying modernist and positivist epistemology. Second, I will investigate whether postmodernist analysis offers a satisfying perspective for advice analysis compared to the proposed rhetorical approach inspired by Toulmin, Habermas and older rhetorical and dialectical traditions within philosophy. Even though postmodernist critics make good points in questioning the rigor of positivist and modernist epistemology, their own implied epistemology is too limited to cover all human knowledge activities applied in consulting. The section concludes with a review of Habermas's post-positivist epistemological foundations of critical theory. This epistemological perspective is most suitable for advice analysis because it implies knowledge included in aesthetic and personal deliberation.

The Grand Narrative of Value Free Science Does Not Suit Advice Analysis

The ultimate purpose of modern scientific approaches is to serve as an unbiased mirror of the natural and social world. Rorty (1980) uses this popular metaphor extensively to characterize modernist science ideals. Postmodernists would describe this belief in true representation as one of the grand narratives of modernity. Modernism is a label for 'the received view' or 'an amalgam of positivism, behaviorism, operationalism and the hypothetico-deductive model of science' (McCloskey, 1983, p. 484).

Positivism as defined by Johnson and Duberley (2003, pp. 35–7) supports the modernist scientific belief of mirroring. According to these authors the meaning of positivism is broader than the "received view" of positivism as characterized by McCloskey. Their understanding also includes Popper's critical rationalism and interpretative and ethnographic approaches. I will not refer to the broad interpretation of positivism, but to the more common use of the concept in the "received view". I will label it the positivist/modernist approach as McCloskey does (McCloskey, 1983, p. 484) to distinguish it from the narrow meaning of "logical"

positivism and the broad definition of Johnson and Duberley. Economists who consider themselves positivists like Tinbergen or Robbins exclude ethnographic research from their "positivism". The positivism of economists does not meet the criteria of demarcation suggested by Popper either. McCloskey's definition of positivism/modernism is thus best in the context of my research.

Because of their objective character, positivist approaches have trouble discussing values and identifying problems. Clients or "normal people" should define problems or objectives; it is not the positivist scientists' task. In situations too complicated, clients ask for advice. They do not understand their problems; they are ill-structured or have conflicting values. When problems assume a real life character like this, the solutions of positivist/modernist scientists become feeble: 'If complex problems are most in need of good policy analysis, then it would seem to be the case that policy analysis, be it positivist, critical rationalist or analycentric in inspiration, is most helpless where it is most needed' (Dryzek, 1993, p. 223).

Even the extended conception of positivism as used by Johnson and Duberley cannot discuss the connection between knowledge and action, which is necessary in the context of advice. In advice, knowledge and action are connected by values: meaning and relevance of knowledge concerning the players with their specific interests must be uncovered. A client should be able to gain from the knowledge, and the consultant has to explain how. A positivist/modernist scientist would not go beyond analysis, since valuation or appraisal related to personal interests is the task of non-scientists.

In practice, the realization of a "problem" offers a first motivation to solve it. It brings about a sense of urgency to do something. After people experience a problem as such and its ensuing discomfort, they begin to address it. Consultants have to discuss the values that help identify problems and develop solutions that can be experienced as improvements.

Ethnographic and interpretative approaches that are part of the extended version of positivism can analyse the values that academic advisers and consultants apply in their work. Ethnographers try to be aware of their own values, interests and culturally influenced judgments. Ethnographic researchers, studying consultants and academic advisers, should be aware to what extent they identify with academic ethos and consultant ethos, because both can influence the interpretation of their findings. Ethnographic researchers try to use their self-knowledge to prevent biases in their research stemming from their own preoccupations, values and interests (Kloos, 1984, p. 114). Johnson and Duberley (2003, pp. 34–6) therefore argue that Rorty's mirror metaphor also dominates the scientific ideals of ethnographic researchers. Ethnographic research tries to describe

the world like it is, including values, but it does not apply values to suggest what should be done.

Consulting goes beyond the mirror metaphor, although the traditional economic view on advice has tried to redefine it so that it fits the modernist view. Analysis is important in consulting activities, but the ultimate intention is changing social realities and realizing new ones. Consultants are not decision makers like their clients, but they intend to influence a decision, often by means of influencing the client's appraisal of an existing situation. The epistemological perspective that supports advice analysis has to be able to make sense of these aspects of reality creation by means of analysis and valuation to prepare recommendations. Even the analysis is a means for the consultant to focus on those aspects that deserve most attention. A consultant analysis is thus explicitly not value free and a consultant contribution is political in the sense that objectives and preferences are subjects of discussion.

The imperative of the mirror metaphor prevents the academic adviser from consciously and openly discussing values in the socio-economic world to change or criticize them. Within the modernist framework discussion, explication and management of values that influence action are not part of scientific deliberation. As a consequence Berglund and Werr (2000, p. 646) claim that academics create a gap between activities that belong either to positive scientific analysis or to normative discussions of practitioners. Positivist/modernist scientists take no methodological responsibility for the interrelation between positive and normative considerations, but consultants do. Consulting is an activity that bridges the gap between positive and normative activities. However, the epistemological position of modernist science reduces advice to questions of instrumental rationality, which is a discussion of the means to reach a given end. That is at best a small part of the domain of advice. For this reason modernist approaches will fail to study economic consulting appropriately.

Postmodernism is Too Little Involved to Give Advice

The "grand narrative" of positivist/modernist science, which claims that it can tell a true and complete story about the world, is criticized in different ways by postmodernists like Lyotard (2001), critical theorists like Habermas (1989), pragmatists like Rorty (1980) and by Feyerabend (2002, p. 9), father of the notion of 'epistemological anarchism'. Their criticisms make us wonder if all scientists should present themselves as humble essayists, as Toulmin (1994, p. 1) states at the beginning of *The Uses of Argument*.

Postmodernists are more modest than positivists and modernists

regarding their knowledge claims. They argue against the creation of "grand" narratives. However, postmodernists remain traditional scientists in one respect: they also tell narratives about the world without intending to influence that world. They remain neutral and aim to understand. They argue that scientific understanding is a more complex task than modernist scientists believe. They also argue that the results of scientific understanding have a more local validity than positivist/modernist scientists suggest.

Lyotard has deconstructed or redefined the enlightenment ideals that still dominate our understanding of scientific theory. His analysis shows that science cannot meet the claim that it can represent a true and complete image of the world. Science is not like the "story telling" of grand narratives. Lyotard (2001, pp. 108–14) therefore argues for a narrative approach that does not claim to tell grand narratives. He argues in favor of explicit "story telling" instead of telling stories that result from SCIENTIFIC METHOD in capitals. A more modest narrative approach better tells of differences and ambiguities and can tell different stories with different perspectives because it does not claim universal validity. From this postmodern perspective a narrative approach based on common sense is not necessarily less adequate than telling "scientific" stories (Czarniawksa, 2003, p. 137). That is contrary to the positivist/modernist view, which values more highly scientific knowledge due to its scientific methodology and considers it more valid than common sense knowledge (Donaldson, 2003, p. 125).

Postmodernists share the assumption that story telling includes the social construction of reality. Social construction means that we only know our own theoretical construction of the world. Chia (2003, p. 111) even argues that it is commonly accepted now 'that reality, as we know it, is socially constructed'. The emphasis should be on "as we know it". This view assumes that the mirror reflecting the world has to be constructed. The mirror is not unproblematic; it is a human construct. This view, that reality "as we understand it" is a product of social construction, is credited to Thomas Kuhn (1976), Gareth Morgan (1986), and especially Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar (1986).

Kuhn (1976, p. 123) offered in 1962 the first strong argument to support the view of social constructivism with the publication of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. In his analysis of the history of physics he shows that the world as we understand it changes completely after a paradigm change. An example is the paradigm change that replaced the geocentric worldview with a heliocentric one. Our understanding and our perceptions of the world changed dramatically with its acceptance. As a consequence the world appears different before and after a paradigm change.

Kuhn has argued that science can be progressive in the end, but there

are more scientific misunderstandings, roundabout ways and dead ends than previously expected. Much scientific discussion is needed to identify dead ends as such. Kuhn argues that scientific development is not a linear, cumulative process. The dead ends are no less scientific than the most modern scientific convictions, nor are the modern scientific convictions less dependent on assumptions that cannot be proved in the end. Kuhn characterizes these assumptions as scientific 'beliefs' (Kuhn, 1976, p. 17). The work of Kuhn has had an enormous impact on philosophers of science and scientists. Even authors who still believe in a realist scientific approach and cumulative development acknowledge that scientific progress requires debate based on conflicting beliefs and opinions (Boal et al., p. 95).

We could question if Kuhn was already aware of the social elements that influence the acceptance of a new paradigm, but he certainly inspired Latour and Woolgar (1986, p. 24). Latour and Woolgar analysed the processes of social construction of reality in detail. They describe how scientific facts get constructed within scientific communities by means of craft, hard work, and a lot of persuasion (p. 31). Both authors criticize the explanatory force of the distinction between 'common sense and scientific reasoning' or '"thought" and craftwork' since these distinctions are a 'consequence' of a scientific construction of facts (p. 253).

During their research Latour and Woolgar found that the more a theoretical argument is proved as evident and certain, the higher its status as "scientific fact". The most certain and obvious theoretical facts or statements can remain implicit in most cases. Latour and Woolgar refer to these implicit theoretical claims as "type 5 statements", which implicitly refer to a certain relationship between two terms. We only need to refer to the distance of a flying object to the ground to make conclusions about the speed with which it will fall. Gravity can remain implicit, because everyone accepts it as a well-known scientific fact. Type 4 statements are as certain as type 5 statements, but have to be mentioned explicitly because they are less well known (p. 77).

Economic claims based on research or theory often lack the certainty of type 4 and type 5 statements. The implied causality of economic theory is often uncertain. Latour and Woolgar (p. 80) would classify many social science claims as type 2 or type 3 statements since they can rarely be presented as an 'objective fact of nature'. Type 3 statements refer explicitly to evidence for the statement found in previous research, backings which do not need to be stressed in type 4 statements. Type 2 statements explicitly refer to the degree of uncertainly or likelihood found in the research to establish a relationship. Type 1 statements are speculations or hypotheses (pp. 77–8).

Toulmin would not argue that the "fact" status of type 2 statements is

weaker than type 3 statements, but he would argue that the modal qualifier is different: type 3 statements are certain, type 2 statements are uncertain. The difference between type 3 and type 4 statements is that the modal qualifier implied in type 4 statements assumes certainty, but is not mentioned. Type 3 statements explicitly backing the claim is certain based on the presented evidence. While Latour and Woolgar nicely categorize how statements are accepted as facts, Toulmin's approach is more flexible with respect to the floating borders between the certainty and uncertainty of statements and the influence of backings, rebuttals and modality.

The epistemological consequences of the assumption that knowledge is socially constructed have even more impact in the social sciences than in the natural sciences to which Kuhn and Latour and Woolgar refer. Czarniawska argues that social construction of reality offers many management scientists a more attractive epistemology than the received view of positivism: 'In most cases, the organization scholars who study "social constructions" start from an assumption that people construct their point of view, opinions, representations etc. in interaction, and usually in conversation with each other' (Czarniawska, 2003, p. 129).

Czarniawska (2001) adds that it is most interesting to ask "how" people construct these views and she explores this question in detail in her article: 'Is it possible to be a constructionist consultant?' Czarniawska applies a postmodern rather than modern view on consulting. White and Taket (1994, pp. 737, 741) argue that a postmodern consultant should be less dominant as expert, less authoritative, less rational, and more creative, emotional and collaborative than the modernist consultant. However, the postmodern view of Czarniawska on consulting is different. Czarniawska acts as a constructionist consultant herself in her article, but she remains an academic, which makes her a postmodern academic adviser. Czarniawska reflects on her question by means of introspection and by interpretation of her own experiences.

Czarniawska (2001, p. 253) discusses the relevance of the construction metaphor for consulting. The metaphor seems promising at first, since consultants intend to contribute to the "construction" of organizations: their policy, their design or their internal processes. Czarniawska's (1988, p. 69) earlier characterization of consultants as 'merchants of meaning' could even support the expectation that consultants are active participants in the social construction of reality. However, the constructionist academic adviser in Czarniawska's article works differently (2001, p. 263). Czarniawska as consultant illustrates an approach in which the constructionist consultant keeps the distant and analytical position of the traditional academic who only tells "about" the world as a positive scientist. As a consultant she cannot go as far as her client asks her in helping, and not

as far as a management consultant would go either. Her postmodern but still scientific ethos limits her.

The constructionist project presented by Czarniawska aims at understanding and analysis, not at intentionally influencing processes that shape the social world. Constructionism fits into the rather analytically oriented postmodern project because it "reconstructs" and "deconstructs" meaning. Czarniawska (2001, p. 263) argues that a constructionist consultant does not intentionally participate in the client's process of meaning construction by arguing how he should look at his organization or by stressing what is of importance. Social constructionist consultants can question dominant or common interpretations to trigger new perspectives to look at the client's organization and its environment, but say nothing about what is good or bad, or about what to do. Czarniawska (pp. 258, 262) was explicitly asked to do so, but declined to step into that role.

Postmodernist approaches have a rich methodological background. They have integrated the findings of speech act theory, rhetoric and a discursive understanding of the social world, which is attractive with respect to analysing discursive and narrative practices of traditional consultants. Postmodern approaches are aware of the power of the stories and interpretations about the world and even of their social consequences, but do not like to act in this world. Their attitude with respect to what "is" in the world is critical, but they do not focus on discussions about a preferable social order. In that sense they do not (de)construct reality: it is only on the level of their understanding. Deconstruction of our superficial understanding of this world is not enough to participate or influence the world in a direct, transparent, and thus responsible way.

An epistemological perspective that fits the analysis of advice should enable a discussion about the consequences of knowledge for social action. It should enable discussion of explicit political objectives and interests in order to influence them. That goes beyond the type of postmodern analysis which remains within the borders of analytical activity and which has not developed the analytical tools that are necessary to discuss values or cultures with the intention to influence them. The required epistemology resembles more the postmodernist understanding of White and Taket (1994) as refered to above. The analysis of advice requires an epistemology that can acknowledge how we create norms, appraise and give advice.

Advice Analysis Needs the Epistemology of Critical Theory

For consultants the epistemology of critical theory offers a perspective to legitimate their use of local values, local knowledge and their rhetoric. The intellectual activity of consultants should be able to follow, understand

and guide clients, given their political or managerial responsibilities. If consultants and academic advisers work for similar clients with similar economic assignments, the requirements from the client side are similar. Because clients work in an everyday context the required knowledge should include more than technical or objective sources. There is a need to identify and critically discuss local values as expressed in the ethos of consultants. Advice analysis has to take that into account.

Habermas has developed an epistemological perspective to support the intellectual project of the Frankfurter Schule. Critical theory that stems from the Frankfurter Schule has to be able to discuss the most general moral values as well as the more local values of specific cultures and smaller aesthetic communities, and even personal values. Scientific or theoretical discussions always need to be related to these moral or even cultural questions, otherwise objective or neutral science can be misused like it was in Germany during World War II. Critical theory is therefore explicitly not value free, but socially engaged. Though consultants do not share the values and ideology of critical theorists, they feel socially responsible for their clients. This social engagement is an integral part of their intellectual activity. When consultants identify with the interests of their clients to help and advise them, they need the same epistemological foundation as developed by Habermas for critical theory. They thus share engagement to help and to influence the world purposefully.

Critical theory discusses existing values in the social world and is willing to influence them. The values of critical theory are integral to the research agenda, which implies that this epistemology does not consider values as a disturbing influence in the context of research, but a necessary part of it. Critical theory thus supports a design perspective that comprises more than the objective to apply science. Critical theory stresses the intention to change the world and to support the weak, for example, by means of advice. However, Buchanan stresses that it is a rare case that universities consider design questions part of their activities: 'Our universities are comfortable with basic research, and many institutions tolerate applied research. But only a handful of universities have begun to recognize production or "making" as a domain of significant problems and expertise that also requires investigation' (Buchanan, 2001, p. 194). This observation applies to the design questions related to social sciences.

Critical theorists criticize social constructionism because 'it shows how things are done without expressing an opinion on whether it is good or bad, and without offering a suggestion of how they should be better constructed' (Czarniawska, 2003, p. 130). This is different from the criticism critical theorists can formulate against consultants: that they take the wrong moral position by arguing the case of those who are able to pay.

Critical theory articulates its values explicitly, such as the support of emancipation and a strong resistance to repression (Alvesson and Deetz, 2001, p. 8). Compared to critical theory social constructionism only advocates analytical values. The moral domain that can be discussed is knowledge creation. Scientific analysis can be done badly or well. Social constructionism argues against the dominance of one method or the repression of other methods that are experience based or related to common sense. As a consequence the social constructionist consultant can give managers only knowledge as input to let them draw their own conclusions, which equals the assumed neutrality of the modernist/positivist point of view.

Habermas's epistemological perspective contributes to an outline for advice methodology better than both the positivist and the postmodern approaches. Like postmodernism it offers a broader concept of rationality and knowledge than the positivist/modernist traditions. It refers to theoretical and practical discourses, as well as aesthetic and therapeutic criticism as a means to reach local consensus about the social/cultural or personal realities discussed earlier in this chapter. Modernist/positivist approaches only stress instrumental rationality and try to prevent values and interests from disturbing the objectivity and neutrality of science. The epistemological perspectives of modernism and postmodernism both have difficulties with applying moral values and aesthetic judgments. These judgments are necessary for consultants because they want to influence, improve or redesign according to local values and interests. Discussion and use of values, norms and aesthetic judgment is a necessary part of consulting: clients ask consultants and academic advisers to discuss objectives and contribute to design questions.

The epistemological foundation that Habermas has developed to discuss values in the context of knowledge creation relies on Toulmin's analytical framework. His theory of communicative action assumes an epistemology that enables scientific discussions in a positivist and instrumental sense by means of arguments that point at regularity or causality, but communicative action also aims at consensus about ethical, political and practical questions by means of normative argumentation. That is necessary to make political and social involvement and engagement transparent. Even aesthetic and personal criticism can be discussed: arguments come from criteria or values that are dominant in a culture or personal relations. Habermas acknowledges with personal and aesthetic criticism fields of argumentation that have local and historical relevance (Habermas, 1988a, p. 41). A local or culturally defined and intersubjective consensus will be the highest truth level that can result from these deliberations.

However, the universalism in the moral approach of critical theory is problematic regarding advice analysis. Emancipation is a key concept in

critical theory and seen as a universal value. It is strongly associated with neo-Marxism in its ambition to influence the social world, to strengthen the "life world" and to criticize its colonization by the economic subsystem. For management consultants or policy advisers, there is no single ideological program like that of critical theory. Ideologies and morality differ between advisers, between clients and between assignments. Consultants may refer to local ideologies that belong to aesthetic discourse. These can be influenced by capitalistic ideals in the context of profit or environmental ideals if the client has green objectives. The consultant is an advocate of the client's interests, but he should also be his client's most astute critic, since a client can misunderstand his own interests. Often the client has a too local perspective, which can be harmful in the long run. Consultants do not have a general or universal ideology like critical theorists claim. Their view on clients' interests, values and objectives is usually somewhat more general though than the local perspective of their client, and so is their advice if both perspectives interact and result in a consensus.

The epistemological strategy developed by Habermas is already used by Fisher (1995, p. 228) in the context of policy evaluation. He takes from Habermas the enlarged concept of rationality and from Toulmin the dialectical perspective. Dryzek's proposal is similar (Dryzek, 1993, pp. 227–9). Because the domain of policy evaluation resembles policy and management advice when viewed from an epistemological perspective, the strategy seems promising for a more detailed application in the context of advice analysis.

4. Espoused theory of advice argumentation

Although consultants and academic advisers discuss the same economic questions, their approach will be different if their professional ethos is different. Ethos generates an image about the character of someone who speaks or writes (Aristotle, 1991, p. 1356a), which of course applies to consultants and academic advisers. Ethos determines a character that clients or audiences can recognize. Someone can have a truth-loving character, a friendly character or a helping character depending on the values she identifies with. Professional ethos therefore is the value system that guides the practice of professionals like consultants or academic advisers. The analysis of ethos can explain why authors prefer one approach over another by reference to the moral or scientific standards they identify with. Because values can explain what is important to a particular profession, they can also explain why academics consider consultant knowledge biased or flawed: consultants ignore some of the standards academic advisers identify with. Ethos can also explain why consultants do not heed these criticisms: consultants consider other values more important.

The previous chapters referred to academic debates about positivist and instrumental economic advice and to advice from a post-positivist perspective in the philosophical, rhetorical and social science literature. They presented arguments to doubt the appropriateness of the dominant instrumentalist view on economic advice. A next step is to ask practicing advisers about their professional values. How do consultants and academic advisers reflect on the way they support their advice with arguments? How should advice be written down? What kind of arguments should be used to support recommendations? Do academic advisers follow the instrumentalist approach of advice that aims to deliver usable expert knowledge? Do consultants prefer an approach that is more in line with the criticisms of this instrumentalist approach? Do they consider valuation part of their assignment? Do they use more lay knowledge and everyday experiences in their arguments than academic advisers? Are consultants more aware of the performative character of their speech acts? A comparison between the normative views of practicing academic advisers and consultants about

how they think they should do their work helps to uncover the ethos of both professions. This comparative analysis will show if academic advisers intend to follow the traditional scientific approach, and if consultants want to act differently. It may help to see why consultants and academic advisers do what they do. The approach is not critical, using academic standards to criticize the work of consultants, or applying consultant standards to review the work of academic advisers. That would result in accusations of charlatanism or irrelevant research. The purpose of this investigation is to present both professions as they like to present themselves.

Toulmin offers a conceptual framework that enables a rhetorical comparison of argumentation that also suits the unscientific argumentation practices of consultants. Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1992, pp. 4–6) characterize Toulmin's argumentation theory somewhat critically as 'anthropo-relativistic' due to its attention to human elements in argumentation such as authority, values or emotions. These human elements are, however, necessary to an analytical framework that includes the personal and aesthetic arguments that consultants apply in the consulting process, following Habermas's characterization of these local meta-fields of argumentation (Habermas, 1988a, pp. 38–45). The analysis in this chapter concentrates on five elements that can be derived from Toulmin (1994, p. 104):

- *The central claim*, which is the ultimate advice, judgment or conclusion presented by the adviser. Degrees of certainty and possible rebuttals pointing to exceptions or preconditions are parts of it.
- *The supporting grounds,* which can be normative statements or valuations and positive statements (data, assumptions). Grounds support the claim directly.
- *The supporting warrants*, which can be motives, values, criteria, principles, laws or theoretical arguments based on causality that establish the relationship between claim and ground.
- *The backings* of grounds and warrants used to justify or validate the arguments.
- *The presentation* of claims, grounds, warrants and backings that can be explicit or implicit in the argument. This is the rhetorical emphasis in the argument.

Toulmin does not mention presentation or emphasis as aspects in argumentation like the previous ones, but (1994, p. 100) argues that many aspects of an argument remain implicit in the course of a discussion or in a text. Choosing whether to make conditions of rebuttal explicit or to

mention a warrant is rhetorical. In practice arguments are rarely complete. If an author does not mention, for example, the theory or law necessary to draw a conclusion from some data, the author can be read as taking responsibility for this necessary step in the argument. To argue that it is dangerous to jump out of a second story window is usually unnecessary due to known frailties of the human body and knowledge of gravity. We can rely on common knowledge in such cases. It can remain implicit without weakening the force of an argument.

Relevant issues related to Toulmin's analytical framework are discussed by consultants and academic advisers, although not systematically. That both professions discuss the existence of rebuttals, the certainty of their claims, and the quality of their grounds and backings confirms that the analysis of argumentation describes elements in advice practice worthy of reflection. This rhetorical analysis can bring us closer to knowing why consultants are for clients more convincing than academic advisers, despite their different and according to academic standards "inferior" methodology.

This chapter investigates how consultants and academic advisers legitimize their own practices. The chapter's approach is romantic, because it does not tell what consultants and academic advisers do in practice, but only what they intend to do in an ideal case as expressed in their ethos. This normative or idealistic investigation will offer propositions or expectations about argumentation styles that can be compared with the performed advice practices of both professions as visible in their advice reports. The analysis of reports is the subject of the next two chapters. It should be noted, however, that advice practices as expressed in reports are different from the practice of clients or from the question if clients follow a recommendation. Advice practice tells us what advisers do, whereas this chapter is about their ethos as described in books and articles.

I choose for this chapter a research approach that stems from the humanities: a literature review. The method is familiar to consultants, if we exchange "reading" with "listening". It is like exploratory interviewing, starting with the interviewer's experience or knowledge, then testing and enriching views by asking questions. The "academic" difference is that this chapter interprets hermeneutically what consultants and academics have written about the ethos of consultants and academic advisers instead of discussing the subject personally as consultants would prefer.

The advantage of literature analysis over interviewing is that the previously written thoughts, experiences and reflections about the consultant profession have an objective and explicit character. They are not in flux and can be verified as sources. How experiences, reflections and views differ from each other has been written evenly. The main objective of this

review is to look for consultants' and academic advisers' expressions about their own consulting and argumentation styles.

The written sources are a series of essays edited by de Caluwé and Witteveen (2001a) in which consultants and academics discuss the theory and practice of consultants, relating it to the practice of academic advisers, pure academics or managers. Some authors are consultants in a consulting company, others are "pure" academics who reflect only on the practice of consulting, and the third group is hybrid: consultants with an academic life, or academics with consulting experience. Clark and Fincham (2002) are editors of a similar book called *Critical Consulting*. With one exception the contributors are "pure" academics. The book investigates the consulting profession mainly from Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian perspectives. Many other articles are published in academic journals about consultants. These academic sources are accompanied by a number of "how to" books about consulting and reflections on consulting written by consultants or hybrids such as Argyris, Ashford, Block, ten Bos, de Caluwé, Greiner, Kubr, Maister, Schön and others, some of whom are even known as "gurus". I also review articles and books about academic advice written by Bergeijk et al. (1997), Köbben and Tromp (1999) and in 't Veld (2000), among others.

CLAIMS IN ADVICE REPORTS

In advice reports conclusions tell clients what they can or should do, such as accelerate growth, invest in research or cut costs. Traditional ethos-following academic advice must be if-then advice, such as "if you cut costs, you will increase profit". A traditional economist like Tinbergen would stipulate that the client state the desire to increase profitability and the academic adviser then tells how to reach that end. The client decides on the need for profitability; the academic adviser should not discuss that objective. She makes the statement: "I know the means to reach your desired end. Give me your end, I will give you the means." Her advice is instrumental.

A consultant, however, does not follow this academic rule. His professional objective is not to be a neutral adviser but to help his client (Kubr, 2002, p. 7; Schein, 1990). An economic consultant could say that he finds reason to cut costs without having the objective stated by the client. In both cases cutting costs is the recommendation, but the consultant's advice to cut costs becomes a normative statement. It suggests a course of action without a client-stated objective. The recommendation is based on his interpretation of client interests: "it is good for you to cut costs"

or "you should cut costs". As soon as academic advisers forget to present their advice as a means, their advice becomes normative as well.

Brockriede and Ehninger (1960, p. 52) distinguish four different kinds of claims. Three of them are relevant to distinguish between the kinds of conclusions that can be made in the context of economic advice. The first is the *designative* claim, a positive statement which tells that something "is". The claim is neutral with respect to values and fits the academic ethos. Scientific claims tell us what is and are thus designative. The second is the *evaluative* claim, which is an appraisal based on a value judgment such as when consultants claim that costs are too high. The third *advocative* claim argues in favor of a course of action such as cutting costs, which makes it an advice claim. The *instrumental* claim, "if you want A, do B", is considered an advice claim by traditional economists, but remains a designative claim because it only presents a causal relationship, a statement of fact. Evaluative claims and advocative claims are usually not neutral with respect to values.

This subsection will discuss claims, their modality and rebuttals. If the style of argumentation should cohere to professional ethos, then the ultimate claim of consultants should be an explicit advocative recommendation. The claim of academic advisers should be instrumental if-then advice based on designative claims that establish a value-free if-then relationship. They prefer to conclude what "is" where consultants are also willing to conclude what "ought to be".

These different claims can, however, have degrees of certainty, which is a second point of attention in this section. This qualification is the modality of the claim, since modality is expressed in terms of certainty or probability. Given the different views on advice expressed by consultants and academic advisers, do they address the modality of the conclusion in the same way? The focus on statements of facts could make academic advisers more aware of modalities. Consultants, aiming at helping clients, could consider it less helpful to paralyze action by stressing uncertainties.

The last question in this section is if consultants and academic advisers refer to the same kind of rebuttals. Rebuttals are counterarguments such as exceptions or conditions that may undermine a conclusion if not taken care of. What kind of exceptions and conditions are addressed by consultants and academic advisers? We would expect that consultants, with their practical involvement and close client relationship, would be more aware of practical conditions that should be satisfied to make a recommendation work, whereas academic advisers will likely focus on more general conditions that follow from their theoretical assumptions.

Claims: Advice or Conclusion?

Theory about advice states that academic advisers like to present useful and instrumental knowledge. Consultants like explicit and tangible advice regarding means or ends. For example, consultants could recommend that an organization needs more flexibility and consequently recommend decentralization. Academics assume the client already knows the organization needs more flexibility. They thus ask, "what should we do to increase the flexibility of our organization?". In that case the academic adviser can present three alternatives to help the organization realize the objective: decentralize, reorganize or outsource. He could also identify the most economic alternative, for example, "if you want more flexibility, outsourcing is the most efficient alternative". How do practicing consultants and academic advisers reflect on these theoretical views, and how do they discuss them?

Academic advice: based on useful knowledge and independence

Academic ethos bars influencing or discussing the objectives behind an assignment. The client defines the knowledge needed; the adviser delivers it. Academic advisers therefore intend to be neutral suppliers of useful general theory expressed in designative claims. They want to apply theory, but do not want to discuss more than that. They refer to the benefits of specialization to legitimize their focus on positive questions (Stiglitz, 1998, p. 52). They acknowledge, however, that the degree of specialization cannot be like that of the pure academic (Bergeijk et al., 1997, p. 3; Frey and Eichenberger, 1997, pp. 28–9).

Managers or policy makers have to make their own decisions based on the information they asked for, due to this division of labor. If decision makers are given useful information that meets the requirements of the assignment, but have no clue as to how to properly use it, a traditional academic economist who gives policy advice would not feel responsible to help. He only feels responsible for delivering the relevant causal relations that determine the means to reach the desired end in if-then advice; it is the client's responsibility to apply the general knowledge to the situation.

Academic advisers will, therefore, judge their research by academic criteria inspired by methodological discussions and references to relevant theory and research. All appropriate theories should be mentioned or applied. From an academic point of view the analysis should be sound, even though the criteria for applied research or policy advice may differ from pure academic research (van Hoesel and Leeuw, 2005, p. 7). If the analysis is weak, so might be the conclusions and recommendations. Frey and Eichenberger illustrate this academic attitude critically by referring to academic policy conclusions which 'are unspecific, short, not backed by

empirical analysis and moreover rather unconnected to the wealth of theories previously expounded at length' (Frey and Eichenberger, 1997, p. 36). Kieser (2002, p. 222) compares the rhetoric of academic advisers and consultants, concluding that academic advisers' recommendations 'can be very vague and general'. But if their recommendations are 'as precise as those of consultants they necessarily over-interpret theory'.

Action research is an alternative academic advice method. It resembles consulting to some degree (Kubr, 2002, p. 56). It influences the subjects of research by confronting them with research findings. Those subjected to the research have to draw their own conclusions, of course, but by intensively considering knowledge about themselves, the relevance of the results has a better chance of becoming apparent. However, it is an exceptional approach for academics that has a low reputation among social scientists because it gives up scientific distance.

Academic advisers like in 't Veld appraise scientific distance and independence, which implies invention and defense of their own analytical criteria (in 't Veld and Verhey, 2000, p. 116). If not, it is an offense against the moral principles of scientific practice. Academic advisers want to follow their own methodological standards. This professional integrity is conditional compared to the objective to help a client. Academic advisers have to take care of their reputation in the academic community: 'The economists I have known, including myself, who have found themselves in this position place great weight . . . on maintaining their reputation with their peer group' (Peacock, 1988, p. 5). Pure academics are also not attracted to contract research because the practical questions of clients are often too specific and too context dependent to arouse international attention (van Dalen and Klamer, 1996, p. 253). Peter van Baalen adds that academics preferably write for their scientific colleagues. Working for a client does not contribute much to an academic career while taking much time and energy (van Baalen, 2001, p. 54). Rarely is it possible to use the results of academic advisers' advice for international publication.

The independence of academic advisers has its negative side effects, such as the focus on theoretical elaboration as criticized above by Frey and Eichenberger. In the Netherlands the Overlegcommissie Verkenningen, an academic committee dominated by professors with the task to evaluate economic research, has pointed at the ivory tower practice at economic (business) faculties of Dutch universities. The committee stresses the importance of empirical- and experience-based knowledge about the economy. In their recommendations they argue that PhD students should gain more practical experience. They also recommend that universities enable part-time professors to have a career outside the university (Overlegcommissie Verkenningen 1996, p. 74). They dislike the

assumption that ivory tower research is the only interpretation of independent research. Also economic policy advisers fear that fundamental economic research will lose its meaning to them if its orientation becomes more international and less focused on the Dutch economy (van Dalen and Klamer, 1996, p. 248).

When Dutch academic advisers compete with consultants, they even stress their critical, scientific attitude and the independence of their research (Köbben and Tromp, 1999, pp. 22–3). Though like consultants they work for clients, they are ashamed of identifying with what they consider the commercial attitude of consultants. They do not want to tell clients what they want to hear to keep a profitable relationship, which comes close to selling snake oil (McCloskey, 1992, p. 36). This resembles the academic characterization of consultants as charlatans, which is definitely not what academics want to be as advisers. Van Hoesel and Leeuw mention similar differences between academic research and commercial research by policy researchers (van Hoesel and Leeuw, 2005, pp. 7, 10). They also argue that the latter feel more compassion for the needs of clients than academic advisers.

The anthropological research by Köbben and Tromp (1999) and the evaluation of policy research by in 't Veld and Verhey (2000) both confirm the concern for independence in an academic environment. Nevertheless, the studies of these academics with experience as academic advisers are rather critical about the practical meaning of academic independence if academic advisers work for clients (Köbben and Tromp, 1999, p. 175; in 't Veld and Verhey, 2000, p. 117).

Köbben and Tromp investigated 70 cases of research in different academic disciplines in which both consultants and academic advisers were involved. They suggest that academic advisers are more independent than consultants in some cases, but only to a limited degree. Their most important conclusion is that clients influence both consultants and academic advisers substantially (Köbben and Tromp, 1999, p. 23). In those cases, however, academic advisers have more problems with their ethos. Their thoughts should not be influenced by anyone but research authors, ongoing debates in the discipline and valid scientific arguments.

Consultants seem better accustomed to the game of influencing and being influenced. They even explicitly try to influence their clients with normative or political advice, also against academic ethos. Academic advisers are rather unwilling to accept the rules of this game of mutual influence; they consider it wrong or bad in the context of academic advice. Consequently they have little talent in playing the game, perhaps making them more vulnerable than consultants. In a social context the academic claim of independence is thus problematic. Clean hands, independence

and distance imply little contact with the client's position and needs, which also means that they get less information from their clients, and probably even biased information as Schein (1990) argues. Consultants listen to a different morality that encourages a close relationship with the client.

The involved and explicit consultant approach

Consultants want to stay close to their clients. One explanation is that their involvement helps them to gain relevant and reliable information (Schein, 1990). Even Pinault (2000, pp. 81–2), a critic on the morality of consultants as a former consultant, underlines the importance of a close client relationship as it lends the best opportunity to help. The intention to help implies a social attitude and a social concern. Jackall therefore characterizes a consultant as 'an expert who trades in others' troubles' (Jackall, 1989, p. 140). Bolweg argues that consultants intend to 'partner' with clients (Bolweg, 2001, p. 193) and Batelaan refers to them as 'co-entrepreneur' (Batelaan, 2001, p. 195). Clark (1995, p. 71) adds that consultants consider the relationship between consultant and client together with their reputation the most important factors to get new assignments from a client. Ashford claims that: 'Once a relationship has been built, it should be maintained at all costs' (Ashford, 1998, p. 101). At that point, however, the consultant's idealistic approach risks becoming opportunistic.

Van Luijk, an academic with a scientific interest in consultants, mentions seven words that characterize the ethos of consultants. One is 'responsibility' (van Luijk, 2001, pp. 266–8). He describes consultants as guides in uncertain situations, where codes to act are rare. Consultants thus run into many unique situations that open up possibilities to take responsibility. They are asked to give suggestions for action, which have to be expressed in advocative claims. No one can push it, but clients hope to get a good suggestion, a critical question or a new perspective. It is part of their ethos of involvement that consultants then offer their help, and even try to recognize unasked questions.

Maister, Green and Galford stress that earning trust is an important competence of consultants. An adviser has to be trusted by his client, the most important precondition to get the necessary information to come up with valuable advice and to get recommendations accepted. Maister and colleagues summarize it this way: 'We learned that you do not get the chance to employ advisory skills until you can get someone to trust you enough to share their problems with you' (Maister et al., 2000, p. ix). Maister and colleagues present techniques to earn trust, but these will only work if a consultant cares about a client (Maister, et al., 2000, p. 60). Block underlines that consultants have to be authentic to be trusted:

'Authentic behavior leads to higher trust, higher leverage and higher client commitment' (Block, 2000, p. 38).

Schein argues that awareness of a client's interests and intentions is a crucial element of process consulting. Clients know they have a problem, but often are unaware of the real causes. Their first need is to understand the problem and the real demand for advice (Schein, 1969, p. 4). After client and consultant mutually frame the assignment, the process moves on to collaborative analysis. Clients must be helped to analyse the problem and develop a solution. Schein argues it is better to solve the problem this way than to offer a solution that clients do not understand or cannot accept for its consequences. An expert consultant often gets disappointed clients, he argues, even though diagnosis and advice are right, because clients were not sufficiently acclimated to a new understanding of their situation. The new understanding is necessary to motivate new decision making (pp. 5–7).

Process consultants argue that it is important that clients remain the problem owner. Though advice has to be useful, it is not enough. Usefulness has to be accomplished by enforcing the client's self-esteem (Feltmann, 2001, p. 150). Consultants therefore have to assess the degree of dependency a client can handle and how willing they are to share their problems to decide which kind of consultant contribution is most helpful. More mature consulting professions such as clinical or social psychology have long acknowledged the problem of dependency (Schein, 2002, p. 21). Within them ethical codes to decide what kind of help is most appropriate are further developed than in consulting. Schein argues that consultants also need to develop ethical codes to be trusted and rewarded in the long run. They are preconditions for their work, which should be cared for.

Compared to academic advisers consultants are therefore more involved, more engaged and they have no intention to be neutral. They formulate their advice with awareness of their clients' needs and interests, being as specific as they can. Consultants interpret information from the perspective of the clients' interests, their stakeholders and the situation at hand. That kind of interpretation is in addition to theory and, in the ethos of a consultant, explicit and open to discussion. A client should be able to reject the interpretation or use it as inspiration to see a different one. Boonstra underlines this point, arguing that it is part of the job of a consultant to 'make things explicit' (Boonstra, 2001a, p. 254). Van Luijk calls it 'transparence' (2001, p. 266).

A client is free to follow or ignore recommendations, and tangible advice that is not followed can incidentally give a helpful orientation. When consultants make the criteria for their evaluations explicit, clients can bring in other perspectives, or omit some criteria to legitimize their own decision. Even rejected recommendations can help if the analytical

preconditions and values underlying them are transparent and explicit (Mason, 1969).

Hoebeke, a consultant, argues that clients' critiques of recommendations are part of the process of acceptance, since it is part of the process of integrating the recommendations into their business, strategy or frame of mind. Some uneasiness between consultant and client serves to see that the recommendations are taken seriously (Hoebeke, 2001, p. 279). Even if recommendations are accepted, consultants argue that a client has to transform advice into good advice, a process Feltmann calls 'poetic' (2001, p. 140). The client has to regard the advice as helpful and good for the organization. Before poetic interaction can take place, the adviser has to surprise or challenge the client to arouse creative participation (p. 149). The more explicit and transparent the advice, the easier this kind of interaction is.

This critical interaction often even starts in the the contract phase. *The McKinsey Mind* authors Rasiel and Friga claim that clients sometimes do not understand their problems (2001, p. 17). A consultant must correct this, because uncritical acceptance of the assignment will inevitably lead to frustration on both sides. Block, for example, advocates rejecting wrongly designed assignments: 'say no as often as you say yes . . . be careful when the client has expectations that you cannot fulfill' (Block, 2000, p. 324). Consultants know that help can mean opposing clients. It requires well-developed social skills and sensitivity to retain a client relationship as he acquiesces to the consequences of the opposition.

Consultants' criticisms reach the social level, because clients' interests are guiding (Feltmann, 1984, p. 242) and the criticisms can even be directed to clients' values. A consultant can oppose a client, for example, by arguing for a change in timeframe, profitability, stability of an objective or regard for stakeholder interest. This requires explicit evaluative statements. With these statements a consultant tries to change the perspective of clients, to motivate a change of action. Cummings and Worley (2005, pp. 157–8) mention tactics such as creating a sense of urgency, or stressing the discrepancy between the current and desired state. Consultants thus often try to influence the views and values of their clients.

Although both consultants and academic advisers are external advisers, they make use of their outsider positions differently. An academic adviser uses this position to be an independent and neutral informational expert. A consultant needs the outsider position to critically discuss interests, preferences and objectives. When consultants use their outsider position to be 'impartial' it is more like third-party or judicial impartiality than the neutrality of the academic adviser who aims at unbiased fact generation (de Caluwé and Witteveen, 2001b, p. 15). Van Luijk argues that consultants try to be 'all-partial' (van Luijk, 2001, p. 266).

Consultant involvement implies that they are attuned to the interests of clients and their stakeholders. Consultants identify with the interests of these different parties, be they management, labor union, employee, customer or government to argue that clients take care of stakeholder interests if they need the relationship. The outsider position of academics implies neutrality with respect to these interests; the traditional consulting economist identifies with the role of an independent expert. Neutrality means not discussing these interests. Ten Bos therefore argues for consultants to 'abandon the distinction between fact and value' (ten Bos, 2000, p. 22). In that sense he considers them postmodern characters. The academic adviser is a more modern character.

The differences in ethos translate in a preference for more evaluative and concrete advocative advice claims by consultants compared to more neutral, designative and general conclusions as academic advice.

The Modality of Claims

Modality is the degree of likelihood or certainty attributed to a claim. The more certain a recommendation or conclusion is, the stronger the implications for action are. If an advocative claim, suggesting some action, is presented with uncertainty, the client may doubt acting on the recommendation. An uncertain designative claim, describing a state of affairs, could signal concern with the certainty of the description. What is the attitude of academic advisers and consultants regarding the certainty of their claims?

Academic advisers strive to certainty

Stiglitz argues that policy advice based on economic science could improve by explicit recognition of uncertainties: 'Too often, that has not been the case' (Stiglitz, 1998, p. 39). Angner (2006, p. 18) contributes to the same proposition by addressing the overconfidence of academic advisers. The quality of their economic advice could improve by stressing uncertainties. Though these authors stress the importance of indicating the uncertainty of findings or predictions of academic advice, they also argue that academic advisers do not take this academic principle as seriously as they should.

To meet academic standards, research questions have to have relevance for a longer period of time and should relate to existing academic theory (Weggeman, 2001, p. 115). Pure academics strive for conclusions that will hold for at least several years, better yet for decades or even centuries. Consultants like to be rewarded by clients for giving advice appropriate to a specific situation and like it if their advice is discussed in the media

because it is an indication of its relevance. Ten Bos characterizes this opposition as the 'granite truth' of scientific research versus the 'fashionable' or superficial knowledge of consultants (ten Bos, 2001, p. 29). This superficial knowledge also claims a much lower degree of certainty. The granite truth of science indicates a preference for a high degree of certainty.

Weggeman (2001, p. 116) argues that the knowledge academics prefer has to be generally valid and certain. That conflicts with research for clients in a dynamic environment. Regularities and predictable routines often have to be changed then to meet new demands by finding a new strategy, a new design or a change in organizational processes. Pure academics have professional difficulty dealing with change. Unique and unpredictable situations are beyond their knowledge horizon; they are too uncertain often.

Twijnstra et al. (2002, p. 19) also refer to the dynamics of the environment, its complexity, and the difficulties in predicting change and the time constraints that conflict with the needs to acquire sufficient certainty. Schön (1983, p. 49) therefore stresses the tension between 'rigor' and 'relevance' of knowledge. The two often conflict, because relevant knowledge often does not meet the criteria of rigor or certainty, and rigorous or certain knowledge is often useless in a practical context, for example, because it is not available at the right time, or because the knowledge is too general. Kubr makes the same observation (Kubr, 2002, p. 58). Allen (1977, p. 50) and Thomas and Tymon (1982) also address that time pressures in practice are quite severe compared to fundamental academic research.

Consultants value timeliness over certainty

Consultants are trained to make judgments that focus more on the possible benefits of recommendations than on the certainty of their claims. They try to choose the best alternative given the likelihood of positive and negative effects. The degree of certainty of most of these claims is too low to satisfy academic standards, but with the help of these estimates clients feel better prepared to make their decisions. Alvesson and Johansson (2002, p. 233) therefore argue that consultants take pride in being professionals who 'know better' than the client. They see themselves as technical or process experts who help a client from a state of 'uncertainty to a state of harmony and security' (p. 239). Fincham (1999, p. 339) even argues that consultants create a sense of uncertainty by addressing problems in order to get their solution better accepted. The solutions reduce the created uncertainty. That is what consultants have to offer.

Sturdy (1997) argues likewise. He characterizes consulting as an insecure business in which consultants help managers deal with insecurities by offering them a sense of control and creating new but controllable uncertainties (Sturdy, 1997, p. 397). Consultants present themselves as

confident, certain in their approach and "in control" in order to be of value to their clients, but Sturdy (p. 405) questions this bravura. He assumes that consultants have to experience a feeling of uncertainty themselves caused by the pressure to resolve so many uncertainties. This concern nicely illustrates Sturdy's own academic view.

To change economic situations they have to be influenced in a timely context and within the timeframe that consultants have to act. Van Luijk (2001, p. 263) therefore argues that consultants are change agents in a changing environment. The time constraint has consequences for the kind of knowledge that is useful. Within months their recommendations can be outdated. The faster consultants present their conclusions, the better.

Scientific generation of knowledge often takes too long, a reason that consultants do not value scientific knowledge highly in their work. McKinsey alumni Rasiel and Friga describe how McKinsey consultants cope with the context of uncertainty, change and complexity. The approach they advocate is a mixture of intuition and information to develop hypotheses as fast as possible (Rasiel and Friga, 2001, p. 22). Good contacts with and active involvement of the client are mentioned as useful, but sometimes inefficient in terms of time (p. 169). While client involvement is not critical to problem solving, it is to acceptance. Acceptance alone, however, is not enough; it is more important that consultants give their advice in time. In the context of time pressure Rasiel and Friga therefore prefer expert over process consulting.

Van Baalen (2001) mentions uncertainty as a feature both in the work domain of academic advisers and consultants, but their strategies for dealing with uncertainty are different. Academics look for assertions of general validity. The consultant's focus is instead on building a good reputation (van Baalen, 2001, p. 70). As a consequence academics have little to say about something as uncertain and complex as management practice. Uncertainty conflicts with the general validity academics stand by, and so they often remain silent. Consultants can say more, as long as this does not harm their reputation.

Kieser (2002) agrees with van Baalen. He argues that academics cannot give advice to reduce uncertainty or that strives to a state of harmony because they cannot believe in 'unfailing recipes' (Kieser, 2002, p. 222). This expression of skeptical ethos illustrates that academic advisers are uncertain about their own advice as well, supporting the expectation that their advice will be cautious and conservative compared to consultants' advice.

The ethos of consultants focuses on the chance that their solutions reduce uncertainty, whereas academic advisers prefer to stress uncertainties as long

as certainty is out of reach. Their self-criticism underlines this preference, but not necessarily such a practice.

Different Attention to Rebuttals

If conclusions or recommendations are rather certain, as academics prefer, their force can be limited by exceptions or necessary conditions that have to be satisfied to make the claim valid. Such exceptions and preconditions are the rebuttals in an argument. Many, like uncertainty, can weaken a claim. If the claim suggests a course of action, rebuttals can address situations such as bad market conditions that would undermine the proposed strategy's success. Given the different approaches of consultants and academic advisers, we expect attention to rebuttals to be different as well. What does each profession consider the proper treatment of rebuttals?

Academics' struggle with theoretical rebuttals

There is some academic awareness for the importance of addressing theoretical rebuttals in academic advice. Stiglitz (1998, p. 51) argues that academic advisers should mention factors that may undermine an economic policy. Too often economic policy advisers make *ex post* rationalizations for the failures of a policy, instead of discussing necessary conditions in advance. Stiglitz therefore claims that academic advisers can improve their advice by mentioning rebuttals explicitly. Weggeman (2001, p. 112) adds that *ceteris paribus* conditions of economists are attractive to theoreticians but not to those who use theory in practice, because these conditions are not explicit enough for the practioner. Angner agrees that consulting economists should make their *ceteris paribus* conditions more explicit. They can improve the quality of their advice by arguing why and when their conclusions may be wrong: 'What would it take for their predictions not to come true? How many ways are there that things can go wrong?' (Angner, 2006, p. 18).

For Argyris awareness of *ceteris paribus* conditions is not enough, since there are more relevant conditions. Argyris criticizes the applicability of causalities and generalizations that are the result of scientific research in general. Argyris (1996, p. 392) differentiates between rigor in the context of theoretical legitimization and rigor in the context of designing or changing organizations, as consultants intend to do. Generalizations or theories have to be actionable in the setting where they were found as well as in the setting where they are applied. Most academic theories are not rigorous 'in the context of creation' because they are vulnerable to changes in research conditions. The rigor of social science theory often only holds in a theoretical or experimental context. As a consequence this theory is then only

applicable in the exceptional situation, where all conditions are in practice as they were in the research setting. When does that happen?

A scientific theory only has practical relevance if it tells users how to create the conditions necessary to make the theory work. Argyris therefore argues that traditional ideas of theoretical rigor do not suffice (p. 396). For that reason it is necessary that academic advisers make explicit under what conditions their theory-based recommendations may work, or how the necessary conditions can be realized. From these academic self-criticisms we can conclude that academic advisers are aware of theoretical rebuttals like *ceteris paribus* conditions, but that they have great difficulties with making the rebuttals explicit that make their recommendations actionable.

Consultants' eye for the particular

Argyris and Schön, who both combine academic work with consulting experience, argue that it is important for consultants and academic advisers to explicitly say how preconditions can be realized to make a theory applicable in practice: 'The generalizations should inform the user not only what is likely to happen under the specific conditions but how to create the conditions and actions in the first place' (Argyris, 1996, p. 392). Schön criticizes the academic model of technical rationality because of the many situations that may undermine the quality of resulting solutions: 'Increasingly we have become aware of the importance to actual practice of phenomena – complexity, uncertainty, instability, uniqueness and value conflict – which do not fit the model of technical rationality' (Schön, 1983, p. 39).

Unique situations do not follow general rules. They are the "exceptions" that can be addressed by a rebuttal. "Instability" can be rephrased as "changing circumstances", which can undermine the applicability of a *ceteris paribus* theory and thus the quality of decisions that stem from the model. Schön is thus well aware that decisions in practice depend on the existence of rebuttals:

> When professionals consider what road to build, for example, they deal usually with a complex and ill defined situation in which geographic, topological, financial, economic, and political issues are all mixed up together. Once they have somehow decided what road to build and go on to consider how best to build it, they may have a problem they can solve by the application of available techniques; but when the road they have build leads unexpectedly to the destruction of a neighborhood, they may find themselves again in a situation of uncertainty. (Schön, 1983, p. 40)

The argument that supports the conclusion to build a road could be completed with a rebuttal "unless it harms the neighborhood". Evidence

that the road will harm the neighborhood indeed weakens the conclusion to build it. Rebuttals often stem from "externalities" beyond the scope of one academic discipline. Consultants are trained to consider everything relevant, whatever discipline it belongs to. Economic consultants thus consider relevant political or social issues, even when they are not specialized in these fields. If these issues interfere with the economic principles that support their argument, they have to take them into account according to the standards illustrated by Schön.

The reason for this focus on rebuttals is that consultants try to realize practical change (van Luijk, 2001, p. 263). Academics, on the other hand, usually try to minimize their influence on the subject they investigate. Influence is seen as disturbance of what has to be investigated; academics try to investigate a situation as it is. In order to realize change consultants have to be aware of rebuttals that may interfere as illustrated by the following quote about them: 'When asked about the main contribution of the consultant, a recurrent response from the project group members was that he directed the process, avoided pitfalls as irrelevant discussions, and ensuring that nothing important was missed' (Berglund and Werr, 2000, p. 644).

Room to improve advice based on academic theory by paying more attention to rebuttals is ample. Academics are trained to focus on rebuttals that stem from theoretical limitations in the discussion section of their papers. However, in their recommendations they fail to discuss *ceteris paribus* conditions sufficiently in their argument. Consultants show even more skepticism than academic advisers regarding the use of academic theory in practice. However, their main concern is that their recommendations work in the end. That makes awareness of rebuttals with practical impact very important to them.

The ethos of consultants asks them to pay attention to practical rebuttals related to their advice, in order to realize change. Academics argue that they need to be more aware of practical rebuttals in their recommendations. Their attention is mainly limited to theoretical rebuttals.

GROUNDS OR EVIDENCE TO CONCLUDE FROM

There are few situations in which a conclusion or advice can stand on its own. It would require absolute authority of the consultant or academic adviser. Advice reports, because they present the underlying research, pay attention to the argumentation behind the recommendations. Grounds are the most direct support of a conclusion. They answer the question: 'What

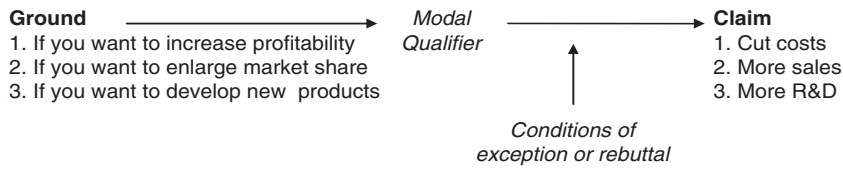

Figure 4.1 Grounds in an argument from effect to cause

have you got to go on?' (Brockriede and Ehninger, 1960, p. 45). Why follow the advice, for example, to cut costs, accelerate growth or invest in innovation?

An adviser could argue that unnecessary costs must be cut (claim) to increase profitability (ground) or a client has to accelerate sales (claim), if she considers it important to enlarge market share (ground). In another situation research and development is necessary (claim) to develop new products (ground). Figure 4.1 presents these three grounds and claims. All are arguments from effect to cause in a means-end relationship. It is an example of the causal argument that supports the instrumental if-then advice of economic advisers in the academic tradition supported by Tinbergen.

Means-end argumentation as well as other forms of advice argumentation can have a number of connected arguments that support and enrich the final advice. The character of these arguments can be diverse, identifying "how" costs can be reduced, "what" costs could be reduced or "to what degree" cutting costs is acceptable. Rebuttals might be that development of new products stay within certain costs, or the "conditions" under which they have to be developed.

Grounds can be positive facts or values. Consider the statement: profitability depends on costs. It is based on positive facts, since costs and profit are dependent by a universally accepted definition. The claim to cut costs based on the ground that costs are too high is different. The ground is then a value statement. If the claim is supported by both a factual argument and a value statement, the breadth of the argumentation increases. That happens when more grounds support a claim directly. Depth of the argument increases when grounds are supported by more detailed subgrounds in chains of argumentation. The longer the chain is, the deeper the argument. How do consultants and academic advisers use the different grounds, such as positive and normative arguments, and what preferences do they express regarding the breadth and depth of argumentation?

Positive or Theoretical Statements

Research used to formulate advice does not generate much durable knowledge as required by academics, because a changing, unstable situation is often the subject of research in consulting. This dilemma prompts Schön to argue for a discussion about the epistemology of practice. The scientists' "art" is of little use to understanding economic practice in a way that helps improve it: 'The dilemma of rigor and relevance may be dissolved if we can develop an epistemology of practice which . . . links the art of practice in uncertainty and uniqueness to the scientist's art of research' (Schön, 1983, p. 69).

Schön differentiates knowledge like Aristotle (Aristotle, 1985, pp. 1139a–40a). Aristotle makes a distinction between science, which he describes as the knowledge of general principles, and practical knowledge (phronesis) resulting from economic or political deliberation that is based on experience. Practical reason is a specific capacity to the human mind that enables it to deal with changing situations, possibilities and uncertainties. Some principles of science can be part of these practical deliberations, but experience is its most useful component (p. 1141b).

Following this distinction we can expect that consultants prefer grounds that are observable and experiential. They may include impressions, personal valuations and local or aesthetic knowledge. Academic advisers, on the other hand, prefer stable and timeless grounds that meet the criteria of scientific rigor. Do consultants and academic advisers acknowledge these assumed preferences for grounds in their own reflections? It would imply that consultants and academic advisers not only give different kinds of advice, but also support their advice in quite different ways.

Positive grounds in academic advice: a specialized and academic argument

The production of facts about the real economy does not seem the biggest concern of academic economists: their greatest joy is being published, a necessity to the success of academic economists. The research by van Dalen and Klamer (1996) showed that only 36 percent of economists at educational and research institutes imagined that thorough knowledge about the economy is *very* important for an academic career compared to 53 percent of economists working in the profit sector (van Dalen and Klamer, 1996, p. 269). Recent Dutch and American PhD students were even more extreme than university staff. Forty percent of Dutch PhD students considered thorough knowledge about the economy not important, and only 12 percent considered it *very* important. The results of Klamer and Colander (1990) in the USA (summarized in van Dalen and Klamer, 1996, p. 272) showed that 68 percent of the responding economic PhD

students considered thorough knowledge about the economy not important; only 3 percent considered it *very* important for an academic career. We can conclude from the Dutch and American PhD students' answers that knowledge about the economy is not necessary to complete a dissertation or publish in academic journals.

Latour and Woolgar (1986) performed an anthropological study in the late 1970s and found results similar to van Dalen and Klamer concerning the academic valuation of knowledge. They investigated the concerns of academics working in a medical institute laboratory specializing in fundamental research. They found that these academics strove for credit in terms of recognition, money and research facilities given by the institutes they worked for (Latour and Woolgar, 1986, p. 201), usually earned by good publications and arguments based on scientific data. Academics thus primarily work for scientific recognition. Consequently they have little incentive and opportunity to leave the theoretical world: they have to manifest themselves in the field of theoretical discussion (Weggeman, 2001, p. 115).

Academic advisers are less involved in scientific publication, but they follow the traditional positivist approach of fact generation by controlled observation. Research generates hypotheses first and tests them second (in 't Veld and Verhey, 2000, p. 120). Academic advisers practice this traditional approach, which is their comparative advantage over consultants. Their strength is that they are better trained in gathering data and performing statistical tests. Having more time for reading theory within their academic specialization is advantageous to developing hypotheses. The disadvantage of this academic approach is that life must wait until scientific facts are produced.

However, academic advisers with post-positivist sympathies show some respect for non-scientific experts like consultants. They acknowledge that the traditional academic adviser is hampered by the limitations of the positivist/modernist approach. Knowledge of non-scientific experts can be used in addition to traditional scientific methods. In 't Veld and Verhey (2000, p. 122) argue that this is an approach which implies a shift from scientific testing to social or 'democratic' control inspired by concepts such as 'lay knowledge' and 'citizen science', a view also advocated by Pröpper (1989, p. 91), who argues that scientific evaluations that aim at inspiring action have to be integrated with non-academic knowledge and non-academic judgments before the implied advice can be accepted and policy-making conclusions can be drawn. It is a criticism, however, that can rarely be met by academic advisers while embracing positivist/modernist science ideals. In 't Veld gives consultants credit for their more generalist and common sense-based approach, which takes arguments from many fields.

Though the positivist academic tradition has somewhat eroded, most academic advisers still seem to prefer their specialized approach with a depth of argument, believing that it guarantees rigor.

The phenomenon of academic specialization has some drawbacks. Van der Ploeg (1992, p. 93) criticizes the tendency to specialize at the academy in the written version of an inaugural lecture. He argues that his teaching commitment should be more broadly defined as "political economy" instead of "macroeconomics". In the latter case he cannot teach microeconomics, econometrics or other related subdisciplines, because they are "other" disciplines. Bergeijk and colleagues criticize specialization of academic economists in the context of economic policy: an 'economic practitioner has to be a generalist. Policy problems of modern society are so complex and academic specialization has gone so far that a team of specialists would probably become unmanageably large' (Bergeijk et al., 1997, p. 4).

Frey and Eichenberger (1997, p. 27) therefore criticize the common belief among economists that specialized economic knowledge is useful in the context of economic advice. Pröpper makes an even more critical statement (Pröpper, 1989, p. 91), arguing that the traditional scientific approach is extremely limited, focused on specific details, and thus far away from the variety of practical considerations that can influence action.

Consultants' postive grounds: experience based and eclectic

Consultants act like their clients in a changing world and they make recommendations for clients to deal with uncertainties. Science is unable to answer these practical questions wholly; it can answer parts of the question with economic theory and methods of scientific investigation. Practical questions are too concrete, uncertain and interdisciplinary to be left to academic advisers. Kubr therefore seems to agree with Aristotle and Schön: 'It is knowledge and practice of skills . . . that set the consultant apart from the academic theoretician. The techniques may be acquired in part by studying research findings and publications but, more particularly, they will be developed by experience' (Kubr, 1978, p. 35).

In Kubr's 2002 edition of *Management Consulting* this dichotomy is not denied, but less accentuated. Kubr aims to integrate consulting with academic research just as medical practitioners make use of academic science. The project has not been quite successful until now: 'It has not been possible to overcome fully the traditional dichotomy between the practically oriented consultant, committed to producing tangible results for the client, and the professor-researcher' (Kubr, 2002, p. 57).

What are the consultant skills to meet irregularity, new issues and

non-routine situations? Argyris argues for an approach where 'individuals write or speak by advocating, evaluating and attributing in ways that are illustrated, encourage inquiry, and are easily tested' (Argyris, 2000, p. 99). The approach is open to criticism and any other kind of feedback. Argyris (p. 240) therefore argues that consultants have to develop the competence of making non-discussible topics discussible: it is the best way to remain alert in a dynamic environment.

Compared to these consultant skills, scientific knowledge does not always add to a better understanding: 'When the challenge is greatest and we need it most, far too much advice is often weakest and most misleading.' In so saying, Argyris (p. 9) criticizes the worth of "theories in use" applied by various advice givers. Theories in use will do in routine situations, but often fail in the non-routine situations that are replete in economic practice. Application of these theories in use results in 'skilled incompetence' (p. 6). It results in knowledge about the world as it "was", which prevents advisers from viewing the world that comes into being. The problem is that knowledge of regularities in the past can obstruct the understanding of non-routine situations.

Consultants partly rely on experience, but they are also eager to produce "facts" to make their argument. They are eager to present the quality and seriousness of their fact production. Their use of the word fact is different from academics however. Van Eekelen and de Caluwé (1996, p. 312) found that consultants 'produce and present facts' when interacting with clients and consultants 'structure information' when doing deskwork. The authors identified these activities among others during a week of close observation of senior consultants.

Consultant textbooks also address the issue of fact generation. Greiner and Metzger (1983, p. 31) stress that consultants' knowledge skills should include the ability to generate valid questionnaires. They should also master different interview techniques to generate knowledge. Greiner and Metzger even argue that consultants should be informed about ongoing academic discussions. Twijnstra et al. (2002, p. 150) support Greiner and Metzger, arguing that 'good information is necessary' to draw useful conclusions. Consultants often interview and read internal documents to inform themselves about the organization of a new client. Peter Block (2000, p. 189), Kubr (1978, p. 123) and Schein (1969, p. 97) devote at least a chapter to the issue of the data gathering necessary to formulate recommendations or develop an intervention plan. Skovgaard-Smith (2008, pp. 135–7) observes 'fact-finding' by consultants as a means to document, proof and illustrate their claims.

Former McKinsey consultants Rasiel and Friga (2001, p. 50) stress the importance of facts as well. They argue that since the company's inception

in 1923, McKinsey consultants have been obsessed with supporting advice with fact-based analysis. Rasiel and Friga claim that in most businesses the daily decisions lack rigorous fact-based support. Therefore consultants should support their claims by at least three good supporting facts (Rasiel and Friga, 2001, p. 60), which is an argument for sufficient breadth of argument as well. The authors disapprove of looking for data because they are interesting, calling it 'playing around' (p. 36). With this they argue against the research attitude of academic advisers and the role of 'mental adventurer' as characterized by Nees and Greiner (1985, p. 77).

Although consultants like facts, the way they produce them differs from academic practices. Fact production starts when consultants interact with clients, make observations, read documents, perform interviews and the like. Academic researchers and consultants themselves consider this kind of fact production "quick and dirty". Consultants legitimize their approach by the importance of having their grounds in time (Rasiel and Friga, 2001, pp. 37–8). With this approach they can discuss everything. They do not restrict themselves to a certain branch of expertise or if they do, the boundaries are much wider than academic specialization. Compared to academic advisers they prefer a generalist approach, drawing arguments from many fields. Therefore research by consultants is 'eclectic' (Weggeman, 2001, p. 116), 'trans-disciplinary' (in 't Veld and Verhey, 2000, p. 122), or 'interdisciplinary' (van der Aa, 2000, p. 26). Their research and subsequent recommendations must solve practical and concrete questions. Sometimes research has to be both economic and sociological, or is social science in an even broader sense.

Schön argues that consultants often have to deal with a 'situation in which geographic, topological, financial, economic, and political issues are all mixed up together' (Schön, 1983, p. 40). That requires an interdisciplinary approach. Consultants thus willingly step from expert into other roles and willingly integrate different fields of expertise in an eclectic way. Argyris reflects on his effectiveness as a consultant in helping managers: 'Managing means creating intended consequences' (Argyris, 1996, p. 402). To realize that, he argues that:

> A theory of managing should include all the relevant disciplines. Examples of these disciplines are the functional disciplines such as accounting, economics of the firm, finance, human resources, information technology, marketing, operations and research and development. Ultimately we must find ways to integrate these disciplines with the ones focusing on the human side of the enterprise. (Argyris, 1996, p. 403)

Argyris warns that integrating disciplines does not imply the objective of completeness. He refers to authors whose 'relatively complete model'

was 'too complicated for practitioners to use in every day life' (p. 402). Mason argues likewise in an article about dialectical consulting:

> Often the expert planner is an economist. The economist (as is true of practitioners in any discipline) by virtue of his training and perspective, abstracts and considers only certain aspects of the total planning problem (e.g. "costs", "benefits", "efficiency") . . . Management has the broader responsibility of determining the organization's plan from all points of view – social, political, psychological and cultural to name a few. (Mason, 1969, p. B407)

Consultants' eclectic approach offers more possibilities to look for inconsistencies by comparing the results from different sources of knowledge. Consultants can better triangulate knowledge because they accept more sources as valuable, such as results from different disciplines, their own research, experience, observation, their clients' views and their professional intuition. These many sources contribute to a greater breadth of argument.

Ethos of consultants welcomes breadth of argument and many kinds of relevant grounds including experience, whereas academic advisers prefer rigorous fact production related to academic specialization.

Normative Statements and Personal Valuations

Advisers can be asked to develop alternatives in the form of, for example, strategies or policy options. These alternatives have to be valued on various norms or criteria. Norm setting, and valuation with the help of these norms, are thus part of policy arguments (Majone, 1989, pp. 23–8). The assessments of alternatives serve as grounds in an argument to identify the best alternative. How do academic advisers respond to the requirement to assess alternatives, seeing that the activity should be left to clients according to their ethos? How do consultants reflect on this aspect?

No explicit valuation by academic advisers

Traditional academic advisers can investigate the economic means to solve client-identified problems, but do not define objectives or identify problems because it would require explicit normative judgments; that is the client's task. The only values that may be used in an argument have to be non-controversial. An example of such valuation is required in cost-benefit analysis, where it should be non-controversial what the (social) costs are and what the benefits are.

The tension that can result from a strictly neutral attitude with respect to values and interests can be found in the case presented by Czarniawska

(2001), which was introduced in Chapter 3. She documents an experience where she was asked to give advice, which was not appreciated in the end. After this experience she reflected on her work as academic adviser: an opportunity to analyse her approach. In her reflections Czarniawska describes that she presented in her report exactly what the client had done, but in a way that provoked anger. She was insensitive to the client's concerns and did not integrate these values in her report. Her advice was that the client present a more Western, business-minded, modern 'image' in communicating with clients – precisely what her client had seriously tried to do. Czarniawska's presentation was too 'frivolous' and 'not serious enough' according to her client. The client felt as if his real concerns about errors in the structure of the organization were not taken seriously. The client also needed good arguments with respect to problems with his stakeholder relationships (Czarniawska, 2001, p. 262), but did not find them in Czarniawska's descriptions, because she did not want to go beyond the existing situation in her advice on communication. She analysed the communication process from a perspective the client was unfamiliar with. She left it to the client to find his own way after her reconstruction. Although Czarniawska's approach was postmodernist or constructionist (as she characterizes it), it fits the model of academic advice in one respect: a neutral, descriptive investigation of a situation as it is, not as it should be. Czarniawska's approach of academic advice was insensitive or neutral to valuation, and even explicitly unwilling in this respect.

Academic advisers such as Blaug or Peacock are critical about the neutral academic approach, but they have not yet developed an academic alternative to formulate or discuss valuations or interests critically. Their argument implies that such a method should be developed in economic consulting (Blaug, 1980, pp. 133, 150–2), and that academic advisers are in a position to do so. Peacock (1992, p. 1217) even fears losing credibility if academic advisers cannot discuss values and assessments. In the context of assignments they thus feel that the activity is required, but it conflicts with their neutral academic approach. This approach cannot claim to be value free, but also does not discuss values openly.

Some examples of consultant valuation

A SWOT analysis requires valuation: the internal analysis assesses strengths and weaknesses (SW) and the external analysis identifies opportunities and threats (OT). Both activities imply valuation. The confrontation phase has valuations too: deciding whether the strengths can be used to realize opportunities and whether weaknesses have to be repaired to defuse the threats. Kubr (1978, pp. 150–6) argues that consultant

valuations in a SWOT analysis can be personal and subjective, as well as based on some kind of measurement.

Minto (1995, p. 164) refers to valuations in examples of consultant assignments. She mentions the valuations 'not adequate' or that 'should be updated' regarding an information system. It illustrates the kind of normative statements that support an advice claim. The normative statement must motivate a client to repair something that is inadequate. Likewise consultants create a sense of urgency by stressing problems or bad performance in order to motivate change (Cummings and Worley, 2005, pp. 157–8).

De Caluwé and Witteveen (2001b, p. 11) claim that consultants try to arouse the right 'emotion' by 'exaggeration', 'distortion' or 'mercilessly' confronting clients with their limitations. To argue that something is a "limitation" requires a normative statement in which a capacity is valued as inadequate. "Exaggeration" and "distortion" can be used to show that a situation does not meet the norms required for a successful performance. Without exaggeration a client can deny problems that the consultant believes deserve attention. Using Habermas's categorization these are aesthetic discussions based on local norms and values as long as they are professional and not personal. Criticisms that address personal integrity, credibility or authenticity are therapeutic in Habermas's classification.

The ethos of consultants leaves room for appraisal and norm setting, which translates in the use of explicit value statements as grounds. Academic ethos and method do not support discussion of value statements.

WARRANTS SUPPORTING NORMATIVE OR POSITIVE CLAIMS

Warrants are statements that confirm the connection between grounds and conclusions. Distinguishing grounds and warrants, however, can be hard: similar statements can serve as either ground or warrant (van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 1992, p. 4). The warrant answers the question: 'How do you get there?' (Brockriede and Ehninger, 1960, p. 45), In other words, how do you get from your grounds to your conclusion or what makes your grounds relevant to the conclusion? If the argument is that research and development can contribute to product development, the warrant guarantees that research and development contributes to product development, that there is a causal relation between the two. In a classic example the claim "Socrates is mortal" has the ground "Socrates is a human being." That will satisfy most of us. To make the soundness of

Table 4.1 Warrants that can support normative or positive claims

Claims:	**Designative**	**Definitive**	**Evaluative**	**Advocative**
Substantive warrant				
A. Cause	X			
B. Sign	X			
C. Generalization	X		X	
D. Parallel case	X	X	X	X
E. Analogy	X	X	X	X
F. Classification	X		X	
Authoritative warrant	X	X	X	X
Motivational warrant			X	X

Source: Brockriede and Ehninger (1960, p. 53).

the grounds explicit, we add "Human beings are mortal." That is a warrant since it makes explicit that Socrates belongs to the class of "mortal human beings": an argument from classification.

There are different ways to connect grounds and claims. Table 4.1 from Brockriede and Ehninger (1960) gives an overview of eight popular warrants in relation to the kind of claim they can support. The columns give the kind of claims, the rows the kind of warrants. An explanation of the warrants follows the table.

Consultants are accustomed to advocative claims with which they can tell what a client should do. That kind of claim identifies the character of recommendations. Consultants also use evaluative claims when they appraise worth, identify problems or assess opportunities, threats, strengths, weaknesses and so on. Designative claims are the academics' or scientists' specialty; they state what the case is. Consultants also make these claims as a result of their analysis, but within a more common sense approach. Definitive claims are rare in the context of advice, because definitions are used but hardly established in applied research.

Warrants characterize the argument. The argument from 'cause' is illustrated in the previously stated means-end argumentation: "You need R&D if you want to develop new products." An argument from 'sign' is a symptom of some deeper attribute. A high body temperature is a sign of fever, but raving can also be such a sign. Rieke and Sillars (2001, pp. 163–4) argue that theoretical constructs like 'fear' or 'attitude' cannot be observed. Therefore it is necessary to refer to signs. They mention increased heart rate as a sign of 'residual arousal to enjoyment,' and refer to survey research where the sample is a sign for the whole population. What Brockriede and Ehninger (1960) call an argument from 'generalization' is

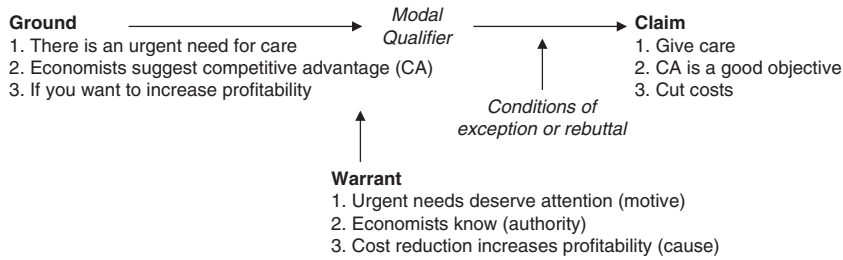

Figure 4.2 Warrants in an argument

also known as the argument from induction. The warrant states that many indications of regularity establish the conclusion that there is regularity. The argument from 'classification' works the other way round, and is also known as deductive argument. In the Socrates argument mentioned above, it is argued that Socrates belongs to the class of human beings. The arguments from 'parallel case' and 'analogy' are similar. In the parallel case similar events or situations give rise to the expectation that what happened in the first case will happen in the second case. The argument by analogy is not historical but refers to common relationships between two pairs of items. Not everyone distinguishes parallel case from analogy (van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 1992, p. 97). The six mentioned warrants are substantive warrants, addressing characteristics of the outside world. The arguments are often and sometimes exclusively used to support designative claims.

The second type of warrant is authoritative, referring to the source of the ground for a conclusion, as in the argument from authority. Its strength is closely connected to the ethos of the author. This argument is normative if it supports evaluative or advocative claims, but can also be used to claim the truth of an observation or to legitimize a definition. The argument from authority has the same broad application as the arguments from analogy and parallel case: they can support every kind of claim. The argument by authority is visible when consultants refer to expert opinions.

The third type of warrant is motivational, referring to values, desires or interests of the audience. The argument is closely connected to pathos and is always normative since it can only support evaluative or advocative claims. It is popular among consultants, but forbidden for traditional academic advisers when motivations are local or personal. Only in the case that the values or criteria in an argument are uncontroversial do academics feel free to apply this kind of argument. An example is the positive attitude of neoclassical economists to market coordination.

Figure 4.2 illustrates three kinds of warrants in an argument. The

warrant that "urgent needs deserve attention" supports an advocative claim to give care. The warrant is a motivational argument since it refers to what we consider important. The second claim is evaluative: an objective (ground) is appraised as "good" since an authoritative argument legitimates the objective. The profession of economists is the authority. The last example refers to causality in an instrumental means-end advice.

The list of warrants identified by Brockriede and Ehninger (1960) is not exhaustive. Benson, et al. (1995, p. 1646) refer to it, but go into more detail and choose a slightly different categorization. Perelman (1982) distinguishes over 25 different types of arguments, which partly overlap with the categorization by Brockriede and Ehninger. Neutelings (1996, p. 198) and Schellens (1985, pp. 68–70) use a somewhat different taxonomy of arguments, arguing that it is relevant to look at pragmatic arguments and arguments from example since they are often used in practice.

A pragmatic argument is a complex argument. It identifies alternatives, estimates effects of the alternatives, evaluates consequences and concludes which alternative is most desirable. It integrates designative statements based on argument from cause (effects of alternatives) with evaluative statements (attractiveness of alternatives) and advocative claims (the recommended alternative). This kind of argument often supports decision making. Consultants can develop the whole pragmatic arguments for their clients, neutral academic advisers can only contribute to the designative parts.

Since "positive" or "neutral" claims belong to academics' field of research (Johnson and Duberley, 2003, p. 37), they will use warrants that help establish designative claims, which excludes the motivational argument. We would expect academic advisers to often refer to arguments from cause since they can be based on theory. We would expect consultants to often use the motivational argument in order to support advocative claims. They will more often use arguments from authority (expert guess) to support positive statements. These warrants will not satisfy academic advisers because they do not provide the certainty needed to make their contribution to decision making "scientific".

Warrants that Support Positive Claims in Advice

Rieke and Sillars argue that academics prefer the argument from cause, followed by the argument based on induction (argument from generalization), the argument based on deduction (argument from classification), and the argument from sign, which is often used in the social and human sciences (Rieke and Sillars, 2001, p. 160). Warrants such as the argument from parallel case or from analogy and even the argument from authority require

knowledge that is less explicit. These arguments can be problematic in a scientific context. Consultants are less critical with respect to the scientific character of warrants. They have a more rhetorical or pragmatic point of view and use the arguments they consider most convincing. Do consultants and academic advisers make these preferences explicit in their reflections?

Theory-based warrants of academic advisers

Academic advisers who were members of the Dutch Overlegcommissie Verkenningen have criticized the ivory tower approach of academic economists. The Overlegcommissie Verkenningen is tasked with evaluating the quality of applied economic research in the Netherlands. They claim that fundamental economic knowledge of causal relations is used in applied economic research and academic advice. They consider the value of fundamental economic research as 'self-evident' (Overlegcommissie Verkenningen, 1996, p. 24), but do not give this claim empirical support. Its truth is questionable in the view of consultants and critical academics such as Argyris or Majone. Nevertheless, academics with an interest in applied (business) economic research prefer advanced mathematical modeling, are more familiar with sophisticated statistical tests in empirical research and like theoretical reflection (Kieser, 2002, p. 209; Portes, 1997, pp. 49–50; Weggeman, 2001, p. 11).

Consultants with an interest in academic methodology criticize that kind of academic research in the context of advice because most of the generalizations academics produce are not 'actionable' (Argyris, 1996, p. 392): the causal relations indentified in economic or whatever social theory do not hold in practice because the conditions under which the causal relations were found often cannot be rearranged in practice. That makes an argument from cause based on theoretical warrants unconvincing: predicted effects do not occur.

Ten Bos (2001, p. 29) argues in addition that academic theories are not fashionable, which implies that they stay too far away from the dynamics, on the 'surface', of economic realities. Academic advisers, on the other hand, are dissatisfied with this minimal theory approach of consultants because of their theoretical standards. They acknowledge that economic reality is complex and argue it has to do with the many causal relations in social science. This complexity takes time to disentangle. Academics strive nevertheless to develop and apply theory since they believe it contributes to the literal or true description of some economic reality (Kieser, 2002, p. 215).

Jacquemin (1997) gives some examples of economists successfully involved in antitrust cases. They influence the debate about concerted practices and mergers with economic theory. Many of them acknowledge,

however, that economic models alone should not be used to make a decision. Jacquemin (1997, p. 132) therefore concludes that: '"experts" involved in a case are expected to be modest'. A workable approach means: 'combining "science" and pragmatism, relying on presumptions and shortcuts that reflect current economic knowledge and beliefs'. Although academic advisers stress the relevance and impact of economic theory in practice, they acknowledge that these theoretical arguments need to be embedded in a more pragmatic and common sense understanding of what happens in economic reality. In addition there is some debate about how advanced academic theory can be and still remain applicable in practice. Frey and Eichenberger (1997, pp. 18, 27) argue that it is only first-year economics, but Portes (1997, p. 51) disagrees, by arguing that practice often demands specialized and tailor-made theories. Frey and Eichenberger also criticize the use of theory in relation to the conclusions. They argue that conclusions 'are rather unconnected to the wealth of theories previously expounded at length' (Frey and Eichenberger, 1997, p. 36), which implies inadequate use of academic theory as warrant.

The consequence of the academic approach is that academics prefer to support designative claims with facts embedded in solid theoretical warrants, be it first-year theory or more specialized or advanced theory. Arguments from cause are thus most popular in academic advice. Some academics acknowledge that their theory does not cover all client questions. They have no official answers to how to treat the realm of unanswered questions, but it seems they modestly accept the pragmatism of their clients. Maybe some are even willing to adapt in the direction of the pragmatic consultant approaches. That strategy, however, has yet to enter their reflections.

Consultants use many kinds of positive warrants

Consultants can use economic or management theory as a point of departure for a case that requires advice. Like Morgan (1986) in *Images of Organization*, Twijnstra et al. (2002, pp. 154–6) argue that consultants should use and compare many theoretical models and perspectives, because there is 'no universal model or theory' to support advice claims. The complexity of advice has to do with the many interdependent causal relations that characterize social phenomena as well as the many interests and interpretations of the parties involved. Consultants should thus analyse their material from different perspectives to interpret their cases.

Consultants have no ambition to develop theory that meets academic standards; they often consider academic theory unhelpful in practice. De Caluwé and Witteveen stress that consultants are confronted with a reality

that is too dynamic and too complex to develop advanced and general theories. They characterize them as 'minimal users' of theory. If consultants use what they consider theory, their simple models are minimal theories as well (de Caluwé and Witteveen, 2001b, p. 15).

Feltmann (1984, p. 72) aims at developing a 'practice-theory', which is less general than academic theory, but still a helpful characterization of the reality consultants have to cope with. Consultant theories are models like the BCG (Boston Consulting Group) matrix or the 7S model developed by McKinsey (Peters and Waterman, 1984, p. 10). A book published by the Dutch consulting firm Berenschot presents 60 management models in consultant style (ten Have et al., 2004). These models do not claim the kind of validity of academic theory, although many of them are also presented in international academic management textbooks such as Johnson and Scholes (2002) or in national academic management textbooks such as Keuning and Eppink (2004).

Consultant models claim to summarize the most important aspects of an organization. Problems related to these aspects may "cause" trouble. The models often have the character of a checklist that has to be filled with data from an organization. They enable an argument from parallel case, since they summarize experiences with relevant aspects of an organization or market, which will be relevant in new cases as well. The argument from parallel case also applies when consultants refer to best practices and benchmarking. If they develop models they use the argument from example based on different experiences, but not necessarily large samples to support a generalization. The argument from sign applies when consultants make a 'diagnosis' based on signs (Twijnstra et al., 2002, p. 156).

Rasiel and Friga (2001, p. 38) address the limited use of theoretical models that meet academic standards. 'Business,' they argue, 'is no exact discipline like physics'. Therefore 'a scientific level of exactitude is even counterproductive for management decisions'. The reason is that too many interdependent variables are involved. Indeed, exact modeling of parts of the economic world is impossible. Rasiel and Friga argue that such pretensions are misleading. As a consequence scientific models that discuss single economic causalities are of little use. McKinsey consultants like Rasiel and Friga would probably be most in favor of the use of scientific models among consultants, since McKinsey prefers consultants with a PhD in physics or other natural sciences. McKinsey is also a proponent of "expert" consulting, but even these well-educated consultants consider scientific standards problematic in the context of consulting.

Some academics reflecting on the profession of consultants share this vision. They point to the limited relevance of academic theory in the practice of consulting. Majone (1989, p. 3) argues that many questions relevant

to consultants are even unanswerable by science; they are trans-scientific. He also criticizes the ambition of very high standards of precision as a pitfall (p. 59), like Rasiel and Friga.

Weggeman mentions three other reasons that explain why scientific theory is of limited use for consultants: (1) consultants are not consulted when academics develop their theories; (2) the theories that academics develop are too simple to be helpful in the complex practical contexts of consulting and (3) there is much evidence that the more rigorous academic theories add little to the understanding of consultants because the results are so trivial (Weggeman, 2001, pp. 111–12). Weggeman also acknowledges the relevance of basic concepts such as Porter's five forces influencing the degree of competition in a market, Kotler's marketing Ps and the BCG matrix in consulting. They are useful 'memory aids' and consultants use them to give their work a touch of objectivity, a means of legitimization. They can argue that one of the Ps (product, place, price or promotion) needs more attention. If not, it will "cause" bad marketing and lower sales. Weggeman describes the consultant position as devoted to practical relevance. As a consequence consultants often consider the use of more advanced academic theory 'a waste of time' (Weggeman, 2001, pp. 114–16). Boonstra adds that applied economic research is too abstract or 'highbrow' for consultants. Therefore it is not applicable in a real debate with a client. Often experience offers better arguments than theoretical knowledge (Boonstra, 2001a, pp. 252–3).

Consultants are skeptical of using academic theory in an argument from cause. They use the argument from cause, but not based on sophisticated academic theory. Consultants also do not take the validity of academic theories for granted (Argyris, 1996, p. 393), such as discussed under their use of rebuttals, since too many conditions cannot be fulfilled often. Thomas and Tymon (1982) mention problems with operational validity. Consultants thus prefer causalities that are evident or understandable from a common sense perspective. Only in special cases will they refer to basic academic theories to assume causality.

Consultants refer little to theory in their causal argumentation and they accept many other substantive and authoritative warrants. Academic advisers intend to apply the warrant from causality based on theory.

Motivational Warrants in Advice

Motivational warrants refer to values, norms, criteria, motivations, desires, interests and so on in order to support the connection between ground and claim. Evaluative judgments like "there is an urgent need for change" or

"efficiency is too low" can support recommendations, but that is on behalf of motivational arguments like "low efficiency has to be repaired" or "a need for change has to be answered by a change". These normative rules can be applied in a motivational argument, but they often remain implicit. If the argument is that efficiency is too low, the conclusion that change is needed seems obvious, since low efficiency conflicts with profitability. The conclusion is then implicitly supported by a motivational argument. Explicit use of motivational warrants fits a consultant's ethos, but does it align with the ethos of the traditional academic adviser? How do the professions reflect on their use of motivational warrants?

Academic advisers avoid motivational warrants

If academic advisers refer to motives in economic advice they 'pay respect to the preferences' of their client (Overlegcommissie Verkenningen, 1996, p. 23). They do not critically discuss these preferences to influence them in a direction they perceive more appropriate. They remain neutral in this respect, as advocated by traditional academic economists such as Hennipman (1977, p. 89), Robbins (1952, p. 150) and Tinbergen (1956, p. 1). Academic advisers use client preferences or objectives as argument inputs. They look for arguments and theories relevant to these preferences or objectives, since the data and theories have to fit the client's interest. So they keep their neutral position of knowledge providers. The only exception is when they bring in non-controversial value statements (Blaug, 1980, p. 129).

In 't Veld and Verhey support the neutral academic position in academic advice, acknowledging that 'values' may only influence the demand for and use of knowledge by clients (in 't veld and Verhey 2000, pp. 114–15). Clients are thus in the position to ask academic advisers to support specific conclusions with more evidence. Clients may also ask an academic adviser to discuss or criticize the claims or conclusions they do not like. Academic advisers may defend positions in which values, norms and motives of their client dominate, but they have to take the preferences as given. The client has to define the research question. This advice fits the 'purchaser-provider model' (Pellegrinelli, 2002, p. 344) but has problematic aspects and even conflicts with a truly neutral and unbiased approach, because academics cannot criticize unbalanced client valuation or strategic definitions of a research question, for example.

The neutral approach of academics is problematic in practice, because clients have many opportunities to undermine the neutral contribution of academic advisers. We could even expect academics to be vulnerable to some of the manipulations of clients. They can ask to focus on the uncertainties that undermine a painful conclusion. They can also ask for

research that supports a contested conclusion. Both activities fit academic ethos, but if an assignment is thus defined, academic advisers are trapped. If clients feel uncomfortable with some findings they can demand that advisers ignore them. In 't Veld and Verhey (2000, pp. 114–15) claim that this process of ignoring results often starts after the process of knowledge production. Frissen (2000, p. 59) argues that it starts with the definition and the redefinition of assignments. Köbben and Tromp (1999, p. 16) argue that these debates arise the moment academic advisers try to publish.

Academic advisers prefer to be knowledge workers, rather than value debaters. They consider discussing normative issues another profession. They prefer the division of labor that enables them to concentrate on knowledge production. Norms, preferences and objectives can only be input in academic advisers' "if-then" advice. The usefulness of distinguishing between means and ends or positive and normative questions was earlier criticized by authors such as Anderson (1983), Clark and Majone (1985), Majone (1989), Kirzner (1976) and Weinberg (1972). Given these tensions between the positive science ideal and the demands of practice, we might wonder how academic advisers argue in their reports. Can they distinguish the values of their client, on the one hand, and their own positive research, on the other hand? We have to remind ourselves of these questions in order to discuss them in the next two chapters.

Consultants use norms, values and motives as warrant

Twijnstra et al. (2002, p. 165) mention evaluation after the activities analysis, diagnosis and identification of alternatives. Given the effects of each alternative, one can be valued as the best because it meets the most important preferences of the client. Evaluative claims can be supported by motivational arguments in the process of giving advice. They refer to norms, criteria or interests to judge alternatives as better or worse. The second case is when consultants make an advocative claim to conclude their advice, again with reference to the interests of the client.

In their textbook on corporate strategy Johnson and Scholes (2002, pp. 15–20) identify three steps of strategic choice. The first step is to formulate the norms to judge a strategy; the second is the identification of alternatives or strategic options; the third is the evaluation of the options by means of the norms. The first step identifies a motivational warrant; it states what is desirable. The third step concludes by assessing the identified alternatives with the help of criteria from step one.

Minto argues that consultants should for the most part use normative arguments implicitly, since it is boring for a client to read about well-known principles and norms. Therefore she makes an argument for their implicit use. Low level sub-subsections are the best place in a report to

make norms and criteria or values explicit when they are the subject of discussion (Minto, 1995, p. 70). She gives many examples of evaluative statements in her book to indicate that there are problems in an organization like: 'more time required . . . wrong frequencies . . . wrong activities' (pp. 139–40). These statements imply criteria to judge the frequencies or activities.

Rasiel and Friga (2001, p. 96), former McKinsey consultants like Minto, write about a 'touchstone' for consultants. Consultants have to judge alternatives against the 'CEO-focus'. Recommended actions should be valued by criteria such as the pay-off and the commitments of time, energy and resources, for example. The best alternative should help to reach the goals of a CEO.

Within academic debates about consultants normative arguments and valuations are seldom discussed. From an academic point of view Bloomfield and Danieli (1995, p. 29) mention discussing norms in one sentence, which is more than most other academics. They claim that clients and consultants discuss 'normative assertions about what should be done' during an assignment. Rude (2004, pp. 280–2) adds the observation that consultants' reports aiming at policy change contain more prescriptive suggestions than academics' reports. Scientific ethos, on the other hand, values 'information over argument' and 'science over advocacy' (p. 279).

Academic advisers avoid motivational warrants due to their ethos, unless they are non-controversial and given by the client. Consultants use motivational warrants openly and they are willing to discuss them with their clients.

BACKINGS OF NORMATIVE AND POSITIVE ARGUMENTS

Grounds and warrants are arguments that can have either a positive or normative character. It may be necessary to back the reliability of these arguments to make recommendations more convincing. If the grounds are data, how are they measured? If the warrant is a causal relation, is there a reference to accepted theory? Toulmin introduced the concept of backing as a field-dependent support for warrants. As argued in Chapter 3, there are good reasons for backing grounds as well. Criticisms of grounds or warrants as untrue or unacceptable can be prevented by a backing. The kind of backing needed to argue for the acceptability of warrants or grounds depends on the character of the statements. Figure 4.3 illustrates some backings.

In Figure 4.3 the warrants make explicit why the grounds are relevant

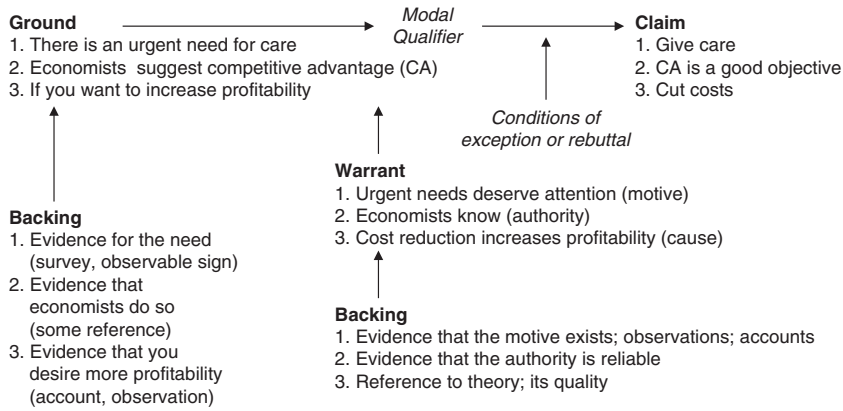

Figure 4.3 Backings in an argument

arguments with respect to the conclusions (claims). The warrant guarantees the logic or reasonableness of the connection between ground and claim. But is the warrant itself "true" or acceptable? And is the statement that serves as ground acceptable? The function of the backing is to assure this acceptability and to increase the force of argument. Backings therefore belong to knowledge fields such as economics or business administration and can be more or less acceptable to specific groups such as managers, consultants and academics within certain disciplines.

The discussion about the backing of arguments is methodological. How can a positive statement about the world be labeled "reliable" or "acceptable"? When can a normative statement be considered "acceptable" in the context of a specific assignment? A backing can be the reference to techniques of measurement, the size and quality of the sample, the quality of the research method, the method of observation, theoretical evidence or even explicit reference to common knowledge. The question is to what extent these observations, measurements or references to common knowledge guarantee the reliability and acceptability of the statement. However, persuasiveness will not only depend on the force of argument, but will also vary between audiences and authors, depending, for example, on their preference for positivist or more post-positivist research approaches.

The backing of normative statements and local or cultural valuations is discussed less than the backing of positive knowledge. Habermas (1988a, pp. 38–45) argues that discussions about the appropriateness of valuations belong to the domain of aesthetic criticism. It is a matter of culture

or taste to consider local valuations as appropriate or not. People within a local culture can agree that some valuations are more appropriate than others. A backing of such a value or norm has to refer to this culture. Also a business strategy cannot be based on facts only, since valuation is a necessary activity in economic decision making. Though it is not a matter of culture or taste in a narrow sense, norm setting, valuation and discussions about the appropriateness of assessments belong to the domain of aesthetic criticism. A group of decision makers has to share valuations that are relevant to the decision. Establishing shared values is a cultural process.

We would expect consultants to be more devoted to an epistemology of practice that includes the use and backing of local and fashionable forms of knowledge and interests. It requires a different approach of backing to legitimize this more transient kind of knowledge. The collaborative consultant approach offers many possibilities to do so. It is a way to experience or observe norms, values and cultural assumptions. The question is how consultants find backings for these local statements in their argumentation, and how they reflect on their own approach.

Since academic advisers do not discuss valuations and preferences, we expect great silence with respect to their reflections on the backing of normative statements. Normative statements have to be given by the client, and as an argument's assumptions they need no further backing. Academic awareness concerning the backing of positive statements and positive warrants is surely expected, since academics are specialized in doing that and their ethos considers the generation of positive backings an important methodological task.

Backings of Positive Arguments in Economic Advice

Academic backing by scientific method

Ten Bos, Kieser and Weggeman compare management scientists and consultants explicitly and wonder why practical experience and practical knowledge is valued so low within the academic community (ten Bos, 2001, p. 29; Weggeman, 2001, p. 111; Kieser, 2002, p. 211). The official reason is that scientific results should not be biased by the interests of a researcher, or by the interests of a client. Knowledge has to be value free. Experience cannot be separated from the personal influences that scientists try to abandon. Scientific distance, visible by a critical attitude, shields academics from biased results disturbed by emotions, values and unimportant details. Academics thus cannot argue for trust or a close relationship with clients, nor can they trust clients' lay knowledge because it too is biased. For that reason they rely on academic method.

Economists are extremely suspicious academics with respect to lay knowledge and experiences. Friedman (1970) does not believe that answers gathered by questionnaires or interviews can be used to reject or confirm a hypothesis, which is a common practice among consultants as well as many social scientists. Friedman refers to a case where business people answered questions about what affected their decisions. Profit maximization was one of many motives. According to Friedman (1970, p. 31) these answers cannot be used to confirm or reject the theory that business people try to maximize profit. Only 'observations' showing the behavior of all business people may support or reject a theory, not what individuals say they do. Only if business people do not act as if they are seeking the highest profit in general can the theory be rejected. Then the observation should be that business people seek some other objective like continuity or fair trade. According to Friedman, business people act 'as if' they seek the highest profit. It does not matter what they intend to do and therefore it makes no sense to ask them. Academic economists like Friedman try to close their eyes to misleading details to see a truth that is higher than any truth these lay persons could tell. Friedman (p. 15) therefore argues that a hypothesis should do 'in general'. The value of hypotheses or theories has to be measured by their ability to predict, not on the realism of the assumptions underlying it. Assumptions can never be as realistic as reality. The realism claim is unrealistic itself.

McCloskey (1994, p. 215) criticizes this essentialist approach of economists in 'Armchair philosophy of economics', a chapter in her book *Knowledge and Persuasion in Economics*. She claims that economists do not like empirical research. Some subdisciplines such as economic history, industrial economics and organization studies are more empirical, but their size and academic impact is decreasing; they practice science with a small 's'. Most economists only look for Science and Theory. In the words of McCloskey: 'The philosophers are misled – as, I repeat, many economists themselves are – by the large place and high prestige of blackboard theorizing in economics' (McCloskey, 1994, p. 226). Economic experiences by non-academic economists are even excluded from the scientific debate altogether (p. 116). Backing of academic economists therefore mainly consists of references to existing and accepted theories and models.

Though business economists and management scientists prefer long-term relevance and a 'granite truth' of their research like Friedman (ten Bos, 2001, p. 29), their research is less mathematical and less axiomatic than that criticized by McCloskey. Human resource management uses psychological insights; the marketing field depends heavily on empirical research. There are even attempts to integrate literary analysis and systematic philosophical inquiry as methods that can be

applied in organization theory (Boje, 2001; Morgan, 1986) and case study research is generally accepted (Eisenhardt, 1989). The qualitative research approaches, however, are not considered good for a scientific career in any of the economic and management disciplines yet. They are often too detailed and their focus is on interpretation rather than on measurement as scientists with positivist sympathies would like.

However, the popularity of a more interpretative approach open to experiences is growing among business economists and management scientists. Morgan's *Images of Organization* (1986), which is cited several thousand times, is an indication. The book is popular among academics as well as consultants (Boonstra, 2001b, p. 324; de Caluwé, 2001, p. 323; Keizer, 2001, p. 328). Morgan argues that organization research should stay close to experience, even though this knowledge lacks general validity. 'We can know organizations only through our experience of them. We can use metaphors and theories to grasp and express this knowledge and experience, and to share our understandings, but we can never be sure that we are absolutely right' (Morgan, 1986, p. 341).

In spite of Morgan's popularity the essentialism focus remains dominant among academics. Weggeman argues that scientific journals' exclusion mechanism cultivates it. Management journals prefer quantitative research based on large numbers of observations on a small number of 'essential' variables. The variables should have a reliable, causal relationship using accepted statistical standards. Anonymous reviewers, that is, business scientists' audience, use these criteria. Managers or consultants have no interest in such prestigious journal publications. The small number of variables makes relationships too particular and thus irrelevant or trivial (Weggeman, 2001, p. 112).

Theoretical backing based on references is therefore the most important kind of backing for academic advisers involved in economic assignments, because of their theoretical orientation (McCloskey, 1994, p. 127; Frey and Eichenberger, 1997, p. 33; Theeuwes, 1997, pp. 92–5, 103). Heilbronner's (1986) ironic characterization of economists as 'worldly philosophers' illustrates this orientation as well. Economists use causal warrants in their instrumental advice, and they refer to the underlying theories in their backings. Academic advisers coming from the business sciences seem to share this theoretical orientation, which can be derived from their criticism regarding consultants. They consider consultant knowledge 'flawed, fashionable, glib and at odds with expert, scientific academic knowledge' (Salaman, 2002, p. 250). A similar characterization can be found in Alvesson and Johansson (2002, p. 229). They mention that consultants consider themselves as having integrity and unquestionable expertise for various kinds of management problems. Academics, meanwhile,

see consultants as shallow, overpaid, immoral, lacking deep knowledge and responsible for many major corporate problems. The lack of deeper knowledge and shallowness refer to the kind of backings academics expect but do not find in consultant advice. We can expect academic advisers to meet these academic standards in their own consulting.

Nevertheless, the focus on theory is problematic in the context of academic advice. Academic policy advisers such as in 't Veld and Frissen acknowledge the limitations of their own academic expertise, thereby turning against the kind of research approach that Friedman advocates. It is not the academic who has an exclusive entrance to economic truth in practice, although they are most educated in academic theory and thus can add most references. Other actors in our political and economic system, such as clients, interest groups, consultants and non-academic experts, know the economic world they act in by experience. Their knowledge is also valuable, for instance, in reaching consensus on a debate about a policy's consequences. That implies a preference for 'negotiated knowledge' in contrast to 'normal science'. Backing can then be found in intersubjective agreement. Normal science corresponds to the positivist/modernist view of testing hypotheses like Friedman proposes; negotiated knowledge is the result of a 'post normal' view on science (in 't Veld and Verhey, 2000, pp. 118–21).

Frissen warns that these negotiations are also visible in the manipulation of research outcomes by changing research questions. This kind of manipulation is an important part of policy advice. Positivist scientists are no exception. Their strong ethos that demands a search for objective knowledge lends them strong manipulative powers, which can have a strong influence on negotiations about the truth. But social scientists often do not know for sure, so their influence in negotiations does not necessarily serve the "truth". Frissen is thus skeptical about the idea that academic research improves the quality of decisions (Frissen, 2000, pp. 59–60) any more than the contributions of other relevant actors' discussions. He argues that it is mere rhetoric to claim that facts are objective in the context of advice. Presenting statements as facts has strategic value though. In that sense academic advisers have more authority than consultants, a strategic advantage in "fact production". However these facts can never be considered as truly objective: research covers only a small piece of reality. But knowledge backed by academic method has more status in knowledge negotiations and academic advisers make use of that.

Common sense backing of positive statements by consultants

Academic characterizations of consultant research practices suggest that consultants are neither in favor of the meticulous empirical research of

most social scientists nor of the theoretical arguments of economists. They are even characterized as charlatans who produce fashionable knowledge that does not meet scientific standards. Indeed, consultants do not intend to be scientists. How do they back their positive statements?

Consultant advice has to contribute to the performance of a client in a social and practical context. Only if consultants do not have the information or experience they need to give advice do they carry out their own research. Their research has to be sufficient to give useful advice, which is different from meeting scientific standards. Reflection on experiences is a first source of knowledge to help develop and legitimize positive statements, but sometimes this backing is insufficient, not convincing or too uncertain. Interviews can then be necessary. But if consultants are convinced with five interviews then they stop researching. Backing of a statement by five interviews is enough if a consultant feels she can take responsibility for the recommendations based on that backing, even if this approach does not meet the standards of scientific method.

Rasiel and Friga (2001, pp. 37–8) refer to the 80/20 rule, which means that consultants assume they get 80 percent of the relevant information with 20 percent of the research effort. The remaining 80 percent of research effort must be spent to get the last 20 percent of information. Consultants leave the 100 percent effort to full-time academic researchers. Absolute precision is not their objective. Consultants acknowledge that their research approach is "quick and dirty", but time and speed are often more relevant than a high degree of precision.

Academics and consultants therefore practice in different timeframes. Pure academics take their time with research, but consultants' clients present urgent questions that have to be answered in time. Clients have to follow the advice before it is outdated. Donald Schön explicitly refers to the dimension of timing by stating that practitioners like consultants have to reflect on action within a limited zone of time (Schön, 1983, p. 62). It is the 'action present', where action can make a difference to the situation. Academic advisers, in contrast, are accustomed to a theory-oriented frame of reference. Their scientific "action present" has a distant time horizon. While no one really believes in an eternal perspective, scientists often assume timelessness in their arguments. Their conclusions should hold forever or at least for long. They like deductive arguments derived from theory and applied to a case. Their backings have to establish these timeless theories.

When consultants use theoretical arguments that need backing, Rasiel and Friga argue for simplicity. Only the key drivers have to be identified. The description of a model should be transparent, focused and brief. It should illustrate the mechanics of a situation and skip the details. The

advantage is that the client can understand the model that describes his situation. He can test it against his experience, which can serve as a backing. This cannot be done with complex 'gigabyte-sized models' (Rasiel and Friga, 2001, pp. 98–9).

Peter Block (2000, p. 37) argues for simplicity too. It is a means to integrate common sense and experience in the process of backing statements. A consultant can prevent flawed advice in this way. One example is to follow procedures that did well in the past, such as following the phases of the consulting process in the same order. Another example of using simplicity to prevent flawed advice is to be authentic as a person. That implies as backing the personal belief in one's own advice.

Consultants' suspicion for academic knowledge and academic theory translates to the rare use of it in their work. Alvesson (1993, p. 1005) has the impression that formal knowledge is less important for management consultants than experience and skills. For consultants a best guess suffices if it is the best kind of knowledge available. Intuition too can provide serious information, such as the reliability or character of a partner. Consultant knowledge is experience-based to an important degree (Kubr, 2002, p. 216). Practicing consultants also value knowledge that can be told or expressed in stories and figures. Gurus are the most successful examples of this approach (Clark and Greatbatch, 2002, p. 159). With these means to gather and express knowledge consultants have access to domains closed to academic advisers due to academic standards for judging the quality of knowledge.

Hybrids like ten Bos, Argyris and Schön know the practice of consulting and are also familiar with philosophical discussions. Argyris (1996, p. 402) argues that consultants are involved in the design of organizations. That implies the aesthetic perspective of human creation as opposed to 'after the fact' scientific registration and explanation. Ten Bos (2000, p. xvi) refers to fashion, which is an aesthetic category helpful in gaining appropriate knowledge about the changing social and cultural realities that comprise economic and political life. They all seem to argue that there is more "truth" than the granite truth of the academic scientist. They assume an understanding that Habermas characterizes as aesthetic or cultural (Habermas, 1988a, p. 41). Support for this aesthetic position can be found in Aristotle (1985, p. 1140a), who relates designers' knowledge to politicans' or managers' social knowledge because both consider changing realities. Consultants, as socially experienced designers, use this kind of knowledge as well.

In the cultural or aesthetic domain universal truth claims do not exist. Claims about what "is" or what "should be" have a local meaning. This domain is thus fashionable, to use the description of ten Bos (2000).

Fashions change with time and place. They have no universal validity. They seem superficial from an academic perspective, but tell a relevant story from an aesthetic perspective that enables the discussion of another kind of truth. It is not the universal truth of traditional scientists, but an aesthetic or local truth. Ten Bos refers to Habermas to characterize what consultants do: they 'advise on matters of both the system world and the life world as Habermas would have it' (ten Bos, 2000, p. 22). These activities refer to an epistemology that goes beyond the rigor of science. Consultants use the many domains of knowledge humans have access to, like experience, observation or common sense judgment, an observation also made by Berglund and Werr (2000). Only in the exceptional case of advising on technical or scientific matters would scientific knowledge suffice.

Consultants therefore rely on their own experiences and those of "experts" in the field. They organize group discussions to integrate and compare their ideas with the experiences of these groups. Personal interviews do the same. One could characterize consulting thus as an 'experience based craft' (van Aken, 2001, p. 314). Consultants give experience-based and personal judgments about what their clients should do, what strategies have the best chances of success and what kind of reorganization could support a new strategy. Reference to common sense is also important for consultants as backing for their arguments, more than theories or techniques (Hoebeke, 2001, pp. 272–3). Also Case (2002, p. 108) mentions that consultants refer explicitly to common sense in their backings. Bolweg (2001, p. 190) argues that consultants consider common sense and experience the main sources of inspiration and justification. Consultants thus have to be 'experienced craftsmen' and the backings they refer to belong primarily to the domain of aesthetic criticism, using their sense of reality, their sense of urgency and their common sense in line with the characterizations of Bourdieu (2002, p. 124).

Consultants interact with clients as though they are reading and interpreting a text in a searching and attentive way (Morgan, 1986; Feltmann, 2001, p. 144). They must acknowledge uniqueness in every project, which implies a tailored approach. Advice can only be valuable if both client and adviser contribute to the fit between advice and the question at hand. Feltmann (2001, p. 143) therefore claims that a consultant should be artist and philosopher instead of applier of a general theory or model.

The ethos of consultants seeks backing of positive arguments in personal belief, common sense, experience and intersubjective agreement. For academic advisers backing is based on academic method and on their reputation.

Backings of Normative Arguments and Valuations

Backing of values and principles resembles the backing of facts and theories in several respects. The appropriateness of a norm can be criticized like the likelihood of a causal relation. Advisers can therefore back values by discussing them in interviews and group meetings to see if the members of an organization recognize and share these local values. The backing can be provided by reference to the shared acceptance of a value or norm in an organization or community. Another way of backing is to observe the dominance of values or norms. They should not conflict with each other, with common sense or with the behavior they guide.

Acceptance of values usually requires a more local backing than the acceptance of facts, because norms and values are more subject to discussion and more culturally dependent than positive statements of fact. Basic values are widely shared, but even these differ from culture to culture. In the case of advice many relevant values have a local existence. They are connected to specific interests of organizational groups, external stakeholders or employees. These different groups never share exactly the same norms and values. They have an aesthetic character.

Consultants consider it part of their service to help the client with discussions on objectives, values and norms. A consultant is even willing to influence them, unlike traditional academic advisers. As previously argued, traditional academic ethos prevents advisers from participating in these discussions. They can only apply norms or objectives in their argument that are universally accepted or explicitly given by the client. How do the professions reflect on the appropriate backing of normative statements?

No academic method of backing of normative statements

The academic position argues for absolute indifference or neutrality against values and valuations. The scientific approach does not prescribe what should be, only what the case is. Therefore we could argue that the backing of valuations is not an item for academic advisers; they do not establish those normative claims. And if economists use values in their argument, they need to be non-controversial (Blaug, 1980, p. 129) such as efficiency, effectiveness, utility or profit: the positive economic values that clients always strive for in theory. However, in the context of advice, values become disputable: utility needs to be defined, profit depends on costs, whose profits are they and so on.

There is little academic debate that normative statements have to be backed in the context of academic advice. The academic judgment of consultants' 'immoral attitude' as investigated by Alvesson and Johansson

(2002, p. 229) suggests that consultants apply incorrect valuations, a hard criticism. It implies that consultants formulate the wrong recommendations and make unnecessary mistakes. Academic advisers prevent themselves from making these moral mistakes by their doctrine of "if-then" advice, which implies that clients formulate the normative statements and be responsible for their backing. It makes the academic position amoral, leaving all moral responsibility to the clients. However, is that possible? A recommendation as commonly understood requires normative statements and valuations.

Some academic advisers acknowledge the weakness of this academic approach and try to step outside the limitations of their positivist/modernist methodology. They are aware that they have to argue by means of values and valuations to help their client (Blaug, 1980, p. 150; Overlegcommissie Verkenningen, 1996, p. 23; Klamer, 2003, p. 199–201; Peacock, 1992, p. 1219; in 't Veld and Verhey, 2000, p. 118) but they do not have a scientific methodology to do so. They also know that the distinction between means and end is artificial in practice, but they are not able to back normative statements about economic issues in a professionally embedded way. Is that the reason that clients pay less for academic advice? The "immoral" mistakes by consultants do not seem to undermine their competitive position. If academic advice can be improved somewhere, it seems to be here, although it is more consequential to academic methodology than adding some of the qualitative and experience-based research approaches that consultants use to back positive statements.

Consultants back normative statements by intersubjective agreement

Consultants explicitly address the issue of backing valuations and normative statements if they write about consulting. This is in line with the remark of ten Bos (2000, p. 22) that consultants abandon the distinction between fact and value. Consultants have developed methods to handle and influence values to some extent as discussed in the sections on normative grounds and warrants. One technique is to make norms and values explicit. Another is to compare different values to investigate their relationships and hierarchies, or to compare espoused values and behavior. It is important for consultants to recognize dominant values and unwritten rules in order to avoid surprises that could follow from ignoring them (Scott-Morgan, 1994, pp. 33–4).

Schein (1969, p. 59) argues that norms are 'not easy to identify in group processes' but they are 'very influential in determining member behavior and feelings'. They derive their influence partly from their 'invisibility'. Schein identifies implicit and explicit norms. His method of discussing the existence of norms is by 'close observation' and identification of 'concrete

examples' of the effects of implicit and explicit norms on behavior (p. 61). This method serves as backing.

Argyris also devotes attention to the discussion of norms and values within organizations. Management often wants a commitment to values, but gaps between explicit, officially espoused values and implicitly practiced ones are common. Such discrepancies can hinder communication, necessary learning and implementation of changes in strategy, structure or business processes. Argyris (2000, p. 159) tries to make this gap explicit in his consulting approach. He does so by asking questions during business meetings and by confronting members of an organization with their behavior in the course of action. These are methods developed by process consultants.

The expert consultant is aware of norms and values too, although with a less explicit methodology to identify them or confront clients with their behavior. Greiner and Metzger beseech consultants to know their clients' culture, norms and values as soon as possible in order to become an accepted 'stranger' in their organization (Greiner and Metzger, 1983, p. 256). In the case of the evaluation of alternatives Kubr mentions that very often the client's professional staff will be involved in valuation and decision making. The selection of alternatives and their evaluation especially have to be joint or collaborative affairs in which both the client and consultant participate (Kubr, 2002, pp. 223–4). This approach guarantees intersubjective agreement in which the valuation by consultants harmonizes with the values of the client as a result of a process that Habermas (1988a, pp. 42–3) would characterize as aesthetic criticism.

Fincham (2002, p. 200) states that the expert consultant uses technical/rational means of legitimization whereas the consultant guru uses charisma. Berglund and Werr (2000) make a similar argument. Charismatic legitimization refers to vision, morality, drama and emotional realities. It is a means to back normative statements that can motivate clients. Academics identify with the neutral and fact-based expert role. Consultants even consider the academic distance from the reality consultants try to experience as 'arrogance' (Weggeman, 2001, p. 111).

Boonstra underlines that consultants are professionals by experience (Boonstra, 2001a, p. 243) and adds that consultants work in a field where the traditional subject-object construction that belongs to the context of scientific research is not helpful, since the object can talk back (p. 252). Too much distance is a barrier to relevant knowledge and to impact. Kubr stresses the benefit of experience in consulting (Kubr, 1978, p. 35). Bolweg also characterizes consultants as professionals who live by their experience (Bolweg, 2001, p. 190). Schön adds that if consultants are 'asked to

describe their methods of inquiry, they speak of experience, trial and error, intuition and muddling through' (Schön, 1983, p. 43).

The interest of clients is to learn about relationships between their organization and the social and economic environment, or between management and employees. These relationships are personal, emotional and loaded with different interests. In this personal context experienced consultants strive to be 'authentic' (Block, 2000, p. 38; Vermaak, 2001, pp. 293, 297), meaning they show character and are able to react in a personal way. The importance of this authenticity implies that emotions and personal concerns are relevant in the consulting process. Van Luijk (2001, pp. 263–4) argues that empathy and susceptibility are necessary capacities for consultants to get in touch with real client concerns.

A consultant's authenticity serves as backing in the context of valuations. Block refers to experiences where a consultant feels excluded, treated as unimportant or forced into the role of judge. In such situations consultants should not hide these emotions, since a disabling position prevents them from working flawlessly (Block, 2000, pp. 37–40, 309). These feelings can have indicative or alarm value. Why do I feel uncomfortable as consultant? Why does a client avoid taking responsibility? Why does a client ignore my findings? These experiences are like observations for the experienced consultant. They give information about the client. Consultants should thus be aware of their feelings and acknowledge their relevance. In contrast to the academic research approach, consultants do not want to be neutral. They do gather positive data, but they also use their feelings, intuitions and subjective judgments (p. 177). These elements are necessary to recommend action.

Block (2000, p. 263) argues that the clients' 'feelings are facts', since their decisions are based on feelings, emotions and even hope. A client has to feel trust and some enthusiasm to opt for the alternative a consultant suggests. The consultant has to be open to experience such feelings and intentions. Therefore it is important that consultants use their sensitivity. They need to acknowledge clients' interests and motives to value alternatives appropriately. And a client's emotional support for an alternative is also a backing.

Bekman (1997, p. 85) also claims that organization members make personal judgments stating an 'expressions of will' or of 'like and dislike'. An adviser can facilitate discussion of these judgments or personal valuations to contribute to the decision-making process. Bekman (p. 79) argues that these discussions can be influenced, but not by uncritically applying one's own personal valuations. Influencing valuations has to be an intentional intervention. Integrity of the consultant serves as a backing in this context. Though consultants hardly ever mention Habermas, who refers

to personal or therapeutic criticism to address the discursive capacities that enable rational discussions about authenticity and honesty in human relationships, in reflections on their practice, the value of such experiences is discussed extensively.

Consultants back motivational arguments and valuation by intersubjective agreement, personal integrity and authenticity. Academic advisers have no method of backing or criticizing normative statements, which aligns with their neutrality ethos.

EMPHASIS IN THE ARGUMENT

The previous sections show that academic advisers and consultants have different preferences in the use of arguments. Motivational arguments and normative grounds are problematic for academic advisers. Table 4.2 summarizes the results of the analysis up to this point in order to show how argument preferences determine what the professions can present. The remaining question is how both professions present their argumentation in a report, and if their style to present them differs as well.

Authors' preferred arguments are not necessarily explicit. Warrants or backings are often used implicitly, but it is possible to make them explicit without changing the argument. Given the explicit elements in argumentation, in what order will they be presented and on what report level (chapters, sections, subsections or paragraphs)? Where are conclusions and advice presented and what information is left to appendices? Is the hierarchy in the arguments that support the conclusion – the main and supporting arguments – reflected in the levels of the report: main arguments in chapters and supporting arguments in subsections?

Consultants have a tradition in writing advice reports, and they have reflected on the most appropriate presentations. The PowerPoint presentation is another important genre and many consultants even present their findings in a PowerPoint report, mixing the two genres. Consultants also support communication with flip-overs, whiteboards, brown paper sessions and so on to make visible what is in the mind of their client. For that reason Skovgaard-Smith (2008, p. 141) characterizes them as 'penholders'. Reports can also serve this purpose, but consultants have more opportunity to add their own insights when writing reports. For them these means of communication all aim at transparency and understanding, since this is a condition for accepting advice. As a consequence we would expect that consultants formulate their advice more explicitly than academic advisers. We can also expect that academic advisers focus more

Table 4.2 Emphasis in the argumentation

	Consultants	**Academic advisers**
Advice (action)	• Instrumental and normative advice	• Only instrumental "if-then" advice
Conclusion	• Positive and normative conclusions	• Only positive conclusion
Modality	• Accentuation of chance	• Accentuation of uncertainty
Rebuttal	• Practical preconditions	• Theoretical preconditions
Positive grounds	• Experiences, observations, results of own research, stories/interviews	• Scientific facts, proved knowledge, own scientific research
Normative grounds	• Valuation, appraisal	–
Positive warrants	• Use of all kinds of convincing warrants; some use of simple theory and consultant models	• Only use of scientific warrants; literal and explicit application of academic theory
Motivational warrants	• Use of all reasonable normative (economic) motives, principles or criteria	• Only use of criteria/ objectives that are non-controversial or given by client
Positive backings	• Only scientific if necessary; reference to experience and common sense	• Only scientific method, scientific references
Normative backings	• Integrity, authenticity, identification of (shared) values	–

on the legitimization of factual statements by sections on methodology and references to theory.

Academic Advisers Emphasize Analysis

There is little academic tradition in the genre of writing scientific advice reports compared to scientific articles, Master and PhD theses, scientific monographs, handbooks and the like. The scientific report written for clients is, however, an academic genre. Academic discussion about the presentation of advice in scientific reports is scarce, but it is likely that the more traditional academic genres influence this new one.

Table 4.3 Methodological outline of reports

Consultant report	**Academic report**
• Description of existing situation	• Research question
• Evaluate problems of existing situation	• Research methodology
• Description of options	• Results
• Evaluation of options	• Interpretation
• Recommendations	• Conclusions and recommendations

Source: Twijnstra et al. (2002, p. 323).

Academic advice questions usually have an empirical character, since clients most often do not have theoretical questions. The academic tradition prescribes that empirical questions have a structure that addresses the research question, a literature review, methodology, empirical results, conclusions and discussion. The structure is found in articles and graduate theses. These genres can (but rarely do) present recommendations. If they do, they are often appended to the discussion or put in an appendix. It reflects the difficulty academics have with making recommendations. They are not well integrated in their advice approach.

Twijnstra et al. (2002, p. 323) mention the main sections that dominate empirical research in the structure of scientific research reports. They argue that the outline of a scientific report has to follow the research process, which illustrates the scientific preference for a 'process order' in reports (Kubr, 2002, p. 891). Strangely enough they also propose that consultant reports follow a similar 'methodological principle' in their outline, which results in the process order illustrated in Table 4.3.

The objective of academic advisers is transparent methodology, which explains their preference for a process structure. Twijnstra and colleagues do not mention the literature review, which is usually necessary to develop hypotheses or specific research questions for empirical research. Possibly they subsume the literature review under the parts research question and interpretation.

Although many consultants would agree that the steps Twijnstra and colleagues identify are necessary, Minto argues vehemently against the structure of consultant reports as suggested by Twijnstra and colleagues. She argues that after the analysis and the choice of one alternative, 'the way in which the alternatives actually compare to each other becomes irrelevant, and consequently would not be included in the report' (Minto, 1999, p. 48). The report has to conclude that one alternative is preferred and then it has to present the arguments to value that alternative as most

appropriate. Minto's approach is developed within the context of consulting; the process structure illustrated by Twijnstra and colleagues and Kubr shows academic influences on the consulting profession.

Academic advisers emphasize the research and theory used to support their conclusions. The academic tradition does not recommend focusing on conclusions and main argument, but rather on the reliability and validity of the research. We can therefore expect academic reports to focus on sub-argumentation, warrants and backing. Academic advisers will draw more attention to theoretical warrants as it is part of their expertise since they have more theoretical knowledge than consultants and take application of theory very seriously. They will not use it in the loose, metaphorical or minimal way that consultants do. The specialist focus of academic advisers can imply a lack of attention to completeness though.

Consultants Present their Recommendations First

After finding relevant and credible conclusions and helpful recommendations, the question is how to get the advice across. It is acknowledged as one of the consultants' major challenges. Twijnstra et al. (2002, p. 105) mention the tension between 'being in the right' and 'to be proved right'. This tension gives rise to the kind of knowledge consultants value best. Rasiel and Friga also argue that the cleverest strategy has no value 'if the client does not buy into it'. Therefore the client has to be convinced by a 'compelling narrative' that mentions only the facts that 'advance your story' (Rasiel and Friga, 2001, p. 100). These are rhetorical and not necessarily opportunistic considerations.

Advice reports require the following elements: a research question or assignment, the investigation of one or more alternatives to improve an existing situation, estimated effects of the alternative(s), valuation of the effects, the recommendation to select one and often conditions that must be satisfied to effect the recommendation (Minto, 1999, p. 41; Twijnstra et al., 2002, p. 323). These elements belong to the pragmatic argument. However advice reports can focus on aspects of the pragmatic argument, such as a study of effects, a feasibility study or an evaluation.

Consultants will usually emphasize the conclusion in their presentation. They do so in the first section of their report, which is the introduction or executive summary. Of secondary importance are the arguments that support the conclusion directly, since consultants believe that the concrete recommendations affect the interests of their clients more than method or motivation. Lower levels in the argument will get even less attention except in the case of doubt. Minto (1995) argues that is the best way

to convince a client. Though Minto developed her ideas at McKinsey, many consultants use her ideas today. Her central concept is the pyramid principle, a metaphor for a proper report outline. Central question and conclusions or recommendations are at the top of the pyramid. The headings of the main sections summarize the main grounds for the conclusion. This second level of the pyramid is the key line. Sub-arguments, backings, warrants and other details belong at the bottom of the pyramid. The levels in the pyramid correspond to the levels of a report, like sections, subsections, paragraphs and sentences. The table of contents therefore illustrates the outline of the pyramid, if a report is well structured (Minto, 1995, pp. 81–2).

The introduction of a report is the place to introduce the key line (p. 49), which consists of the main points that serve as arguments to support the final conclusion. The key line is introduced by starting from a well-known situation, adding a complication that leads to the central question of the report, and giving the answer to this question. The latter is often the recommendation of the report (Minto, 1998b, p. 47). The key line gives the steps and main arguments to support the answer. It is unusual for academic advisers to answer the question in the introduction, since it is not yet supported. The only support consultants give at that point comes from the main grounds expressed in the key line. Consultants consider it most helpful to come to the point with a recommendation as quickly as possible. Above all they are asked for recommendations, so recommendations have the highest relevance for their client. Support for the recommendations will follow, but can wait.

Minto's pyramid has a vertical and a horizontal dimension (Minto, 1995, p. 15). The vertical dimension distinguishes the levels of abstraction. It subsumes sections under chapters and subsections under sections. Introduction and conclusions build the top. The horizontal dimension in the pyramid consists of 'groupings' of ideas or arguments on the same level of abstraction (Minto, 1995, 1998a). The groupings that belong together can be characterized by one idea: the heading of that section.

Minto (1995, p. 15) argues that transparent writing should take care of this horizontal and vertical relationship. To do so, writing has to follow three rules:

- Ideas at any level in the pyramid must always be summaries of the ideas grouped below them (vertical dimension).
- Ideas in each grouping must always be the same kind of idea (horizontal dimension).
- Ideas in each grouping must be logically ordered (horizontal dimension).

The first two rules convince many consultants. The first rule implies a "conclusions first" structure, popular among consultants. It also requires the use of conclusive headings, which summarize the idea of the text that follows. The first rule argues for a proper hierarchy in the logical pyramid and says that all chapters together have to support the answer to the main question in the introduction. The chapters thus serve as the main grounds for the final conclusion. Similarly the sections in a chapter provide the arguments to support the main point of the chapter. The first rule also demands that chapters all have the same level of abstraction, as well as sections within a chapter. The second rule implies that all chapters should relate to the main question and not to other issues. Similarly, the sections in a chapter should deal only with the chapter's theme, not themes of other chapters. The third rule implies that on each horizontal level sections or chapters have to be related by a certain order, such as chronological (subsequent causes, process steps and so on), structural (parts of a whole) or ranking.

In her article (1998a, pp. 37–8) Minto omits the ranking order mentioned in her book. She does so with good reason, since ranking implies a vertical hierarchy within a horizontal grouping. One could make a similar criticism with respect to deductive arguments, which can also structure the order of sections on one horizontal level according to Minto (1995, p. 23). However, a deductive argument (argument by classification) subsumes an example or situation under a rule, which implies a sequence of arguments with different levels of abstraction. Minto is therefore not very coherent in her third rule.

In addition to the second and third rule Minto (pp. 103, 112) argues that groupings have to be MECE, which means mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive. On each level of abstraction the groupings should be MECE, so all arguments of the key line should be different and additional compared to each other and exhaustive together. Rasiel and Friga subscribe to Minto's argument, possibly due to their similar background. They argue for a "conclusions first" presentation with a MECE structure (Rasiel and Friga, 2001, pp. 109, 111). The focus is on completeness, however, rather than details or lower levels of abstraction. That would be the academic approach.

Many consultants interviewed by Rasiel and Friga (p. 114) argue that the purpose of writing is to present a message clearly and simply. If advice is the message, it has to be presented as the main message. Rasiel and Friga give many examples in their book, in which McKinsey alumni underline these points. Some have top positions at other consultancies, but still emphasize the benefits of this approach. Barry and Elmes (1997, p. 438) mention the clearness and familiarity of consultant ideas in their strategic

advice. It is a means to gain credibility. This observation is also made by Huczynski (1992, p. 15).

Block agrees that consultants should communicate directly. He makes some remarks about the words that should be chosen during feedback meetings, recommending language that is 'descriptive, focused, specific, brief and simple' instead of 'judgmental, global, stereotyped, lengthy and complicated' (Block, 2000, p. 223). Greiner and Metzger (1983, p. 32) also underline that writing skills are important for consultants. They prefer concrete recommendations rather than those that rely on abstract principles. They explicitly warn against succinct statements that 'summarise weeks of data gathering'. We could interpret this warning as a plea for focus on the main argument, and not on details.

Kubr (2002) refers to Minto's pyramid principle in an appendix on writing reports. He argues that the choice for a report structure depends on the emphasis a consultant gives to certain aspects. Chapters should cover the main subjects of the greatest importance, sections and subsections the minor subjects and details. To devote a chapter to a subject gives it most emphasis. We can choose, for example, between what Kubr calls a process structure (introduction, analysis, conclusions and recommendations) or a subject structure (analysis, conclusions and recommendations for each subject) (Kubr, 2002, p. 891). There are many ways to vary a structure, but given this distinction we can argue that the subject structure promoted by Minto is most preferred by consultants. We could also expect that academic advisers prefer the process structure to emphasize methodology. It is the standard structure in academic articles and may be visible in their reports as well.

The ethos of consultants aims at transparent writing. The result is a conclusions-first structure in reports, and emphasis on main arguments. Academic advisers stress their scientific approach and prefer a process structure in their reports.

EXPECTATIONS ON ARGUMENTATION IN ADVICE REPORTS

This chapter has discussed what kind of argumentation academic advisers and consultants prefer in supporting advice. Table 4.4 summarizes the answers based on the discussions in the previous sections. It presents research expectations for the report analysis that follows in Chapters 5 and 6. As in Chapter 2, academics such as Kieser (2002), Peacock (1992) or Weggeman (2001) criticize the applicability of the traditional academic

Table 4.4 Preferred styles of argumentation

	Consultants	**Academic advisers**
Claim	Concrete and evaluative conclusions and advice. Emphasis is on chance and on practical conditions of rebuttal.	General and neutral conclusions. No normative advice. Emphasis is on uncertainties and on theoretical conditions of rebuttal.
Grounds	More breadth of argument: generalist approach. Use of positive statements and valuations, both concrete and straightforward.	More depth of argument: specialist approach. Exact and reliable statements preferred, but little fact production, no valuations.
Warrants	Mainly based on common sense causality and not on high theory. Often reference to values, motives, norms and criteria.	Mainly based on theory embedded in economic disciplines and non-controversial normative principles, values or motives.
Backings	Based on experience, rough estimates, personal valuation and intersubjective agreement. Outcomes should be "common sense" proof.	Based on scientific method. Little sympathy for backing by "quick and dirty" research, experience and common sense.
Presentation	Accentuation of advice, conclusions and the line of argument by text structure, headings, diagrams and tables.	Accentuation of scientific backing by manifest presentation of methodology and theory in the report structure.

view on advice again, but now related to the elements of advice argumentation. There is little consensus, however, on an alternative academic approach. The traditional view is most often discussed and is therefore the input for my research expectations. It is important, however, to notice some feeling of uneasiness regarding this view among academics, a reason to stay alert regarding whether academic advisers will meet the expectations that follow from their traditional ethos. The differences in opinion can translate in to different practices. Consultants show more consensus in their views, so will their advice practice be more in line with their professional ethos?

The report analysis will show if the espoused theories of consultants and academic advisers regarding their argumentation practices as presented in

Table 4.4 equal their theories in use. The question will be: to what degree, if any, do consultants and academic advisers meet the standards expressed by their ethos? The next two chapters therefore analyse argumentation in ten advice reports about whether Amsterdam Airport should grow further, and continue with an analysis of advice argumentation in ten reports about liberalization of the electricity market. In each case five reports were written by consultants and five by academic advisers. The actual deliberative performance of both professions has to be investigated before we can discuss why consultants are considered more effective by their clients, despite strong academic skepticism regarding the quality of their work.

5. Advice on further growth of Amsterdam Airport

If and how fast Amsterdam Airport should grow is a years-old policy debate. Economic interest groups argue that Amsterdam Airport should grow because of positive economic effects such as increased employment and growth in related industries like trade and transport. Environmental interest groups worry about negative effects such as air pollution, noise and safety. Noise is one of the most controversial issues in this debate, especially for those in the Amsterdam Airport region. Different interest groups react against each other and try to convince policy makers and decision makers. They ask consultants and academic advisers for help. Internal policy advisers from the government, Central Planning Bureau (CPB) and Nationale Rekenkamer are also involved in the debate.

Amsterdam Airport's public owners are the national government and the cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam. In this case study Amsterdam and the national government are involved in the Amsterdam Airport debate as clients, along with environmental organizations, branch organizations and Amsterdam Airport. Client interests are different and sometimes conflicting. Amsterdam has an interest in Amsterdam Airport's growth as a shareholder and beneficiary of its economic activity, but it is also a conflicting interest, since Amsterdam and Amsterdam Airport both need land for growth. The growth of Amsterdam Airport implies encroaching on Amsterdam's borders for future building. Inhabitants of the Amsterdam Airport region have conflicting interests as well. They appreciate the many destinies afforded by a larger Amsterdam Airport, but worry about the increased jet traffic and its related noise, especially during times of rest. The debate is about the different interests that relate to the different effects of the growth of Amsterdam Airport.

Consultants and academic advisers have similar kinds of assignments in this debate. They have to estimate the sum of positive and negative effects, or evaluate the methodology of estimation. Environmental organizations, for example, ask advisers to calculate the social costs of Amsterdam Airport and identify neglected costs. They also ask them to critically assess the positive economic effects of Amsterdam Airport. Organizations with an economic interest stress the benefits of growth and ask their advisers to

estimate the benefits and critically assess the negative effects. The parties in the debate thus respond to each other.

The question is how consultants and academic advisers perform in this debate. How do they treat the interest of their clients, for example? Can both groups equally articulate the public and economic interests? Governments, it turns out, give more assignments to consultants in this case, and economic interest groups (branch organizations, Amsterdam Airport) give more assignments to academic advisers. Why is that?

The reflections on academic and consultant advice practices presented in Chapter 4 give the report analysis some orientation. Are academic advisers more the neutral experts they claim to be in their performance? Given their ethos of solid scientific backings, do they indeed apply rigorous theory and sophisticated research methods? And how do consultants perform? Is their advice more normative? Do they refer to more sources of knowledge such as experience and local information in their backings? And are they really minimal users of theory as summarized in Table 4.4? Consultants have presented a straightforward image of their practice. Academic advisers have put forth the traditional view of the economic adviser, but they also present doubts and criticisms. Their self-image is ambiguous compared to consultants. This ambiguity is visible in the report analysis as well.

The analysis will show what each profession actually does. That knowledge is necessary to discuss why clients are willing to pay consultants more for their services, and if consultants really deliver fashionable knowledge and badly proved arguments compared to academic advisers. It is necessary to know the approaches of the professions in practice to discuss the reliability of the reflections and judgments presented in the previous chapters. The best way to do that is to observe the professions in a similar situation, where they use similar arguments, perform similar research and are asked for similar advice. The analysis follows the extended analytical framework of Toulmin as discussed in the previous chapters. The first case is about five consultant reports and five academic reports about Amsterdam Airport. All selected reports, their authors, clients and the assignments are listed in Box 5.1.

OVERVIEW OF THE AMSTERDAM AIRPORT DEBATE

How can you analyse a debate with so many connected arguments, so many positions and interests and such a long history as the one on Amsterdam Airport? Even when the contributions to this debate are limited to only five consultant reports and five academic reports, the

BOX 5.1 SELECTED REPORTS ABOUT THE GROWTH OF AMSTERDAM AIRPORT

The selection of ten reports about Amsterdam Airport is based on five criteria. 1. The reports discuss economic welfare effects related to growth of Amsterdam Airport. Not included in the sample are reports that focus on health or environmental aspects without discussing economic welfare effects, and reports on the related question of moving Amsterdam Airport to the North Sea. 2. Only one report is selected from organizations writing multiple reports that meet the first requirement, like BCI or Nyfer. 3. Reports are written for a client. 4. The authors are academic advisers working at universities or consultants working for consultancies. 5. The number of reports by consultants and academic advisers is equal.

Five consultant reports

1. The Instituut voor Onderzoek van Overheidsuitgaven bv (IOO, 1993) wrote a report about (indirect) state support for the Dutch aviation sector. State support is a "hidden cost" of Amsterdam Airport, which is a new argument in the debate. The client was the environmental organization Stichting Natuur en Milieu (SNM).
2. Bureau voor Economische Argumentatie (BEA, 1993) wrote a report that claims to discuss all economic effects of Amsterdam Airport. The report contains contributions by Buck Consultants International (BCI), Nederlands Economisch Instituut (NEI) and BEA. The client was Project Mainport & Milieu Amsterdam Airport (PMMS), a government project organization. "Milieu" refers to the client's environmental concern.
3. BCI (1996) wrote a report, which was an update of the BCI part in the BEA (1993) report. The client was Projectbureau Toekomstige Nederlandse Luchthaven Infrastructuur (TNLI). TNLI is part of the government.
4. Booz, Allan & Hamilton (BA&H, 1999) wrote a report about the economic impact of Amsterdam Airport for the Ministry of Economic Affairs. It investigates how Amsterdam Airport contributes to the growth of a knowledge-intensive economy and how the government can facilitate its development.

5. CE (2002) wrote an evaluation of the benefits of the growth of Amsterdam Airport for the Amsterdam region. The client was the Department of Environmental Affairs of the city of Amsterdam.

Five reports written by academic advisers

1. The Universiteit van Amsterdam (UvA, 1992) wrote a report about the effects of the aviation sector on the growth of the economy and service sectors. Amsterdam Airport is the dominant airport in this report. The client was the Air Transport Association Netherlands (ATAN). ATAN has an economic interest in the growth of Amsterdam Airport.
2. Erasmus Universiteit (EUR et al., 1997) wrote a report on the positive effects of infrastructural projects like Amsterdam Airport or Rotterdam mainport on the (Dutch) economy. One of the authors of the UvA report, Prof. dr. H.B. Roos (EUR), has since changed universities. Other authors are Professor J.G. Lambooy (UvA) and Professor R.E.C.M. van der Heijden (Technische Universiteit Delft, TUD). The client was a branch organization of building constructors (AVBB). AVBB has a strong economic interest in the growth of Amsterdam Airport.
3. The Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (RuG, 1997) wrote a report that criticizes the effect of Amsterdam Airport on service sectors and the resulting indirect labor effects. The report by RuG was a reaction to the BEA/BCI report and questioned the central argument in the UvA report. The client was Actie Strohalm, an organization with a strong environmental interest. The authors work for the Wetenschapswinkel of the RuG.
4. Nyfer (2000) wrote a report that concluded that the economy benefits most from the growth of Amsterdam Airport, not from its size. The report is written for Cerfontaine, the CEO of Amsterdam Airport. Nyfer estimates structural and temporal indirect labor and welfare effects of these growth activities.
5. Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU, 2001) investigated the indirect effects of growth of Amsterdam Airport. The client was Rijksluchtvaardienst (RLD). Its purpose was to develop a sound method of estimating the social costs and benefits of the growth of Amsterdam Airport.

number and kind of arguments are far more extensive than what we usually read in one report. The individual reports present on average one third of the arguments of the entire debate in this case. However, the analysis of this complex argumentation is a means to compare the contributions of consultants and academic advisers. It is not an end in itself, since the debate serves as the context in which both professions are performing.

Table 5.1 gives an overview of the arguments in the Amsterdam Airport debate. It is a summary of the debate based on ten reports written between 1992 and 2002. The outline of Table 5.1 is inspired by Von Werder's (1999) presentation of two strategy debates. Concepts such as grounds and rebuttals are used in line with Toulmin (1994). The reports by consultants and academics are listed in the same order as in Box 5.1. The table has four layers of grounds and subgrounds that support the most central claim in the debate and four levels of counterarguments that are presented as rebuttal. Grounds follow "since"; rebuttals follow "but".

The construction process of Table 5.1 started with the first consultant report (IOO, 1993). The main claim, supporting arguments and rebuttals were identified by close reading and marked in the table with an X. The second and subsequent reports were added, overlapping arguments were marked with an X and new arguments were incorporated in the table. Then it was checked to make sure the new arguments were not overlooked in the previous reports. In the columns that belong to a report, all arguments mentioned in that report are marked with an X.

The hierarchy of arguments in the debate was most difficult to determine, starting from the central claim and looking for direct and indirect support. Since a debate is an example of complex argumentation in which many arguments are connected, support for grounds by subgrounds is also considered. Main grounds are the first level in this argument, subgrounds are the second level, and the table also distinguishes a third and fourth level of subgrounds.

In the debate each report has a different position. A final claim in a report can therefore be one of the arguments in another report. The first consultant report (IOO, 1993), for example, has positive and negative effects as most general claims with the rebuttal that they are often not investigated properly. That the positive and negative effects identified by IOO exist are claims of the second level in the debate. The second report (BEA, 1993) implies a shift in perspective, since the central advocative claim is that Amsterdam Airport should grow under certain conditions. That is the highest level claim in the debate. Other reports concluded, for example, with the first level claim (evaluative) that positive effects are greater than negative effects, which is an argument for the growth claim but not a recommendation itself. That makes the effects identified by

IOO second level claims in the debate, though highest level claims in that report.

Table 5.1 presents an overview of the many arguments in the Amsterdam Airport debate, which makes it difficult to comprehend at once. It is best read from left to right, starting with the claim, continuing with the level of main grounds, then the level of subgrounds and so on. The grounds on the first level give the main arguments and rebuttals that relate directly to the claim that Amsterdam Airport should grow. Main arguments are (first level):

- the assumed dominance of positive effects over negative effects;
- positive historical effects of growth;
- better chances to survive in a global market.

Main rebuttals are (first level):

- the region should facilitate growth;
- Amsterdam (city) should also be able to grow.

Table 5.1 gives the necessary background to interpret the subsequent tables, which will discuss claims, rebuttals, modality, grounds, warrants, backings and presentation, applying an extended version of Toulmin's analytical framework as developed in Chapter 3. The main objective of the table is to introduce the Amsterdam Airport debate and provide the background for the further steps in the analysis. It also enables reflection on the proposition that we can expect more breadth of argument from consultants and more depth of argument from academic advisers. This difference corresponds to a generalist or specialist style of argumentation regarding the use of grounds and rebuttals. The interpretation of Table 5.1 is the subject of the next subsection.

Consultants and Academics Show a Similar Degree of Specialization

The research expectations formulated at the end of Chapter 4 in Table 4.4 state that consultants argue more like generalists and academics more like specialists. This has some support in the Amsterdam Airport case, since consultants present more grounds and rebuttals on the first levels and academic advisers present more arguments including rebuttals on the fourth level. The total number of arguments used by consultants is slightly greater than the number used by academics, but most apparent is that differences are small.

On the first level of grounds and rebuttals, consultants give more rebuttals

Table 5.1 Claims, grounds and rebuttals in the Amsterdam Airport debate

Levels of reasoning: central claim and grounds					**Consultants**					**Academics**				
Claim	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Amsterdam Airport should grow under conditions						X	X	X	X					
Alternative advice: Amsterdam Airport should grow											X			
Since	Conditional growth has more positive than negative effects					X	X	X	X					
Since	Growth has more positive than negative effects									X	X		X	
	Since	Amsterdam Airport has (many) structural effects that are positive			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		Since	Amsterdam Airport generates growth economy		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
			Since	More direct added value	X	X	X	X			X	X		
			Since	More indirect added value		X	X	X			X			
			But	Not if there is perfect competition										X
			But	Mainly service industries benefit						X			X	
			But	Amsterdam Airport profits from growth economy									X	
		Since	There are labor effects		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
			Since	More direct labor	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
			Since	More indirect labor	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
			But	Labor effects are mainly regional					X				X	X
			But	Some indirect effects are temporal							X		X	
			But	Measurement is hard and unreliable						X		X		X
			But	Indirect labor effects are negligible								X		
		Since	It generates new settlements of (international) firms like carriers, European headquarters etc.			X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
			Since	New contributions to economy			X	X					X	
		Since	Service level infrastructure improves			X	X	X	X		X			X
			Since	More destinations/ frequencies		X	X	X	X		X			X
			But	Hard to prove creation added value										X
		Since	Competitive position Dutch economy improves			X	X	X			X			
			Since	Industries benefit like agri-business; (food) process; trade/ transport etc.		X	X	X			X			
		Since	It enables a new knowledge-intensive economy					X			X			
		Since	Comparative advantage Dutch economy								X			
		Since	Better quality of life								X			
		Since	Environment also benefits							X	X			
			Since	More service industries						X	X			

Levels of reasoning: central claim and grounds					Consultants					Academics				
Claim	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
			Since	Better transport efficiency							X			
			Since	Up to date transport technology							X			
			Since	Possible international benefits							X			
	Since	Investments in growth cause temporal positive effects									X		X	
	But	There are also structural negative effects			X	X	X	X	X			X	X	
		Since	Amsterdam Airport gets indirect financial state support		X							X		
			Since	Sum of tax reductions will increase	X									
		Since	Amsterdam Airport causes pollution		X	X	X		X			X	X	
			Since	Air pollution will increase	X				X			X	X	
			Since	Noise production will increase	X				X			X	X	
		Since	Amsterdam Airport will cause more safety risks		X				X			X		
		Since	Growth of Amsterdam gets more expensive						X					
			Since	Amsterdam Airport limits utility of land (costs)					X					
			Since	Amsterdam Airport limits height of buildings					X					
		Since	Houses and land become uninhabitable (costs)						X					
		Since	Investments to reach Amsterdam Airport by land (costs)						X					
	But	Negative environmental effects should be managed				X	X	X	X					
	But	Cost-benefit analysis is not applied correctly often			X				X					
	But	Framework needed for completeness of the analysis				X								
	But	Economic effects are often overestimated or not reliable								X		X	X	X
	But	General equilibrium model required to estimate effects												X
Since	History shows the benefits of growth of Amsterdam Airport and similar projects									X	X			
Since	Growth helps to survive the threads of a globalizing market					X	X	X			X		X	
	Since	Airports have to meet critical thresholds of size, service				X		X						
But	Region should offer competitive service level to enable growth					X		X						
But	Amsterdam should also be able to grow when Amsterdam Airport grows								X					
Total number of grounds (rebuttals) in five reports on first level							7 (3)					7		
Total number of grounds (rebuttals) in five reports on second level							7 (12)					7 (7)		
Total number of grounds (rebuttals) in five reports on third level							32					26		
Total number of grounds (rebuttals) in five reports on fourth level							32 (1)					26 (13)		

to shade their final recommendations than academics, which aligns with the expectation that consultants use a more generalist approach in their argumentation. Two academic reports and one consultant report do not contribute on this level but present more specialized argumentation.

On the second level of argument, which states there are positive and negative effects, consultants present again more rebuttals, mainly negative effects. All reports acknowledge that Amsterdam Airport has positive welfare effects. Most academics focus on positive effects; negative effects get less attention than in the consultants' reports. Two academic reports question the validity of certain estimations, signaling a focus on methodology in their rebuttals. Consultants also show some methodological doubt, but they focus more on the management of negative effects.

On the third level of argumentation, academics mention more kinds of positive effects and consultants mention more kinds of negative effects, but the differences are modest. On the fourth level of argumentation, academics express doubts, exceptions and limitations in their rebuttals that question the impact or size of the positive effects. They admit the effects exist, but in estimating them they often hesitate. Doubts such as "there is much we do not know", "we need a better model of the economy", and "more research needs to be done" influence the academic conclusions. Consultants hardly mention rebuttals on this detailed level of argumentation.

Evaluation of the Degree of Specialization

The proposition that consultants argue more like generalists than academic advisers has hardly any support in the Amsterdam Airport case. Consultants present somewhat more (and more balanced) argumentation on the level of main grounds and rebuttals. Academic advisers present somewhat more (and more balanced) argumentation on the most detailed level of grounds and rebuttals. The differences are small though. The question is if similar differences will be visible in the liberalization debate as well.

CONSULTANT ADVICE IS MORE BALANCED

Chapter 4 concluded with the expectation that consultants and academics give advice in different ways. The differences apply to the final advice claim, the presented rebuttals and the attention to the modality of claims. These concepts come from Toulmin (1994). The final claim is what the authors conclude or advise; the rebuttals mention counterarguments that differentiate or weaken the meaning of the conclusion, such as having to

meet necessary conditions, or advantages that come with disadvantages. In the Amsterdam Airport case rebuttals are negative effects, practical (economic or political) conditions and methodological conditions. The modal qualifier indicates the certainty or uncertainty of a claim.

The research expectations (see Table 4.4) are that consultants give advice according to the common sense meaning of the word, using advocative and evaluative claims, whereas academic advisers present general conclusions for the client's application, such as the neutral if-then advice proposed by Robbins (1952) and Tinbergen (1956). Consultants claim they are more aware of practical conditions of rebuttal; academic advisers stress the need to address theoretical and methodological rebuttals. Academic advisers also claim to be neutral advisers, implying a balanced or non-controversial attention to positive and negative effects. Regarding modality, consultants are willing to present claims as certain in cases; academic advisers cannot be so bold due to their rigorous methodological standards.

Tables 5.2 (consultants) and 5.3 (academic advisers) summarize the advocative advice claim in the first row. The rows below continue with the underlying designative or evaluative conclusions, the modality attributed to the claims and the kind of rebuttals. Tables 5.2 and 5.3 therefore interpret and summarize the main conclusions and rebuttals presented in Table 5.1.

Consultant Advice is More Action Oriented

Consultants

Of the five consultant reports only IOO (1993) does not give advice about Amsterdam Airport (Table 5.2). IOO (1993) recommends taking the indirect state support into account in future cost-benefit analyses of investments in growth of airports. The report concludes that previous cost-benefit analyses of investments in Amsterdam Airport were not methodologically sound; decisions to invest in airports should consider all costs (IOO, 1993, p. 117), but the report gives no advice to reconsider the growth of Amsterdam Airport based on the criticized analysis. The report written by BEA (1993) argues explicitly in favor of growth of Amsterdam Airport because of the positive sum of effects of growth, although negative effects have to be managed. BCI (1996) considers different alternatives of growth and gives advice in favor of growth because it generates positive welfare effects in all relevant scenarios. BA&H (1999) advises their client to support growth of Amsterdam Airport, with the explicit need for the government to pay attention to the economic preconditions that need to be satisfied to enable growth. CE (2002, p. 11) recommends that the city of Amsterdam stresses its independence from Amsterdam Airport. CE (2002) argues that Amsterdam Airport should grow because of the

Table 5.2 Advice by consultants about Amsterdam Airport

	Consultants				
Client Author	SNM IOO (1993)	PMMS BEA (1993)	TNLI BCI (1996)	EZ (ministry) BA&H (1999)	City A'dam CE (2002)
Advice on Amsterdam Airport	No advice; consider indirect state support	Facilitate growth to mainport	Facilitate growth and watch threads	Facilitate growth and watch growth conditions	Facilitate growth, take measures to ease nuisance
Conclusion	Indirect state support lacks in cost-benefit analysis Amsterdam Airport	Positive welfare effects growth; growth is a strategic necessity	Positive welfare effects	Positive welfare effects growth; growth is a strategic necessity	Positive effects; social costs for Amsterdam fail in cost-benefit analysis
Modality (overall)	Certain claims	Certain claims	Certain claims	Certain claims	Likely claims
Rebuttals	Negative effects; methodology	Negative effects; political and economic conditions; methodology	Negative effects; political conditions	Negative effects; economic conditions	Negative effects; political conditions; methodology

Table 5.3 Advice by academics about Amsterdam Airport

	Universities				
Client	ATAN	AVBB	Actie S.	CEO Amsterdam Airport	RLD
Author	UvA (1992)	EUR et al. (1997)	RuG (1997)	Nyfer (2000)	VU (2001)
Advice on Amsterdam Airport	No advice; more research required	Facilitate growth	No advice; current research unreliable	No advice	No advice; more research required
Conclusion	Economy benefits from growth A'dam Airport	Positive welfare effects growth; growth is a strategic necessity	Denial of indirect labor effects	Economy benefits from growth A'dam Airport	Hard to estimate (indirect) welfare effects
Modality (overall)	Accentuation of uncertainties	Certain claims	Accentuation of uncertainties	Certain claims	Accentuation of uncertainties
Rebuttals	Measurements are unreliable	–	Negative effects; methodological requirements	Negative effects; method of estimation	Theory is not quite suitable; estimations unreliable

many positive effects for Amsterdam, but not at the cost of Amsterdam's growth. Amsterdam should stress the costs for the city and develop policies to manage its own growth problem caused by Amsterdam Airport.

Academic advisers

The most important recommendation of UvA (1992) and VU (2001) is the need for more research (Table 5.3). There are no recommendations about the growth of Amsterdam Airport. EUR et al. (1997) is the only academic report that concludes with the recommendation that Amsterdam Airport should grow. Compared to consultants, academic advisers give less action-oriented advice about Amsterdam Airport. If they give advice it has mainly a research orientation.

Consultant Conclusions are Concrete Compared to Academic Conclusions

Consultants

The IOO (1993) report has a critical and methodological perspective (Table 5.2). It introduces costs that are new to the debate. As a consequence IOO (1993) concludes that the outcome of the cost-benefit analysis of investments in Amsterdam Airport will be less positive.

BEA (1993) concludes that growth of Amsterdam Airport contributes to the international competitive position of the Dutch economy and especially to growth of the aviation and distribution sectors. Growth of Amsterdam Airport also contributes to the settlement of international headquarters and generates employment. BEA (1993, p. 37) also mentions strategic reasons to invest in growth of Amsterdam Airport such as the threshold argument, which says that moderate growth is not an option. If Amsterdam Airport fails to grow as it has, it cannot keep its position as an international mainport. In recessions airlines will concentrate their activities on the biggest international airports with most facilities. European headquarters will settle near those international mainports.

BCI is one of the consulting companies that contributed to the BEA (1993) report. It is therefore no surprise that the line of argument in the updated BCI (1996) report is similar to the BEA report. The focus of the BCI report, however, is on economic trends. The need for competitiveness is stressed for Amsterdam Airport to realize growth and for its attractiveness as a region for firms to settle in. Growth of Amsterdam Airport will therefore generate positive welfare effects.

BA&H (1999) concludes that Amsterdam Airport contributes to regional and national welfare, the development of a more modern economy and the international competitiveness of the Dutch economy. All are reasons to recommend growth.

CE (2002, p. 11) concludes that Amsterdam benefits from growth, but the report argues that many costs are not part of the cost-benefit analyses of CPB (2002), which has great authority as government adviser. The uninvestigated costs relate to enlarging Amsterdam with new construction. CE argues that good land becomes scarce due to the noise production of airplanes, so growth of Amsterdam becomes more expensive and more difficult.

Academic advisers

UvA (1992) draws the tentative conclusion that aviation contributes increasingly to the economy (Table 5.3). It refers to different indicators to show an increasing share of aviation in companies' transportation costs and an increasing share of aviation in aviation-dependent companies' production costs. These results suggest that Amsterdam Airport has a stimulating influence on related sectors of the Dutch economy. The UvA (1992) report introduces a new argument for growth: a larger Amsterdam Airport enhances the service sector. Growth of the service sector at the cost of industrial production means less pollution, so UvA argues that the environment will benefit from Amsterdam Airport's growth (UvA, 1992, p. 1).

EUR et al. (1997) conclude that there are only positive effects of further growth of Amsterdam Airport. They give the largest list of positive effects of growth without admitting negative effects. The authors are aware of many negative effects mentioned in the debate, but counter them with arguments. Like UvA (1992), the report argues that growth of Amsterdam Airport even generates positive environmental effects (EUR et al., 1997, pp. 34–6). These conclusions favor the interests of their client, an organization of building constructors, since investment in Amsterdam Airport is an investment in infrastructure. Investment in infrastructure means more work for building constructors, which is a temporary positive economic effect. Better infrastructure generates more efficiency in the Dutch economy and less travel time.

The RuG (1997) report is potentially the most critical. It is an attack on the indirect economic effects estimated by BCI, which are taken very seriously in the whole debate (BEA, 1993; BA&H, 1999; EUR et al., 1997). BCI argues that Amsterdam Airport generates much indirect labor by the settlement of international headquarters and European distribution centers near Amsterdam Airport. The RuG report claims that the most Amsterdam Airport dependent industries like European distribution centers and European headquarters are less Amsterdam Airport dependent than assumed in the debate (RuG, 1997, p. iv), thereby arguing that the multiplier of indirect labor effects used by BCI and most others is far too

high (RuG, 1997, p. 29). Whether there is a small multiplier effect remains a question. The report gives no advice and no general conclusion about growth of Amsterdam Airport. The central claim in the RuG report about indirect labor effects could serve as a strong rebuttal in the debate, but the report does not make an explicit connection to the main claim in the debate. It attacks the main argument and methodology of most reports in favor of growth only implicitly.

Nyfer (2000) concludes that the economy benefits from further growth of Amsterdam Airport. Nyfer acknowledges some negative effects of growth, but the focus is on the positive ones. They estimate high indirect labor effects by comparing welfare and employment in international regions with and without large airports. The results correspond to previous international research that estimates multipliers of indirect labor and indirect added value.

The VU (2001) report admits positive indirect welfare effects of Amsterdam Airport, but fails to quantify them. Indeed, how to interpret their literature review of indirect effects, which resembles the Nyfer review, is unclear. The VU report does not draw the same conclusion as Nyfer, but argues instead that many positive effects will be absorbed by reactions of the economy. They mainly argue how difficult it is to make sense of the effects and how little economists know about them.

Compared to consultants the conclusions of most academic reports are less tangible. That applies to UvA (1992), RuG (1997) and VU (2001). The EUR et al. (1997) and Nyfer (2000) reports have concrete conclusions that tell more about the size and kind of effects of growth, like the consultant reports do.

Uncertainty Stimulates Consultants to Action and Academics to Further Research

Consultants

All consultants that stress the benefits of growth of Amsterdam Airport argue that the Dutch economy will certainly benefit from Amsterdam Airport's growth (Table 5.2). Reasonable doubts are no reason to draw this conclusion with less certainty. BEA even refers to uncertainty as a reason to act and support the growth of Amsterdam Airport. BEA (1993, p. 6) argues that the most likely future seems that Amsterdam Airport has to compete in a European or a global aviation market and that growth of Amsterdam Airport is the best alternative in most scenarios of possible futures. It 'is in all situations better than the decision to do nothing, even in the current situation of strategic uncertainty'. Uncertainty is therefore a reason to act, not a reason to wait while striving for more certainty.

Academic advisers

Academic reports (Table 5.3) like UvA (1992, p. 30) present conclusions with explicit doubts: 'many decisions about aviation assume a relation between this sector and the whole Dutch economy'. As a consequence the UvA report argues that more research is needed to draw more certain conclusions. In the VU (2001) report a similar line of argument is visible. The RuG report also stresses uncertainties and doubts. The EUR et al. (1997) and Nyfer (2000) reports are exceptions. Both present relatively certain claims, although Nyfer argues that exact quantification of effects is difficult, but a less exact quantification also suffices.

Consultants Stress Practical Rebuttals, Academics Deny Negative Effects

Consultants

All consultant reports mention concrete negative environmental effects or costs of Amsterdam Airport (Table 5.2). IOO (1993) and CE (2002) stress that some costs are neglected in the debate. In all reports negative effects are an important rebuttal.

Four reports pay attention to practical rebuttals such as political or economic conditions that need to be satisfied. BEA (1993, p. 1) mentions the need for management of negative effects, although the report concludes that positive effects outweigh negative effects. BCI (1996, pp. 8–10) mentions practical preconditions to implement the process of growth. Although BCI values the positive economic impact of Amsterdam Airport relatively highly, it also acknowledges negative environmental effects of Amsterdam Airport as a rebuttal. The BA&H (1999) report mentions the responsibility of the government to manage the conditions for growth, since they are not quite fulfilled. CE (2002) argues that the possibility of further growth of Amsterdam is a precondition for further growth of Amsterdam Airport.

Consultants unexpectedly also pay some attention to methodological rebuttals. IOO (1993) and CE (2002) both argue that cost-benefit analysis requires a complete investigation of costs and benefits and that some costs are neglected in the debate. BEA argues for the need of a framework to analyse all effects, which is, according to BEA, a research condition that assures completeness.

Academic advisers

Only two academic reports (RuG, 1997; Nyfer, 2000) mention concrete negative effects of Amsterdam Airport (Table 5.3). VU (2001) poses a research question to focus on indirect effects, which can explain this lack of attention to negative effects. UvA (1992) and EUR et al. (1997) argue

one-sidedly, only mentioning positive effects of growth of Amsterdam Airport and even denying some negative effects. That is unexpected, since academic advisers claim to be neutral experts.

Academic reports pay no attention to practical rebuttals. They only pay serious attention to methodological rebuttals in this debate. RuG (1997) argues against the method to estimate indirect labor effects. The Nyfer (2000) report mentions no methodological rebuttals with respect to its own conclusions, but is very critical about previous research methods, like the RuG (1997) report. The Nyfer report applies another methodology to solve methodological problems criticized in consultant estimations. The VU (2001) report mentions methodological rebuttals and refers to them in the conclusion for further research.

Evaluation of the Presentation of Claims

Expectations about advice are met in the Amsterdam Airport case. Consultants give more advice than academic advisers and their advice is more actionable. If academic advisers give advice, they often recommend more or better research.

Academic conclusions are vague if the recommendation is for more research; they say little about the kind and size of positive and negative economic effects. Consultants' conclusions are concrete concerning kind and size of economic effects.

Three academic reports stress uncertainties as expected. Two present bold claims and deny questions of uncertainty. For consultants this was expected, for academics it was not.

Academic advisers pay serious attention to methodological rebuttals. Quite unexpectedly three reports argue one-sidedly with respect to the positive and negative effects: only two reports mention negative effects of Amsterdam Airport's growth. Therefore, academic neutrality becomes rather questionable. Consultants are more balanced with respect to positive and negative effects and pay more attention to practical rebuttals than academic advisers. Unexpectedly they also pay attention to methodological rebuttals in three reports.

CONSULTANTS MAKE REALITY BY QUANTIFYING GROUNDS

Table 4.4 in the previous chapter summarizes research expectations. Consultants like estimations to quantify their variables, even if they are based on guesswork; academic advisers prefer precise measurements.

Consultants present valuations; academic advisers prefer to be neutral advisers presenting statements of fact or non-controversial valuations. How well do these expectations fit the Amsterdam Airport case?

Tables 5.4 and 5.5 give the available quantifications of the grounds summarized in Table 5.1. Toulmin (1994) characterizes grounds as the arguments that give the claim direct support. Quantifications make grounds more concrete and therefore more compelling. It is more convincing to say that Amsterdam Airport generates two times as much employment than that Amsterdam Airport generates "more" employment.

Central positive welfare effects in the debate are direct and indirect labor effects and the related direct and indirect added value generated by Amsterdam Airport. Both positive effects are estimated and used as argument for growth, since these positive or desirable welfare effects will grow when Amsterdam Airport grows. Many reports estimate total labor effects with the help of multipliers. When the multiplier of total labor is one, it means that there is one indirect laborer employed around Amsterdam Airport for every laborer employed at Amsterdam Airport directly. Amsterdam Airport generates employment for suppliers (backward linkages) and for its users (forward linkages). Indirect labor is defined differently in some reports, but in Tables 5.4 and 5.5 all labor that is not direct but still caused by Amsterdam Airport is treated as indirect labor. IOO (1993) estimates indirect state support, RuG (1997) only mentions this argument. Table 5.4 shows consultants' quantifications and Table 5.5 shows academic advisers' quantifications.

Most Consultants Estimate Economic Effects Themselves

Consultant reports

Table 5.4 shows that most consultant reports estimate Amsterdam Airport's labor effects and added value. With these quantifications they create a more concrete representation of an economic reality. Quantifications – both positive and negative – give the economic impact of Amsterdam Airport more presence.

The IOO (1993) report is very focused in its argument. Only indisputable positive effects such as direct employment and direct added value of the aviation sector are considered. Figures about indirect effects that are central to most other reports have no real importance to the argument in this report. The main argument in the IOO (1993) report is that Amsterdam Airport is supported by the government via tax reductions. These reductions are quantified to count them as social costs, since all costs have to be considered in a social cost-benefit analysis, as well as indirect state support.

Table 5.4 Quantification of grounds by consultants

	Consultants				
Client Author	SNM IOO (1993)	PMMS BEA (1993)	TNLI BCI (1996)	EZ (ministry) BA&H (1999)	City A'dam CE (2002)
Estimations for year	1990	1990	1995	1995	Not specified
Direct labor effects	46 000[1]	38 000	38 680	41 600	–
Indirect labor suppliers	–	18 000	26 580	26 250	–
Indirect labor users	–	16 000	19 500	19 000	–
Total labor effects	–	72 000	84 760	87 750	Mainly direct
Multiplier total labor effect	c. 1	0.9	1.2	1.2 (cited)	Low
Added value	€[2] 2.2 billion[3]	–	€4.3 billion	€4.5 billion	–
Indirect added value	–	–	€1.8 billion	€2.3 billion	–
Total added value	–	€3.9 billion	€6.1 billion	€6.8 billion	–
Indirect state support (lost taxes)	€0.2–0.9 billion	–	–	–	–

Notes:
[1] Employed in whole Dutch Aviation sector.
[2] All estimates originally in Hfl.
[3] Added value whole Dutch Aviation sector.

Table 5.5 Quantification of grounds by academic advisers

	Universities				
Client	ATAN	AVBB	Actie S.	CEO Amsterdam Airport	RLD
Author	UvA (1992)	EUR et al. (1997)	RuG (1997)	Nyfer (2000)	VU (2001)
Estimations for year	–	1995	1995	1997	–
Direct labor effects	–	41 600	38.500	1500 per mil. passenger movements	–
Indirect labor suppliers	–	26 250	–	–	–
Indirect labor users	–	19 900	–	–	–
Total labor effects	Positive	87 750	Far less than 85 000	3000 (5800)[1] per mil. pas. m	–
Multiplier total labor effect Amsterdam Airport	1.5–1.75 (based on citations)	1.2 (cited)	Negligible	1 (3)[1]	Less than 2 (based on citations)
Added value	–	€[2]4.5 billion	€4.3 billion	–	–
Indirect added value	–	€2.3 billion	–	–	–
Total added value (attributed to Amsterdam Airport)	–	€6.8 billion	Less than €6 billion	€0.3 billion per mil. pas. mov.	–
Indirect state support	–	–	–	–	–

Notes:
[1] Figures in brackets are temporal during process of growth.
[2] All estimates originally in Hfl.

The estimations in BEA (1993) differ only in degree from the other reports. BEA (1993) estimates a relatively low multiplier of indirect labor. As a consequence the indirect added value estimate is also relatively low.

Compared to the BEA report, BCI (1996) estimates the positive effects somewhat higher, for instance, the multiplier of indirect labor and the importance of Amsterdam Airport in attracting other companies to settle. Their estimations of direct and indirect added value and employment generated by Amsterdam Airport are used by BA&H (1999) and EUR et al. (1997).

BA&H (1999) presents estimates similar to BCI, but based on a later BCI publication. The authors estimate the direct effects and indirect added value somewhat higher, but indirect labor effects somewhat lower.

CE (2002) uses CPB's estimates. The report makes a sort of apology for not estimating economic costs while criticizing CPB for underestimating many of Amsterdam Airport's social costs. The reason they give is 'lack of time' (CE, 2002, p. 11).

Academic reports

Table 5.5 shows that academic advisers give fewer estimates in their reports. They concentrate on direct effects and research about indirect effects. In RuG (1997) and Nyfer (2000) estimates are presented with extensive methodological justification. Little consensus nonetheless exists in academic advisers' estimates, in spite of their academic methods.

The UvA (1992) report is critical about the exactness of estimates of indirect employment since the multipliers of indirect labor differ in previous research too much to be reliable. UvA (1992) estimates a relatively high labor effect compared to later consultant estimates (BCI, 1996; BEA, 1993).

The EUR et al. (1997) report does not refer to its own research. It uses BCI results to estimate positive employment effects, but does so without critical reflection. In that respect EUR et al. (1997) is an exceptional academic report again.

The RuG (1997) report concludes that growth of distribution firms and international headquarters in the Amsterdam Airport region is not dependent on Amsterdam Airport's growth. If Amsterdam Airport doubled its flights, it would have no effect on the sales and profits of nearly 90 percent of what are considered the most Amsterdam Airport-dependent distribution firms. The remaining 10 percent could expect small effects on sales or profits at most. The indirect labor effects of Amsterdam Airport are estimated even lower. Ninety-seven percent of the firms expect no positive effects on their employment from Amsterdam Airport's doubling of flights. The multiplier is thus close to zero. The RuG report has had little

effect though, maybe because the report does not draw conclusions that relate to the more general arguments in the debate.

The Nyfer (2000) report draws quite different conclusions with a different methodology. It estimates the multiplier of indirect labor for Amsterdam Airport at 1 on a structural basis and 3 during the process of investment in growth (Nyfer, 2000, pp. 109–112, 129). They estimate indirect added value at € 0.3 billion per million passenger movements. In 1995 Amsterdam Airport had about 25 million passenger movements (p. 37), which would imply a total added value of € 8 billion (pp. 130, p. 113), a figure higher than the highest consultant estimation.

VU (2001) does not estimate much. The report cites many impact studies without drawing quantitative conclusions. The authors only indicate the size of the multiplier of the total labor effect by arguing that it will be less than 2 (VU, 2001, p. 110), which suggests a high multiplier compared to the consultants' estimates of around 1. Academic estimates are thus both lower and higher than consultant estimates and most apparent: they show lack of consensus.

Consultants Present Positive and Negative Effects More Balanced

The proposition about grounds in Table 4.4 in the previous chapter states that consultants use explicit valuations in their argument and academic advisers do not. This proposition is only visible in the Amsterdam Airport debate regarding consultants. Academic advisers value effects in a controversial way: only two academic reports acknowledge negative effects as such (Table 5.1). The third level of Table 5.1 shows that the consultant reports together acknowledge six positive effects and five negative effects, whereas academic advisers acknowledge nine positive effects and only three negative effects.

Presenting an effect as positive or negative or claiming that positive effects outweigh negative effects both imply valuation. Most consultants and academic advisers make this evaluative claim. The UvA (1992) and EUR et al. (1997) reports are most extreme, since they ignore negative effects altogether. That certainly implies a controversial valuation. UvA (1992) and EUR et al. (1997) try to redefine negative environmental effects of Amsterdam Airport and apply the technique of dissociation (Perelman, 1982, p. 126). They argue that in the long run and from a more general perspective, Amsterdam Airport stimulates travel efficiency, growth of the service sector and technological innovation, which will result in less pollution from a macro perspective. Because the service sector causes less pollution than industry, total pollution decreases when Amsterdam Airport grows. EUR et al. (1997) also argue that the evaluation of pollution

should be international. The report argues that growth restrictions for Amsterdam Airport can cause inefficiencies that result in more international pollution in the end. They argue that pollution caused by the growth of Amsterdam Airport is more apparent than real, thereby denying the existence of negative effects. In contrast, the strategy of RuG (1997) is to deny positive effects. Academic advisers seem more comfortable arguing that something *is not* rather than that something *is*.

None of the consultant reports explicitly deny the negative value of environmental effects of Amsterdam Airport like UvA (1992) and EUR et al. (1997). Most consultants arguing in favor of growth acknowledge the relevance of the position of the environmental movement and argue for measures to manage negative effects. Consultants even find new negative effects that have to be considered in the debate: social costs such as the loss of tax income due to tax reductions (IOO, 1993) or the limitations for the growth of Amsterdam (CE, 2002).

Evaluation of the Use of Grounds

The results regarding consultants align with the formulated proposition. Consultants estimate the economic effects of Amsterdam Airport by means of figures that can be understood relatively easily, such as the total employment that results from Amsterdam Airport or the reduction of taxes. Consultants' estimates about indirect effects are close to each other, given the large margin of error. Consultants create a credible but not necessarily exact representation of the world and they make their message concrete. Consultants try to picture a world in order to act in that world. In their overall picture positive and negative effects are considered in a balanced way compared to academic reports.

The results regarding academic advisers do not align with the formulated proposition regarding the use of grounds. Within the debate about labor effects academic advisers present different estimates. One report argues that consultants estimate labor effects much too high (RuG, 1997) whereas others suggest the highest multipliers in the debate (UvA, 1992; Nyfer, 2000; VU, 2001) and some state that previous estimates differ too much (UvA, 1992; VU, 2001). Among academics EUR et al. (1997) even cite consultant estimates without any critical discussion. Only the techniques of estimating illustrate the research expectation about academics: UvA (1992), RuG (1997), Nyfer (2000) and VU (2001) apply these techniques. However, this does not guarantee consensus.

Valuation of positive and negative effects by academic advisers is less balanced than valuation by consultants. They deny positive (RuG, 1997) or negative effects (UvA, 1992; EUR et al., 1997). Only two academic

reports consider both positive and negative effects in a more balanced way as consultants do in this case.

CONSULTANTS PREFER COMMON SENSE WARRANTS

The positive economic effects of Amsterdam Airport are grounds supporting the conclusion that Amsterdam Airport should grow because its growth implies growth of positive effects, given that negative effects do not outweigh them. The implicit warrant for this conclusion is that a positive sum of economic effects is desirable. The reasonable connection between grounds is implicit, while the conclusion is explicit.

Since warrants often meet general acceptance, most are left implicit in argumentation (Toulmin et al., 1984, pp. 100, 114). Warrants give only indirect support, guaranteeing a reasonable connection between grounds and conclusion. It should therefore always be possible to make warrants explicit by stating this reasonable connection. If not, the argumentation is flawed. Implicit warrants of Table 5.1 legitimizing the connection between the main claims and first level grounds and between first level grounds and second level grounds are made explicit in Table 5.6. The same applies to connections with first and second level rebuttals.

Table 5.6 gives three kinds of warrants: warrants based on motives, on criteria or laws and on causality. Sometimes warrants have a dual character, like in the case of effects: there is causality involved to make it an effect, but also a motivational element when effects are positive or negative. I have only listed the most dominant implied warrant in Table 5.6: the causal assumption regarding effects is conditional and therefore most dominant, for example.

The claim that Amsterdam Airport should grow conditionally is supported by the ground that conditional growth generates a positive sum of effects. The warrant is that the positive sum of effects generated by conditional growth is desirable: the first warrant presented in Table 5.6. An alternative advice claim is that growth of Amsterdam Airport is always beneficial because there are no negative effects (EUR et al., 1997). The implicit warrant here is different, since it connects other statements: even unconditional growth generates desirable effects.

The table divides the warrants into three groups. Those referring to values or motives are presented first. Warrants referring to criteria, norms or laws are presented next. The third group of warrants refers to assumed regularities, causalities and theories. Do consultants and academic advisers argue like they say they do regarding the use of warrants (see Chapter

Table 5.6 First and second level warrants implied in reports about growth of Amsterdam Airport

		Consultants					Academics				
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Motivational warrants that refer to desires, motives or values											
Conditional growth of Amsterdam Airport is desirable because of the positive sum of effects			X	X	X	X					
Growth of Amsterdam Airport is desirable because of the positive sum of effects								X			
It is desirable to remain competitive in a globalizing market			X	X	X			X		X	
It is undesirable that growth of Amsterdam Airport makes the growth of Amsterdam impossible; it requires measures to prevent that						X					
2nd level	It is undesirable that growth of Amsterdam Airport harms the environment; it requires measures to protect the environment		X	X	X	X					
Motivational warrants that refer to explicit criteria, norms or laws											
2nd level	Criteria to apply cost-benefit analysis should be followed	X				X					
	Explicit framework of effects to judge economic impact is necessary to argue for the completeness of integral judgment		X								
	Methodological criteria that guarantee reliability of results should be followed to estimate welfare effects						X		X	X	X
	Appropriate equilibrium theories are necessary to estimate welfare effects reliably										X

		Consultants					Academics				
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Warrants that refer to causality or means-end relations:											
The history of growth of Amsterdam Airport shows its growing economic impact as a regularity							X	X			
Growth is a helpful means to meet the requirements of a competitive airport in a global market			X	X	X			X		X	
A competitive service level of the Amsterdam Airport region is a necessary means for growth			X		X						
2nd level	There is a causal relation between growth of Amsterdam Airport and positive effects like more added value, employment, settlement etc.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	There is a causal relation between investments in growth of Amsterdam Airport and temporal positive effects							X		X	
	There is a causal relation between growth of Amsterdam Airport and negative effects like pollution, safety risks, scarcity of land etc.	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	
	Only if Amsterdam Airport's size and service surpass threshold values, then its growth becomes an effective cause (or means) to increase competitiveness		X		X						

4)? The proposition presented at the end of Chapter 4 states that academics make more extensive use of theoretical explanations based on assumed causal relations, whereas consultants as minimal users of theory refer more to motives, values and economic criteria in their arguments.

Consultants Use Motivational Arguments More Critically

Argumentation that refers to the desirability of one alternative compared to other alternatives is typical for consultants. They value the desirability

and the possible risks of alternative policies. In the Amsterdam Airport debate consultants use the warrant that growth of economic welfare is desirable and that threats have to be dealt with. They argue, for instance, that it is desirable to increase competitiveness of Amsterdam Airport by its growth. These motivational arguments are used less by academic advisers in the Amsterdam Airport debate, which corresponds to the expectations in Table 4.4.

Consultant reports

Most consultant reports refer to a desirable future state caused by the growth of Amsterdam Airport. The desirable state is characterized by means of its 'advantages' (BEA, 1993, p. 4; BA&H 1999, pp. 4–5). CE (2002) devotes the subtitle of their report to the question of whether Amsterdam benefits from growth of Amsterdam Airport. They argue it will, but warn about the neglected costs of disadvantages for Amsterdam. Three consultant reports use the warrant that negative environmental effects have to be managed, since these effects are undesirable. Consultants thus use motivational arguments to convince their clients to take measures, to "do" something like BA&H (1999, p. 16): if Amsterdam Airport cannot grow, it results in a 'danger for the economy of the Amsterdam Airport region'.

All consultants assume that conditional growth of Amsterdam Airport is desirable. That is the first warrant in Table 5.6. However, BEA (1993), BCI (1996), BA&H (1999) and CE (2002) identify environmental threats to the realization of desirable growth, their second level motivational warrant in Table 5.6. They thus warn and push in their recommendations to direct their client to the desirable future state they imagine.

The last two motives refer to managing disadvantages of growth. Many consultants stress the importance of taking more interests into account. BEA (1993, p. 10) refers to environmental constraints, and a separate research project to investigate the economic effects of the growth alternative most beneficial to the environment. BCI (1996, pp. 48–50) refers to political and consumer trends, in which an increasing care for the environment is mentioned, and a possible tax regime to better protect the environment. CE is most explicit in this respect, arguing that Amsterdam has to ask for more consideration of its own negative effects to manage the social costs.

CE (2002, p. 10) is pragmatic in the sense that the authors admit that there is always a trade-off possible between environmental constraints and economic effects. Strong positive economic effects can undermine the force of environmental constraints. The price of environmental care has to remain acceptable.

Academic reports

The ethos of academics is to leave the decision about what is and what is not desirable to the client. As expected they refer less to motivational arguments than consultants in the Amsterdam Airport debate. However, two reports do. The EUR et al. (1997) report is exceptional in two ways: it presents motivational warrants explicitly and presents them one-sidedly, that is, in favor of unrestricted growth of Amsterdam Airport.

Consultants Stress Completeness as Criterion, Not Precision

Some values such as the appreciation of a neutral attitude or the intent to help a client with sound recommendations can often be translated into explicit criteria. Criteria are, for example, that all costs should be considered in a cost-benefit analysis, or that academic results are the same results when research is replicated. What are the criteria, norms or laws that consultants and academic advisers refer to, according to their ethos? Do consultants refer more to controversial economic criteria, principles or laws than academic advisers as expected in Table 4.4?

Consultant reports

Consultants refer to criteria in the Amsterdam Airport debate that belong to normative methodology, such as the principle of considering all relevant costs and benefits (Table 5.6). It is a completeness criterion. Consultants argue that their results should give a good indication, but precision is not their ultimate end. It is not a problem to estimate certain effects somewhat too high or too low, but it is a serious problem to forget a relevant category of effects. The above summarizes their "quick and dirty" approach.

IOO (1993) and CE (2002) criticize those who argue in favor of growth of Amsterdam Airport without mentioning negative effects and costs. IOO (1993, p. 13) shows that state support is neglected while considering investments in airports. The authors argue that 'under these circumstances, a careful cost-benefit analysis is necessary'. "Careful" means considering all relevant categories of costs and benefits. Research that neglects state support in a cost-benefit analysis violates this principle.

CE (2002) argues differently. The authors admit that the benefits of growth are so huge that costs will be less, even though underestimated. They consider it necessary, however, to take all costs into account to appropriately manage the social costs or negative effects. Reduction of social costs contributes to welfare and therefore should not be neglected.

BEA (1993, p. 30) tries to make explicit which effects are taken into

account by presenting a frame of reference for evaluating all economic effects. The BEA report distinguishes three levels of economic effects on a micro, meso and macro level, and identifies the effects considered on each level. It makes their analysis transparent and it contributes to analytical completeness.

Academic reports

Academic advisers refer to criteria of positive methodology (Table 5.6). They criticize inconsistencies and imprecision in estimating the multiplier of indirect labor. Academic advisers share the objective to do sound academic research, but in their own analysis they show no consensus regarding method and results. Only EUR et al. (1997) consider the estimates consultants make reliable enough to use them, which makes them exceptional again.

UvA (1992, p. 30) argues that estimates of multipliers should become more reliable to strengthen the argument for decisions about investments in Amsterdam Airport. The authors acknowledge serious indications that Amsterdam Airport generates substantial welfare effects, but they point to the methodological weaknesses in this argument too.

RuG researchers argue that economic effects of Amsterdam Airport's growth should be visible in the value of companies, as expressed in profit, sales, number of employees and share price (RuG, 1997, p. 20). However, growth of Amsterdam Airport has little effect on those indicators. Therefore they argue that the methodology of BCI consultants, and other reports that use BCI estimates, overestimate indirect welfare effects, which conflicts with the criterion of precision and reliability. The RuG (1997) report needs 25 percent of its length to justify its alternative method.

Nyfer (2000, p. 97) uses different methodological criteria to argue in favor of a statistical analysis of the relationship between settlement or employment and size or growth of an airport. The authors argue that questionnaires give less reliable results than international comparison of regions with and without mainports or airports.

VU (2001, p. 121) mainly argues that indirect effects are hard to estimate because of the many interdependencies between variables in the economy: 'There is probably no general equilibrium model available' that enables a sophisticated estimation of all these effects. VU (2001) cites much previous research without drawing many conclusions because the results are not reliable. VU (2001) refers to the criteria that effects should not be counted twice and that advantages should not be focused on without taking into account disadvantages of the same effect (VU, 2001, p. 122).

Consultants Base Causal Warrants on Common Sense Instead of Theory

All reports in the Amsterdam Airport debate use arguments by regularity or causality. Arguments by regularity are historical, and based on ongoing trends. An argument by regularity assumes that past regularities will continue in the future. Arguments by causality assume a causal or a means-end relation. Academic advisers do not use these arguments more often than consultants, but relate their causal argumentation to theories not mentioned by consultants. The latter refer to common sense understandings. The expectation of Table 4.4 based on academic and consultant ethos is thus visible in the practice of both professions.

Consultant reports

All reports address many direct and indirect effects of Amsterdam Airport. Reference to these positive or negative effects implies causality. Most reports argue that the effects increase with the growth of Amsterdam Airport (Table 5.6). In this respect argumentation between consultants and academic advisers is the same. Regularities are also part of the arguments of consultants and academics, but consultants do not consider the long time horizon of academics (EUR et al., 1997; UvA, 1992), who give historical arguments. Instead of a historical orientation, consultants are more aware of recent trends and developments (BCI, 1996). They also refer to growth as a means to maintain the current strategic balance between competitors (BEA, 1993; BCI, 1996; BA&H, 1999). The arguments refer to common sense more than theory.

BEA (1993, p. 4) stresses that some competitors realize their growth strategies better than Amsterdam Airport. BCI (1996, p. 56) argues that many transportation alternatives are possible but alternatives with Amsterdam Airport in a strong position realize the largest positive welfare effects. It is an argument for a strategy to position Amsterdam Airport as an international mainport and for growth as a condition to remain competitive. The BA&H (1999) report mentions the strong competitive force of the other European mainports, but also stresses that the government is responsible for creating Amsterdam Airport's growth conditions, like the competitive service level of the Amsterdam Airport region.

Academic reports

Academic advisers refer more to sophisticated theory in causal warrants (Table 5.6), even though advice reports do not require much theoretical sophistication. A first example is UvA's (1992, pp. 5–9) historical argumentation, which covers the development of the Dutch economy to a service economy over a period of 30 years: longer than trend analyses by

consultants. The authors of the UvA report argue that service economies are more dependent on the aviation sector than agricultural and industrial economies. Therefore Amsterdam Airport's importance for the Dutch economy will grow.

The reference to the concept of comparative advantage (EUR et al., 1997, p. 7) is another illustration of academic sophistication in discussing causality. The warrant is not visible in Table 5.6 because it is an argument on the third level in Table 5.1. This theory of Ricardo explains the causality that Rotterdam Seaport and Amsterdam Airport give the Dutch economy an advantage over other European economies. The Dutch economy had historically a comparative advantage by its many rivers and central European position. Rotterdam Seaport has benefited from and contributed to this Dutch comparative advantage for centuries. Amsterdam Airport can have a similar impact. The argument is strengthened by the fact that Amsterdam Airport and Rotterdam Seaport work increasingly together. The strategic advantage of a big seaport with a first-class airport cannot be overvalued is their central message.

Evaluation of the Use of Warrants

As expected, consultants use motivational warrants more often than academic advisers in the Amsterdam Airport debate. Both professions use methodological criteria in their argument, implicitly referring to their appropriateness. That is unexpected for consultants. Also unexpected is the lack of consensus academics have about criteria and methods to estimate indirect effects. That makes the methodological criteria they refer to rather controversial.

The use of arguments by causality and regularity is as expected. Consultants refer more to a common sense understanding of causalities, whereas academic advisers add more sophisticated theoretical insights to their causal arguments.

CONSULTANT BACKING IS QUICK AND DIRTY

Backings confirm the existence or truth of grounds and warrants. Grounds giving strong evidence for a conclusion are not necessarily true. Their truth can be backed by reference to observation, a document or experience. Chapter 4 concluded that consultants often refer to experience, observations and oral sources to back their arguments. Academic advisers rely on scientific method to provide evidence for their arguments. Scientific reference to previous research is a popular method. How do both

professions back their arguments in the Amsterdam Airport debate? Table 5.7 summarizes their methods.

Only Consultants Emphasize Experience as Backing

Academics cite more than consultants

The results of Table 5.7 correspond to the research expectation presented in Table 4.4 that academics follow the scientific method concerning frequency and precision of citations. It is the most dominant technique of backing in academic reports about Amsterdam Airport. The number of references in academic reports is on average three times higher than consultant reports. The selection of sources is also different. Academic advisers refer to many academic works and academic theories. The Nyfer (2000) and VU (2001) reports, for example, refer to theories of Krugman. The VU (2001) report has the most references to sophisticated academic theories. If consultants do refer to a scientific source, it is a single dissertation (IOO, 1993) or academic report (CE, 2002). References to the other genres such as consultant reports, government texts and annual reports of Amsterdam Airport are more frequent, even though academic advisers are still more active in looking at these text sources as well. Only public databases and statistics are more often used by consultants. There are thus differences in the kind of references and the frequency of their use.

The third difference is that academics present references in their reports as if they were writing for an academic audience. Consultants follow the same standard but less accurately. The BCI (1996) report shows this most clearly in making no scientific references at all. Sometimes the BCI (1996) report refers to an author or institution in the text and sometimes it gives information with figures and tables, but the references do not meet scientific standards.

Statistics, calculations and economic models

Calculation of welfare effects is common in consultants' reports: IOO (1993), BEA (1993) and BCI (1996) base their conclusions on their own calculations (Table 5.7). Only UvA (1992) also applies this technique. VU (2001) applies economic models to identify the causality between Amsterdam Airport and its indirect effects, but they cannot find effects this way. Nyfer (2000) generates grounds with a statistical model that helps estimate indirect labor effects in a scientific way. Even though they criticize how consultants back their guesses, their results are even more optimistic than the "quick and dirty" consultant estimates.

Table 5.7 Sources as backing for statements in reports about the growth of Amsterdam Airport

	Consultants					Academics				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Text sources										
References to scientific research (reports, books, articles)	X				X	X	X	X	X	X
References to (policy) reports by consultants or private organizations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
References to policy texts or laws written by government/ministries	X	X			X	X	X		X	X
References to annual reports	X								X	X
References to public statistics or public databases	X	X	X	X		X			X	
References to newspapers							X		X	
References according to scientific standards	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
References to more than 50 different sources							X		X	X
References to 20–50 different sources	X	X				X		X		
References to less than 20 sources			X	X	X					
Technical sources										
Own calculation of welfare effects	X	X	X			X				
Use of statistical techniques to estimate effects									X	
Application of economic model(s)									X	X
Oral or experience-based sources										
Reference to own expertise, experience, interpretation or view authors		X	X	X	X					
Face to face (expert) interviews					X			X		
Group discussions		X								X
Tele-interviews or enquiry								X		
Use of consultancy database			X							

Consultants' experience-based sources

Table 5.7 illustrates the expectation that consultants refer more to experience than academics. BCI consultants refer to a large company database of accumulated knowledge, for example. Most consultants are willing to estimate, interpret and suggest the best course of action for their client, which can be Amsterdam, Amsterdam Airport or the national government, even though they cannot legitimize in a scientific way. When it is the

best interpretation or suggestion possible, they will not hesitate to use it. Their experience, expertise or authority is the backing in these cases.

Academics have much theoretical knowledge, but do not refer to their personal knowledge like consultants. The EUR et al. (1997) report gives advice, and is also very opiniative, but personal views are not referred to as a source. The authors of the EUR report look for "objective" sources that support their own opinions. They prefer sources like published research, since they consider publication a sign of quality, but they also refer to consultants' reports. Academics rarely interpret numbers like consultants and do not give personal estimates or expert guesses in the Amsterdam Airport debate. The VU (2001) report, for example, refers to many consultant estimates of indirect labor effects, but rarely the authors own. Similarly RuG (1997) criticizes consultant calculations of indirect labor effects, but the authors do not give their own. They conclude that previous estimates are too high, but refer to a McKinsey method to legitimize how they estimate the value of firms, which is somewhat ironical.

We would expect consultants to more often interview their environment. In the Amsterdam Airport case, however, they rarely do. Interviews are mentioned in the consultant report by CE (2002) and also in the RuG (1997) report, meaning no difference in approach. We would also expect the use of group discussions, but there are few signs of that approach. Only BEA (1993, p. 10) mentions an advisory committee and a large supervisory committee whose participants contributed to discussions about the report. I cannot explain why they do not mention these approaches more. In my experience, interviews and group discussions are very important in consultant research.

Only Consultants Back Value Statements

The backing of value statements is concerned with whether and to what degree effects are positive or negative. The research expectation is that academics are not involved in these controversial value debates, whereas consultants are. However, academic advisers participate in these debates and they try to back controversial statements in unexpected ways.

Environmental effects, a political issue, are the most controversial in the Amsterdam Airport debate. The many complaints about the noise of arriving or departing airplanes are commonly accepted as negative effects. All consultants and some academic advisers refer to them as negative effects in their reports, even when they argue in favor of growth of Amsterdam Airport. Many positive welfare effects are also commonly accepted. Two academic reports (UvA, 1992; EUR et al., 1997) argue in a controversial way about the negative character of these environmental effects. The EUR report is most extreme by arguing that the underlying effects like noise or

pollution would not increase with the growth of Amsterdam Airport, thus crossing the boundary of common sense understanding. The authors back their claim by changing the horizon of investigation. If people cannot fly from Amsterdam Airport, they will fly from another airport; Amsterdam Airport is modern and modern airports cause less environmental damage than less modern ones. In a similar way RuG (1997) tries to redefine the positive indirect labor effect of Amsterdam Airport as non-existent. The authors argue that there is insufficient backing for the claim that labor effects exist, as opposed to common sense belief.

A second controversy is about the costs of Amsterdam Airport. Some categories are underestimated, others are not even considered (IOO, 1993; CE, 2002). Consultants again refer to common sense: why are taxes not taken into account, or why are the negative effects for Amsterdam not quantified? In the debate these arguments would not make a difference in the end, due to the general feeling that the benefits still dominate. CE (2002, p. 10) argues: 'it would be naïve to consider environmental constraints as rock-solid' such that they would not be given up if the importance of positive economic effects dominates. Overestimation of economic benefits could suppress the impact of environmental constraints, even when acknowledged. This debate is therefore about the balance between positive economic effects and negative environmental effects, and the urgency of managing negative effects.

Evaluation of the Use of Backings

The backings of positive statements are as expected. Academic advisers refer to text sources more than consultants. Academic advisers prefer academic sources; consultants refer more to policy reports and public statistics. Academic advisers also use more advanced techniques of estimating, such as statistics and economic models. Consultants refer more to experience-based sources and common sense beliefs. Though the expectations are illustrated in general, that interviews and group discussions are mentioned so little by consultants in the Amsterdam Airport case was unexpected, but also that academic advisers need to back their controversial statements about the positive or negative character of effects. That they fail to do so can be explained by their espoused neutral approach.

CONSULTANTS STRESS HIGHLIGHTS IN THEIR REPORTS

The reflections on presentation in Chapter 4 conclude with the expectation that consultants' recommendations have a dominant position in their

reports. They also present important claims and final conclusions expressively with headings, textboxes, diagrams or tables. Academic reports are expected to have more sections on methodological and theoretical issues. Do reports in the Amsterdam Airport debate meet these expectations? Table 5.8 presents the differences. The first group of rows shows where and how conclusions and advice are presented. The second group of rows addresses the key line based on the order of the main chapters. The third group of rows presents the special means of accentuation such as headings, highlighted texts, and the use of tables and figures.

Consultants Devote More Text to Recommendations

Do consultants express their recommendations or conclusions more boldly compared to academic advisers? Consultants do as they say, but academic advisers do almost the same as consultants (Table 5.8). Both professions consider it important to summarize their results at the beginning of the report. The preference for a management summary is part of an academic adviser's practice. Most consultants and two academic advisers present their conclusions both in an executive summary and at the end of the report. The only structural difference is that consultants present recommendations and conclusions more extensively in the last section of the report.

The RuG (1997) report illustrates the expectation shown in Table 4.4 that academic advisers stress methodology over conclusions. The report is exceptional though: all interpretation about conclusions is left to the client and the conclusion is hidden behind methodology and research sections. The choices made in the RuG report have rhetorical consequences. A client can be impressed by all this methodology, but the final message remains hidden. Can the client figure it out? Conclusions are more important in this debate than anything else, consultants would say. Some other academic advisers have integrated this view in their reports however.

Consultants Dislike the Methodological Structure Preferred by Academics

Consultants consider it most appropriate when chapters between introduction and conclusion give direct support to the main conclusion. The chapters focus on kinds of effects. This structure is good from the perspective of a client, who is most interested in conclusions, advice and main arguments (Minto, 1995, p. 15). Consultants' reports on Amsterdam Airport show that they write this way. Academics prefer a different structure, which elaborates on theory and presents all the results together in one main section (Table 5.8). This preference is still visible in three academic reports about Amsterdam Airport (UvA, 1992; RuG, 1997 and

Table 5.8 Differences in structure and presentation of Amsterdam Airport reports

	Consultants					Academics				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Conclusions and advice										
Summary or introduction with conclusions and/or recommendations	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Conclusions and/or recommendations (also) in the last section	X	X	X		X	X	X			X
Key line and subsections										
Key line has a methodological structure						X		X		X
Key line of main sections presents different kinds of economic impact	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	
One or more (sub)sections on methodology or approach	X	X						X	X	X
One or more (sub)sections on theory before application						X			X	X
Means of accentuation										
Overall impression: the report has an expressive/conclusive writing style	X	X	X	X	X					
Conclusions or questions in headings	X	X	X	X	X				X	
Central claims in textboxes or in bold		X	X	X						
Details or elaborations in textboxes									X	
Use of diagrams for illustration 'logic' or line of argument	X	X	X	X						
Use of diagrams to illustrate theory		X							X	X
Use of diagrams and/or tables to present results	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Use of tables to summarize own conclusions	X	X	X	X			X			
Use of tables to evaluate with symbols (+;-) or with words		X	X	X			X			

VU, 2001). The other two academic advisers, EUR et al. (1997) and Nyfer (2000), structure the main sections in their reports according to consultants' preferences mentioned above.

All consultant reports devote main sections to the different kinds of positive and negative effects (Table 5.8). IOO (1993) presents different kinds of state support for Amsterdam Airport. These are social costs, or negative effects of Amsterdam Airport neglected in the debate. BEA (1993) estimates the effects of Amsterdam Airport on the micro, meso

and macro levels in three main sections. BCI (1996) identifies strategic effects (competitiveness of the Dutch economy) and economic effects (labor effects, and so on). BA&H (1999) discusses three effects in the main sections: Amsterdam Airport supports the knowledge economy, provides the necessary service to be a competitive region to settle, and generates employment. CE (2002) argues that Amsterdam Airport's growth has consequences for Amsterdam and devotes sections to it.

In the three more traditional academic reports the key line starts with theoretical elaborations (Table 5.8). The UvA (1992) report presents first an investigation of economic effects based on the literature and the second two sections based on CBS statistics. The RuG (1997) report presents a literature review and then results from an enquiry first and interviews second. The VU (2001) report discusses indirect welfare effects of Amsterdam Airport first from a theoretical perspective and then from a methodological perspective. After these theoretical investigations the report summarizes results from international and national research in a section.

The two other academic reports eschew this traditional academic structure. The first section in the EUR (1997) report mentions that growth of mainport activities will cause welfare growth (EUR, 1997, p. 13). This causality is derived from historical investigations. Section 2 presents recent research that shows causality between infrastructure and economic growth in general. This causality is applied to the different welfare effects of Amsterdam Airport in section 3. Section 4 estimates expected welfare effects of different future strategies of investments in Amsterdam Airport. The Nyfer (2000) report needs three sections to begin discussion of the economic impact of Amsterdam Airport. First, it discusses deregulation, then key figures regarding Amsterdam Airport and third, future scenarios of European airports. After this long introduction (60 pages) comes a discussion of economic effects in the remaining 70 pages. The authors discuss settlement effects in section 4 and regional economic effects in section 5.

Extensive Academic Elaboration on Theory and Method

Not the attention to but the extensiveness of methodological discussion in the Amsterdam Airport debate is exclusively academic. The focus of RuG (1997), Nyfer (2000) and VU (2001) is on the certainty and validity of the authors own claims, and claims in previous research. Consultants presenting their approach do not discuss the same methodological issues as academics. The authors of IOO (1993) discuss their method of estimating indirect state support. The authors of BEA (1993) discuss criteria for judging welfare effects of Amsterdam Airport. This attention of

consultants to their own methodology in whole sections or subsections was unexpected.

The academic preference for theoretical elaboration is visible in the UvA (1992) report, which first elaborates on the development of the service sector compared to agricultural and industrial activities. It is also visible in the 60 pages of discussion about economic effects in the Nyfer (2000) and VU (2001) reports, which elaborate extensively on welfare effects (Table 5.8).

Consultants Write More Expressively than Academic Advisers

Headings

Academic advisers mostly use headings in reports to describe the function of a heading like "Introduction", "Interviews", "Results", and "Conclusion", but they also describe a section's subject like "The Netherlands in a European context" or "The impact of Amsterdam Airport". Subject and functional headings express a neutral research attitude. Consultants more often use conclusive headings (Table 5.8). Such headings are a strong means of accentuating a text's important claims, as the headings in this book illustrate. Below are some examples from the reports.

In the IOO (1993) report conclusive headings appear on the lowest level of paragraphs, illustrating there is 'no tax on kerosene' and 'no tax on flights'. These are examples of indirect state support, since the state does not get these taxes. The BEA (1993) report headings often suggest conclusions with words like 'perspectives', 'risks' or 'challenges'. Other headings give more explicit conclusions like 'The economic relevance of investment in Amsterdam Airport' or 'What if Amsterdam Airport does not grow?'. The BCI (1996) report has conclusive headings like 'Regional differences of economic impact of Amsterdam Airport' and 'Changing importance of Amsterdam Airport for settlement'. The BA&H (1999) report uses conclusive headings like 'Transport as supporter of the knowledge economy' or 'Transport as cluster of global services'. Most conclusive is the CE (2002) report. From the main sections' 11 headings, eight give explicit conclusions like 'CPB underestimates costs of restrictions for house-construction' or 'Growth of Amsterdam Airport limits the height of house construction'.

Headings in academic reports are functional or they characterize the subject of discussion. The tables of contents give a neutral and scientific impression. The UvA (1992) report uses both functional headings and subject headings like 'Overview literature aviation' or 'Consumer services'. Subjects dominate the headings in the EUR et al. (1997) report. Most conclusive is 'The economic impact of Dutch mainports' but it remains a subject heading. In the report itself the rhetoric of neutrality changes

though by its many opiniative conclusions in the text. RuG (1997) uses functional headings like 'Introduction', 'Purpose', 'Structure of the report', 'Research design', 'Results inquiry' and 'Conclusions'. This approach corresponds to the very methodological content of the report. The other headings give subjects, but no conclusions. The Nyfer (2000) report uses mainly subject headings, adding some conclusive headings like 'Different estimations of total effects' or 'Shortcomings'. The VU (2001) report also uses functional headings like 'Methods', 'Results' and subject headings. While one heading, 'The rule is: do not take indirect effects into account', sounds conclusive, it is a citation rather than VU's (2001) final conclusion.

Tables, textboxes and bold texts

Only consultants make use of textboxes and bold text to emphasize central messages (Table 5.8). Tables and diagrams can also be a means of accentuation. When consultants use tables to present results, they often are such a means. Academics do not use these visual means of emphasis. Their tables tend to present information or results rather than conclusions or evaluations.

IOO (1993) uses diagrams and tables to emphasize the components of direct and indirect state support. Examples are a map of airports, a diagram of the relations between the government and aviation sectors, and an illustration of developing government expenses. Apart from accentuation, the main function of the tables in this report is, like academics, to present information. BEA (1993) uses textboxes at the beginning of chapters to emphasize conclusions. Tables mostly summarize conclusions, show different scenarios and evaluate the effects of these scenarios as positive or negative. Diagrams emphasize, for example, the structure of the report, the criteria for evaluation, causal relations or developments of employment. Tables, diagrams and textboxes present core elements in the BEA argumentation. Report text often interprets or elaborates on the content of textboxes, tables and diagrams. The BCI (1996) report uses bold text liberally to accentuate the assignment, conclusions and central concepts. Diagrams give an overview. Tables compare the competitiveness of alternatives of growth, or the quality of services of Amsterdam Airport with other airports. The BA&H (1999) report has central claims in bold, using diagrams to illustrate relations and tables to evaluate or present results. CE (2002) uses only many expressive headings for emphasis.

None of the university reports highlights text in textboxes or in bold. Four of five reports use tables to present results. Most reports illustrate the expectation that academic advisers do not have the expressive writing style that consultants practice. The UvA (1992) report presents tables and diagrams in abundance, but only to present results. The use of tables in

the RuG (1997) report is only informative. RuG cites an evaluative BCI table to criticize BCI estimates. The RuG (1997) report presents some clear diagrams in the appendix, but there they will arouse little attention. The Nyfer (2000) report uses tables and diagrams to present results, but not as a means of emphasis. Textboxes are used only twice: to illustrate Nyfer's position and to interpret a table. The VU (2001) report is even more neutral in appearance. There are only tables showing a theoretical model or presenting summaries of results of previous research. These tables do not present VU conclusions. Only the EUR et al. (1997) report is exceptional and in many respects similar to consultants' reports. The main purpose of the tables is to present conclusions and overviews, such as when they present an overview of all possible effects of investment in Amsterdam Airport in a table.

Evaluation of the Presentation

Consultants present as expected in the Amsterdam Airport debate. Conclusions start the report, elaboration on recommendations or conclusions end the report, and they present chapters with supporting arguments. Academic advisers take some of these elements from consultants. Most have an executive summary and some organize their chapters like consultants. Three reports present chapters in traditional academic order and two shift towards consultant practices.

Differences in the detailed use of headings, textboxes, bold text, diagrams and tables are generally as expected. Academic advisers follow their traditional ethos, using tables to present detailed results and rarely to summarize conclusions. Their headings are less conclusive than consultant headings and they do not present important text in bold like consultants. Consultants, as expected, write more expressively.

INTERMEDIATE EVALUATION OF THE AMSTERDAM AIRPORT CASE

Overall the Amsterdam Airport case illustrates most research expectations outlined in Chapter 4. However, academic advisers do not full-heartedly give advice along traditional lines. There are exceptions in the section on presentation, but also in the sections on the use of grounds, warrants and claims that show signs of erosion. Academic advisers do not meet all expectations based on their traditional ethos convincingly. The traditional academic view prevails in their argumentation practice, but some exceptions seem fundamental since they appear in many reports.

Why do academic advisers present the effects of Amsterdam Airport in a less balanced way or even without attention to the negative economic effects, in contrast to their ethos? How is it possible that the one report that gives advice (EUR et al., 1997) gives unconditional advice in favor of growth, paying no attention to the management of negative effects? Why do academic advisers show less consensus than consultants regarding the estimates of indirect welfare effects in spite of their criticisms about the research methods of consultants?

Analysis of advice argumentation in a second debate in which academic advisers compete with consultants can help to determine if the same unexpected findings will occur again. How do academics perform in the debate on liberalization of the electricity market? Can they perform as neutral advisers in this debate, better than in the Amsterdam Airport debate? Can they show the pay-off of their academic methodology? Do they have theoretical answers that have added value compared to the common sense views of consultants?

Consultants seem to have expressed their true character in their reflections, but only one case does not provide enough evidence to rely on. Their attention for methodological issues is even beyond expectation. Do consultants meet expectations again in the liberalization debate, as they do in the Amsterdam Airport debate? Can consultant's quick and dirty research style still outdo the research by academics in the context of advice? Will they give balanced advice again, paying more attention to practical normative or social rebuttals than academic advisers? The next chapter will show to what extent the results in the Amsterdam Airport debate can be replicated in the liberalization debate.

6. Advice on liberalization in the electricity market

The ongoing policy debate in the Netherlands about liberalization of traditionally regulated markets started in the 1980s. It has a European dimension, since liberalization is a condition for integrating the European market for electricity. The claim that market failures always have to be corrected by regulation is contestable, but benefits of deregulation and liberalization are also subject of discussion. Inefficiencies of regulation are obvious, but market failures can be worse.

The debate about the electricity market changed after the Dutch electricity Act of 1998, which established more competition in a traditionally strongly regulated market, even though the electricity Act of 1989 had already given the largest consumers freedom of choice. Before 1998 the central issue in the debate was the most appropriate degree of liberalization. After 1998 the debate was more about the effects of the new electricity Act, and about preconditions and additional policies to correct market failures.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs has facilitated the debate about deregulation and liberalization since the late 1980s. It has initiated many liberalization projects in regulated markets, such as postal services, public transport and education, and is the main proponent of liberalization in the debate about the electricity market. Through a research program the ministry of Economic Affairs has appointed consultants and academic advisers to consider the effects of liberalization in this market.

In this case study consultants and academic advisers have each written three reports for the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Other clients have also sought advice on the issue of deregulation and liberalization from the point of view of environmental care and works councils (consultants), and from the point of view of utilities (academic advisers). It can hardly be a coincidence that clients with an economic interest asked academic advisers for advice rather than consultants as in the Amsterdam Airport debate. What makes the academic adviser so attractive to them?

The Ministry of Economic Affairs represents a more general interest compared to the interests of the other clients. The network of work councils (LME) expects a great reduction of the labor force as a result of liberalization. They want to know just what the effects will be, and how to explain

them to their members. They ask consultants for arguments to retain the workforce, such as paying enough attention to maintenance to guarantee the quality of the networks. An environmental think tank (Bezinningsgroep Energie) stresses the development of new policies for environmental care. They also ask consultants to make the argument. Clients with economic interests such as a utility (Eneco) and a utility collective (EnergieNed) ask academic advisers to influence the debate in a direction towards effective liberalization. They both stress preconditions to enable fair competition and fair regulation. In this debate the general project is not questioned: conditions to make the project successful are discussed. Since the project is legitimated by law already, direct opposition is not an option in this case.

Apart from consultants and academic advisers, research institutions such as Centraal Plan Bureau (CPB) and Energie Centrum Nederland (ECN) are involved in the debate. Dienst uitvoering en toezicht energie (Dte) has a special position by participating in the debate as well as by influencing reality with its regulative authority. The influence of CPB, ECN and Dte in this analysis is visible in references to their reports by consultants and academics.

How do consultants and academics perform in this debate? Are the propositions formulated at the end of Chapter 4 visible as they were in the Amsterdam Airport debate? In the Amsterdam Airport debate most expectations are illustrated, except consultants' reference to explicit criteria, norms or laws; they refer rather to methodological criteria. Academic advisers surprise by appraising effects rather positively and in denying negative effects, which is different from being neutral experts uninvolved in controversial value judgments. Do we see these unexpected results again? Will the ambiguity of academic advisers be visible in this analysis, or is the traditional character of the academic adviser more dominant now? Even more interesting, how is the practice of academic advisers developing given that it veers from the traditional ethos?

The analysis follows the extended analytical framework of Toulmin, and is based on the analysis of advice argumentation in five consultant reports and five academic reports as in the previous case. The discussions in each section are less extensive, since the second case is meant as a control case. All selected reports, their authors, clients and assignments are listed in Box 6.1.

OVERVIEW OF ARGUMENTS IN THE LIBERALIZATION DEBATE

The debate about the introduction of competition in the electricity market concentrates on the economic effects of liberalization and the conditions

BOX 6.1 SELECTED REPORTS ABOUT LIBERALIZATION OF THE ELECTRICITY MARKET

The selection of ten reports about the introduction of more competition in the electricity market is based on five criteria. 1. Reports discuss economic welfare effects related to liberalization of the electricity market. Reports that discussed the effects of liberalization in other sectors were excluded. 2. Only one report is selected from organizations writing multiple reports. 3. Reports were written for a client. 4. The authors are academic advisers working at universities or consultants working for consultancies. 5. The number of reports by consultants and academic advisers is equal.

Five consultant reports

1. KPMG Bureau voor Economische Argumentatie (KPMG BEA, 1998) wrote a report for Landelijk Medezeggenschapsplatform Energiedistributiebedrijven (LME). LME is a platform of the works councils of all Dutch utilities. Since utilities have some freedom in the way of unbundling network activities and commercial activities, LME questions if that will make a difference for employment in the sector.
2. Arthur D. Little (ADL, 1999) evaluated the start of the liberalization process until the beginning of 1999. The Ministry of Economic Affairs was the client. The aim is to evaluate the effectiveness of the process according to the largest electricity users, utilities and regulators. Where ADL identifies issues, they also formulate suggestions.
3. EIM/IOO (2001) and EIM (2002) wrote a report in two parts for the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Their assignment was to identify and quantify indicators such as price convergence, increased labor productivity or client satisfaction. They only provided information for an evaluation of the Ministry's 1998 electricity Act.
4. CE (2005) wrote a report about the effects of liberalization on environmental policies. The client was Bezinningsgroep Energie, a private environmental "think tank". The report contains advice about additional policies to protect the environment in the context of liberalization.

5. Capgemini (2006) was given a research project by the Ministry of Economic Affairs to estimate the employment effects of liberalization in the electricity sector in five possible scenarios in response to the worries of representative advisory boards and labor unions. Capgemini gives no advice.

Five reports by academic advisers

1. Universiteit Twente (UT, 1996) wrote a report for the Ministry of Economic Affairs about the welfare effects of possible alternatives of liberalization of the electricity market. The report was written before the electricity Act 1998 to help policy makers decide the most appropriate degree of liberalization.
2. The Research Center for Economic Policy (OCFEB, 1997) wrote a report about macroeconomic consequences of liberalization in the electricity sector and four other sectors. The report estimates positive welfare effects. OCFEB is part of Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam. It is an extended version of an OECD report published by the Ministry of Economic Affairs.
3. Erasmus Studiecentrum voor Milieukunde (ESM, 1999) wrote a position paper for the Ministry of Economic Affairs. ESM is part of Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam. The report discusses the consequences of liberalization in relation to environmental policies. The question is if all traditional measures remain as effective as in the more regulated market, and if there are new opportunities for environmental policies.
4. Nyfer (2001) wrote a report for EnergieNed, a collective of utilities in the Netherlands. The assignment is to determine the degree of liberalization that best serves and satisfies the public interest. Nyfer is a research institute of Nijenrode University.
5. SEO (2003) wrote a report for Eneco, a utility company. The assignment is to investigate if the degree of investments in production and distribution networks depends on the degree of transparency and coherence of regulation. SEO recommends improvements in these regulations. SEO belongs to Universiteit van Amsterdam.

that need to be fulfilled to realize these effects. In some reports the question is whether liberalization has a positive balance of welfare effects; in others that is not an issue, since liberalization is the result of the electricity Act. For all reports the conditions under which liberalization will generate positive effects are the main subject of discussion. Many positive and negative effects depend on additional policies or regulation.

Table 6.1 gives an overview of the arguments used in the liberalization debate based on ten reports published between 1996 and 2006. It serves as an introduction to and a summary of this debate. The outline of the table is inspired by Von Werder (1999). Concepts such as grounds and rebuttals are used following Toulmin (1994). The table gives four levels of grounds and sub-grounds and four levels of rebuttals. Grounds follow "since"; rebuttals follow "but". The reports by consultants and academics are listed in order of appearance, as in Box 6.1. Most reports make a final claim in favor of liberalization, but the main arguments differ. Consultants refer only to the 1998 electricity Act to support this advocative claim; academic advisers also stress the positive sum of effects of liberalization, which is an evaluative statement in favor of liberalization. The advocative claims consider most conditions of liberalization.

The construction process of Table 6.1 is similar to the construction of the table about the Amsterdam Airport debate in Chapter 5. However, the liberalization debate is more complex than the Amsterdam Airport debate and consequently the table is twice as long as the one summarizing the Amsterdam Airport debate. Identifying all the relevant arguments and finding their proper hierarchy in the debate was more difficult, although the debates have a similar structure. Both mention positive and negative economic effects, but in the liberalization debate reports discuss conditions (of liberalization) and additional policies in much more detail.

The individual reports again cover on average one third of all the arguments in the debate. I therefore recommend reading the table from left to right, starting with the final claim and the two main supporting arguments:

- the obligation to liberalize as stated in the electricity Act 1998;
- the positive sum of effects of liberalization.

Then consider the three main rebuttals:

- the conditions that have to be met;
- the additional policies necessary;
- (according to one report) the even better effects of an increased degree of liberalization.

The subgrounds supporting the second main argument, a positive sum of effects, are based on estimates of the many positive and negative effects. Conditions and additional policies are articulated in more detail in the subgrounds following these main arguments.

Given the propositions in Chapter 4 summarized in the research expectations (see Table 4.4), we would expect Table 6.1 to show more breadth of argument for consultants and more depth of argument for academic advisers. This corresponds to more grounds and rebuttals on the global levels of argumentation in consultant reports, given their generalist approach, and more arguments on the most detailed level in academic reports, given their preference for specialization.

Academic Advisers Do Not Use More Specialized Arguments

The contributions to the liberalization debate undermine the proposition that consultants have a more generalist and academic advisers have a more specialist style of argumentation. They argued this way in the Amsterdam Airport debate, albeit the differences were not substantial, but not here. Academic advisers give more arguments on the more global level, consultants on the most detailed level (Table 6.1). The total number of arguments and the balance between grounds and rebuttals are similar for each profession.

On the most general level most academic advisers argue that the positive effects of liberalization are greater than the negative effects; no consultant makes this claim. This is contrary to the expectation that academics do not make evaluative claims unless they are non-controversial. The benefits of liberalization *are* controversial, given the many rebuttals. The positive evaluation of academic advisers is independent of the type of client: government, utility or branch organization.

On the second level of argument the contributions of consultants and academic advisers are similar. They mention the existence of positive and negative welfare effects, and address the motivations for regulation and additional policies. They also mention similar domains where preconditions and additional policies are needed.

On the third level of argumentation the debate begins to get more concrete with the identification of positive and negative effects of liberalization, discussion of the effects of regulatory measures and claim of possible additional policies. Academic advisers mention four positive effects of liberalization not mentioned by consultants and consultants include one positive effect not mentioned by academics. Consultants mention three negative effects passed over by academics and academics mention two passed over by consultants. Overall consultants present a more critical

Table 6.1 Claims, grounds and rebuttals in the liberalization debate

Levels of reasoning: central claim and grounds					Consultants					Academics				
Claim	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Liberalize production and trade of electricity with more attention to conditions (liberalization includes competition, free choice for consumers, privatization, no entrance barriers for producers and entrance to distribution network)					X	X		X		X		X	X	X
Since	The electricity Act 1998 and EU regulation require liberalization				X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Since	Cond. liberalization causes more positive than negative effects									X			X	X
Since	Liberalization causes more positive than negative effects										X			
	Since	Liberalization generates positive welfare effects			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		Since	Level of economic welfare increases by lower price electricity and/or higher profits etc.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
			Since	Labor productivity will increase	X	X	X		X	X	X			
			Since	Reorganization and rationalization	X	X		X	X	X		X		
			Since	Consolidation and scale effects	X		X		X			X		
			Since	More cost awareness managers	X			X	X			X		
			Since	Shareholders like higher returns	X				X					
			Since	Market pressure by trade/import		X			X		X			
			Since	Pressure new entrants/competitors	X				X		X	X		
			Since	Market restricts excess profits			X				X			
			Since	Market likes efficient technology						X	X	X		
			Since	Less standby capacity				X		X	X			X
			Since	Less investment costs networks				X		X				X
			But	Risks for the long run				X						
			But	Import limitations EU interfere							X			
			But	Current overcapacity production							X			
		Since	Innovation increases (dynamic efficiency)		X	X				X	X	X		
			Since	Competition causes innovation						X	X	X		
			Since	Competition causes adaptation						X				
			But	Multi-utility strategy complexer	X	X								
			But	Mainly short-term innovations										
		Since	More incentives to meet preferences of user		X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
			Since	More marketing/sales effort	X	X			X			X		

		Since	More customer satisfaction	X	X	X				X							
		Since	More choice contracts/services		X	X				X							
		Since	Option of collective purchase			X											
		But	Transition causes complaints			X											
	Since	New opportunities for environmental care			X	X	X				X						
		Since	New niche market green energy		X												
		Since	Marketable emission rights		X		X				X						
		Since	Marketable quota of green energy		X		X				X						
	Since	Comparative advantage in EU market						X									
		Since	More export of (cheap) energy						X								
		But	Dutch firms are small in EU context: less R&D, less capital						X								
	Since	Competitiveness of Dutch economy will increase due to lower electricity prices							X								
	Since	Better climate for investments						X								X	
	Since	Regulation failures decrease												X	X		
	Since	More transparent prices and/or products			X		X										
		But	Not necessarily in the short run			X											
But	There are negative effects, risks or market failures		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X				
	Since	Focus on costs, less on quality networks	X		X	X	X							X	X		
		Since	Failing price and quality regulation	X											X	X	
	Since	Risk of less reliable electricity supply		X	X	X		X						X	X		
		Since	Little investments in production		X		X		X							X	
		Since	Uncertainty about price, volume electricity delays investments		X	X												
		Since	Less diversity in production			X											
		But	Still some private investments			X										X	
		But	Not if one can choose level reliability						X								
		But	Government is not a good investor													X	
	Since	Risk of non-payment increases			X												
		Since	Utility cannot predict costs of purchases			X											
	Since	Risk of less innovation				X		X									
		Since	Signs of less R&D				X		X								
	Since	Market does not care about environment		X	X	X		X			X	X	X				
		Since	Less budget green investments		X		X					X					
		Since	Less agreements whole sector									X					

Table 6.1 (continued)

Levels of reasoning: central claim and grounds					Consultants					Academics				
Claim	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**1**	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
			Since	Less information about market		X						X		
			Since	Sector more heterogeneous								X		
			Since	Less investments in green energy, more use of old power stations		X	X	X						X
			Since	Less incentives to save energy				X				X		
			But	Production of green energy grows			X							
		Since	Focus on profits, less on safety workers				X						X	
			But	No evidence until now			X							
		Since	Employment in the sector decreases		X				X					
		Since	Traditional measures to protect public interests become less useful							X		X	X	
		Since	Risk to misuse market power networks										X	X
		Since	Costs of unbundling multi-utilities						X					
	But	Effects depend on degree/scenario liberalization			X				X	X	X		X	
But		Conditions of liberalization have impact and deserve attention			X	X		X		X		X	X	X
	Since	Regulation should be more coherent, transparent			X	X		X				X	X	X
		Since	Market and authors question effectiveness price/quality regulation of networks		X	X							X	X
			Since	Power/knowledge Dte is lacking		X							X	X
			Since	Independence of networks from sales part of utilities is questioned		X								X
			Since	Investments in networks are delayed or cancelled									X	X
			Since	Methodology of Dte is questioned									X	
		Since	Reliability, security should be guaranteed					X						X
		Since	A European level playing field is needed			X								X
		Since	Conflicting regulations for electricity, water or cable obstruct multi-utilities		X									
		Since	Liability for electricity failures is not sound											X
	Since	Required technical of conditions are not met				X								X
		Since	Import/export capacity is insufficient			X								
		Since	Registration of use of electricity by firms is lacking											X
	Since	Suppliers should be more competitive				X				X		X		
		Since	Much import and standby capacity			X				X				
		Since	They are not in international competition			X								

	Since	Market price and service should be more transparent					X				X		
	Since	Utilities and users should have a free choice to buy					X				X		
	Since	Electricity should remain a universal service										X	X
		But	Risk for character of a universal service									X	X
	But	Prevention of market failures causes government failures				X						X	X
But	Additional policies to avoid market failures need attention						X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Since	Necessary to internalize external environmental effects					X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		Since	There are possibilities to do so				X	X		X			
			Since	Marketable emission rights and quota of green energy			X	X		X			
			Since	Duty to produce green energy				X		X			
			Since	Obligations for energy saving				X		X			
			Since	Subsidy for green and total energy				X		X			
			Since	Agreements with producers				X		X			
			Since	Saving energy by regulations for electric articles of use				X					
			Since	Providing information						X			
But	Additional liberalization of networks would have better effects											X	
	Since	New Zealand has positive experiences with some competition between networks										X	
Total number of grounds (rebuttals) in five reports on first level							5 (5)			8 (9)			
Total number of grounds (rebuttals) in five reports on second level							14 (8)			20 (9)			
Total number of grounds (rebuttals) in five reports on third level							43			45 (2)			
Total number of grounds (rebuttals) in five reports on fourth level							61 (8)			51 (6)			

view: five positive effects and seven negative effects. They also mention more rebuttals in discussing positive effects. Academic advisers mention eight positive effects and six negative effects. The discussion of specific preconditions for liberalization is quite similar.

On the fourth level consultants present more grounds for the positive effects they mention and more related rebuttals than academic advisers. In discussion of negative effects consultants also present more supporting arguments for them. Here they present themselves not only as specialists compared to academic advisers, although the differences are small, but also as more critical. Subgrounds related to the preconditions and additional policies are similar.

Evaluation of the Global Argumentation Style

The proposition that consultants argue more like generalists than academic advisers is not supported by the electricity case. Consultants present more specialist arguments and academic advisers use more global arguments. The detailed research assignments in some consultant reports could explain this specialist focus. The unexpected differences are small as in the Amsterdam Airport case, so there is no possibility that that case can compensate for the results in the liberalization debate. Also the total number of arguments in the reports by consultants and academic advisers is similar: again an argument against a more specialized and profound approach of academic advisers.

ACADEMIC CONCLUSIONS ARE NOT NEUTRAL

Chapter 4 concluded with the expectation that consultants and academics give advice in different ways. The differences apply to the final advice claim, the presentation of rebuttals and the attention to the modality of claims, concepts introduced by Toulmin (1994). The final claim is what the authors conclude or advise; the rebuttals are counterarguments that differentiate or weaken the conclusion, such as conditions that need to be satisfied or the balance of disadvantages and advantages. The liberalization debate includes a discussion of negative effects and practical conditions. Practical conditions are political or economic, but can also be the effect of different scenarios and the necessity of additional policies. The modal qualifier indicates the certainty or uncertainty of the claim.

The research expectations (see table 4.4) based on the reflections of both professions in Chapter 4 assume that consultants give explicit advice, and that they pay more attention to practical rebuttals. Academics are less

willing to give advice. They prefer to conclude what the case is without advising on what to do. They also pay more attention to the uncertainties and limitations of their conclusions than consultants. The Amsterdam Airport case illustrated the expectations regarding advice, conclusions, practical rebuttals and modality. That consultants also paid attention to methodological issues and that academic advisers paid so little attention to negative effects were unexpected. Tables 6.2 and 6.3 show the results for the liberalization debate. EZ is the abbreviation for the Ministry of Economic Affairs (Ministerie van Economische Zaken), the debate's main client.

If Academics Give Advice, It Is Not If-then Advice

Unexpectedly there is no substantial difference between the professions regarding the most general advocative claim (Tables 6.2 and 6.3). Four academic reports and three consultant reports give advice in the liberalization debate. Advice of both professions has a similar character. The importance of conditions and additional policies is discussed in the electricity Act and the need for suggestions in that direction can be considered non-controversial, but the benefits of liberalization are controversial and so is the question of which conditions and additional policies are required. Most attention is devoted to preventing negative effects and realizing positive effects. In two cases consultants have an explicit research assignment. In the advice reports consultants present normative and concrete advice as expected.

However, academic reports give advice that goes beyond the principles of economic if-then advice, like the EUR et al. (1997) report did in the Amsterdam Airport case. The academic reports base their advice on a rather positive view of the effects of liberalization. The Nyfer (2001) report even recommends liberalizing the networks instead of only liberalizing production and distribution as defined in the electricity Act 1998.

The four academic reports that present advice discuss policy objectives like consultants in this case. Nyfer (2001, pp. 14, 77–81) argues that the political choice not to liberalize networks would cause government failures that have to be taken more seriously than the possible market failures of increased liberalization. SEO (2003, pp. i, 1) argues that the regulation of quality, such as security of delivery, is not developed well enough. Liberalization without high quality regulation obstructs investment decisions, which would harm public interest in the end. Academic advice does not follow the imperatives of economists such as Robbins, Tinbergen or Stiglitz. It is not neutral about policy objectives.

Table 6.2 Consultant advice about liberalization

	Consultants				
Client	LME	EZ	EZ	Bezinnings-groep Energie	EZ
Author	KPMB BEA (1998)	ADL (1999)	EIM/IOO (2001) & EIM (2002)	CE (2005)	Capgemini (2006)
Advice beyond the Law 1998	Suggestions regulation	Suggestions regulation and policy	No advice	Suggestions regulation and environmental policy	No advice
Conclusion	Two alternatives of unbundling utilities have equal employment effects	The conditions for liberalization are not fulfilled	Some effects of liberalization/ Electricity Act 1998 are visible	Liberalization requires additional policies to care for environment	All liberalization scenarios have substantial employment effects
Modality (overall) Rebuttals	Certain claims Negative effects; impact scenarios; political conditions	Certain claims Negative effects; many conditions; additional policy	Certain claims Negative effects	Certain claims Negative effects; political conditions; additional Policy	Certain claims Negative effects; impact scenarios

Table 6.3 Academic advice about liberalization

	Universities				
Client Author	EZ UT (1996)	OECD/EZ OCFEB (1997)	EZ ESM (1999)	EnergieNed Nyfer (2001)	Eneco SEO (2003)
Advice beyond the Law 1998	Suggestion for transition and policy	No advice	Suggestions conditions and environmental policy	Suggestions regulation, policy and lib. networks	Suggestions conditions and policy
Conclusion	Liberalization has more positive than negative welfare effects	Liberalization has positive welfare effects	Indication of effectiveness of policies to protect environment	Liberalization has more positive than negative welfare effects	Liberalization has more positive than negative welfare effects
Modality (overall)	Uncertainty size effects	Uncertainties	Uncertainties, probabilities	Certain claims	Certain claims
Rebuttals	Negative effects Impact scenarios; economic conditions; additional policy	Impact scenarios	Negative effects; many conditions; additional policy	Negative effects; impact scenarios; many conditions; additional policy	Negative effects; many conditions; additional policy

Academic Conclusions are General but Not Neutral

Quite unexpected is that so many academic advisers present the controversial evaluative claim that positive effects are greater than negative effects (Table 6.3), even when it is uncalled for. The electricity Act has already legitimized liberalization. In comparision with consultants it seems that academic advisers have a free market mission. Consultants present rather neutral conclusions compared to them (Table 6.2).

UT (1996, p. 130) concludes, for example: 'liberalization will result, under conditions, in a better performance of the electricity sector'. Nyfer (2001 p. 83) is even more positive: 'Research on different forms of regulation shows that real competition, if possible, has the best results for society'. A better performance or better results for society are evaluative claims. How can academic advisers present these claims as statements of facts, moreover as non-controversial facts? The numerous rebuttals in the debate make liberalization a controversial project by definition.

Academic Advisers Stress Uncertainties More Than Consultants

In the research of consultants factual statements are firm (Table 6.2). Consultants are well aware that they can misinterpret situations sometimes but it seems they prefer to make mistakes rather than say too little. One consultant report acknowledges this: 'This report . . . gives recommendations about liberalization based on our best professional interpretations . . . Arthur D. Little cannot be held responsible for damage to others based on decisions or actions that are taken or not taken, based on this document' (ADL, 1999, p. 1). However, the quote also is a warning that clients remain responsible for their actions based on advice. These consultants only take responsibility for the quality of their interpretations, not for consequences. After this general remark in which they implicitly admit that they can make mistakes, the authors present their findings boldly and without further ado.

Academic advisers are more aware of uncertainties and express them explicitly (Table 6.3). OCFEB (1997, p. 2) devotes a section to this issue in their summary, in which tables estimate the margin of uncertainty at 50 percent. UT (1996, p. vi) authors mention in their summary that they are not quite sure about the increase in welfare, but that they probably underestimate positive welfare effects. ESM even refers with irony to gazing into crystal balls to make correct estimations of future effects of liberalization: 'Crystal balls however do not exist' (ESM, 1999, p. 3).

Academic Advisers Pay Attention to Practical Rebuttals Like Consultants

The academic attention to negative effects in the liberalization debate is more balanced than the Amsterdam Airport debate, but they are still less aware of negative effects than consultants. All consultant reports compared to four academic reports address negative effects. One academic report pays attention to positive effects only, and three academic reports did so in the Amsterdam Airport debate, which makes a total of 40 percent of academic reports with a positive bias in the two cases.

There is unexpectedly no difference between consultants and academic advisers in their presentation of practical rebuttals, as there was in the Amsterdam Airport debate. That follows from the classification of rebuttals in Tables 6.2 and 6.3; equal use is also visible in the list of individual rebuttals in Table 6.1. Both professions add the same kind of practical refinements to their conclusions to make liberalization more successful and both consider scenarios. Methodological or theoretical rebuttals do not seem important in this debate.

Evaluation of the Presentation of Claims

In some respects academic advisers come close to consultants in the liberalization debate. Like consultants they present concrete advice and pay substantial attention to practical rebuttals. These results are unexpected. Consultants perform as expected regarding concrete advice and practical rebuttals like as the Amsterdam Airport case.

Also unexpected is that academic advisers draw heavily on positive conclusions about liberalization compared to consultants and that consultants even show a more neutral or balanced attitude than academic advisers. The positive bias of academic advisers is also visible in their attention to negative effects which, as in the Amsterdam Airport debate, is less substantial than consultants. This positive bias could be related to the academic resistance to discuss the preference of clients: most clients of academics are in favor of liberalization and growth of Amsterdam Airport.

Academic advisers unexpectedly pay no attention to methodological or theoretical conditions of rebuttal. It is not an issue here, as it was in the Amsterdam Airport debate. The treatment of modality is the only indicator meeting research expectations to some degree: consultants present more certain or bolder claims than academic advisers. Two academic reports, however, present their claims like consultants without modal qualifiers.

Table 6.4 Quantification of effects by consultants in liberalization debate

	Consultants				
Client Author	LME KPMB BEA (1998)	EZ ADL (1999)	EZ EIM/IOO (2001) EIM (2002)	Bezinnings- groep Energie CE (2005)	EZ Capgemini (2006)
Welfare effect				€[1]200–450 million per year (cited)	
Price effect		–20–40% (only wholesale)	c. –30% (only wholesale)		
Labor productivity (increase)			1996–2000 (p/y) Utilities c. 4% Production 5.4%		2006–15 [(p/y)] 4.9–11.7%
Employment effect (total)	–5% every year next five years	–20%	1996–2000 Utilities –12% Production –20%		2006–15 –5000 to –10 000
Electricity failures			c. 23 minutes per year; raise after 1998		

Note: [1] Estimates originally in Hfl.

ACADEMIC ADVISERS QUANTIFY LESS THAN CONSULTANTS

The research expectations in Table 4.4 based on the reflections of consultants and academic advisers postulate that consultants like to present concrete estimations to quantify their variables, whereas academic advisers prefer precise measurements. In the Amsterdam Airport debate these expectations were illustrated for consultants but the performance of academic advisers was rather ambiguous and more remarkable: their estimates had no consensus. How does each profession perform in the

Table 6.5 Quantification of effects by academics in liberalization debate

			Universities		
Client	EZ	OECD/EZ	EZ	Energie-Ned	Eneco
Author	UT (1996)	OCFEB (1997)	ESM (1999)	Nyfer (2001)	SEO (2003)
Welfare effect	€[1]205 million per year	€205 million per year (cited)			
Price effect		–11.3%			
Labor productivity		+50%			
Employment effect		–26.2 to –29.6%			
Electricity failures					c. 30 minutes per year

Note: [1]Estimates originally in Hfl.

liberalization debate? A comparison of Tables 6.4 and 6.5 shows the differences in quantification of grounds. They quantify effects in categories such as welfare, price, labor productivity, employment and electricity failures.

Academics Use Economic Models for their Estimations

Table 6.4 shows that most consultants estimate variables of the economic effects of liberalization. Most effects are quantified by consultants themselves. Only CE (2005) presents figures by means of desk research, including the duration of electricity failures. In reports by KPMG BEA (1998), ADL (1999), EIM/IOO (2001) and Capgemini (2006) estimates of employment and price effects differ only slightly. Consultant reports show consensus regarding welfare effects, as they did in the Amsterdam Airport debate. Again consultants create realities with their estimates, helping policy makers envision and reflect on the effects of the liberalization policy. Consultants need the appearance of this "reality" like their clients do in order to suggest measures to manage negative effects. Though their reality might be contestable, like environmental effects for many, for clients these effects are real enough to consider them.

Table 6.5 shows that academic advisers produce fewer estimates than consultants as expected. Estimates hardly overlap and are not debated as

in the Amsterdam Airport case. In the liberalization debate two academic reports with estimates of effects use models to estimate them. This preference for models was also visible in the Amsterdam Airport case where the VU (2001) report argued that a general equilibrium model would be necessary to make valid estimates, albeit they did not find one. Only OCFEB (1997, p. 43) estimates that the indirect welfare effect of liberalization is about 25 percent of direct effect, but the estimate applies to liberalization of several sectors together and not necessarily to the electricity sector alone. Tables 6.4 and 6.5 therefore only present direct effects.

Academic estimates regarding employment effects are similar to consultants' estimates in the electricity case, although the methods of estimation differ. Unlike our findings in the Amsterdam Airport debate there is consensus in the liberalization debate. However, we have too little observations to state that academics are not divided among themselves: their estimates hardly overlap.

Academic Valuation of Liberalization is Rather Positive

The research expectation about grounds in Table 4.4 (see Chapter 4) states that consultants use explicit valuations in their arguments and academic advisers do not, unless the valuations are non-controversial or given by a client. As in the Amsterdam Airport case both professions value effects as positive or negative. One academic report (OCFEB, 1997) only finds positive welfare effects of the change under consideration, like the UvA (1992) and EUR et al. (1997) reports in the Amsterdam Airport case, which is a rather unbalanced and thus controversial view. Table 6.1 showed on the third level that academic advisers mentioned more positive effects (eight) than negative effects (six), and consultants more negative effects (seven) than positive effects (five). The question of which effects are relevant and how they should influence an overall judgment is therefore rather controversial, and the appraisal of academic advisers from this perspective is relatively biased in favor of liberalization.

In the Amsterdam Airport debate environmental effects were appraised differently; in the liberalization debate employment effects are viewed from different perspectives, though less extreme: it is not an example of dissociation. Both KPMG BEA (1998, p. 1) and Capgemini (2006, p. 4) show their social concern by referring to the interests of employees, representative advisory boards and labor unions. They acknowledge the effect of increasing labor productivity, but also address the social consequences: less employment. The academic report that discusses labor effects only focuses on the gains of the negative employment effects: increased labor productivity and decreased labor costs (OCFEB, 1997, p. 13).

Another controversy is the appraisal of government failures. Academic advisers Nyfer (2001, pp. 12–14) and less extreme SEO (2003, pp. 17–18) stress government failures and argue that they will decrease more than market failure will increase in face of increased liberalization. They stress that good regulation is not feasible. No consultant makes this claim. Consultants focus instead on the problems with regulation in the context of liberalization to argue for solutions.

Evaluation of the Use of Grounds

As in the Amsterdam Airport debate, the liberalization debate shows that consultants like to estimate and academic advisers present few estimates. When academic advisers do estimate, they use economic models. Although consultants' and academic advisers' methods of estimation are different, the results show consensus.

In the appraisal of positive and negative effects, academic advisers variously show a biased view in favor of liberalization. One report does not discuss negative effects at all. Together the academic reports consider more positive than negative effects, whereas consultants see more negative than positive effects, in spite of their acceptance of liberalization. Academic ethos claims that academic advisers are neutral observers, but this claim is again undermined. Academics' presentation of valuations as non-controversial when they are not is confusing and misleading.

ACADEMICS USE MOTIVATIONAL WARRANTS LESS CRITICALLY

The research expectations of Chapter 4 state that consultants refer more to economic values, motives and criteria in their warrants, whereas academic advisers refer to causal arguments embedded in theory. This expectation was partly illustrated in the Amsterdam Airport debate. That academic advisers embedded their arguments in theory and consultants did not refer to theory when using causal arguments was expected, as was consultants' use of motivational arguments. The rather similar reference to methodological norms and criteria, however, was unexpected. How do the professions perform in the liberalization debate?

A warrant is needed to legitimize the connection between claim and grounds. It guarantees that a ground is relevant to support the claim. Table 6.6 presents the warrants that connect the final claim with the first level ground, and the first level ground with the second level grounds in the reports. The same applies to connections with first and second level

Table 6.6 First and second level warrants in the debate about liberalization of the electricity market

		Consultants					Academics				
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Motivational warrants that refer to desire, motive or value											
Liberalization of electricity production and trade is desirable, since it has – under feasible conditions – more positive than negative effects							X		X	X	X
Additional policies are desirable since they can help to neutralize negative effects of liberalization			X		X		X		X	X	X
More liberalization of networks is desirable because of the positive effects										X	
2nd level	Suppliers should be more competitive in the context of liberalization, otherwise they would be outperformed, which is undesirable		X				X		X		
	Electricity is a basic need and therefore it is desirable that it is available for every one (universal service)									X	X
	Government failures are undesirable, especially if the failures of regulation exceed possible market failures	X								X	X
	The environment needs protection in the context of liberalization since we depend on it		X		X		X		X	X	X
Motivational warrants that refer to explicit criteria, norms or laws											
The electricity Act 1998 makes liberalization a necessity		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
2nd level	Coherence is a necessary precondition of regulation	X	X		X				X	X	X
	Transparency is a necessary feature of a healthy market		X						X		
	It is a necessary feature of a healthy market that utilities and users should be free in their choice to buy		X						X		

		Consultants					Academics				
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Warrants by regularities or causality											
Welfare effects of liberalization depend on many conditions		X	X		X		X		X	X	X
2nd level	There is a causal relation between liberalization and positive effects like price or innovation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	There is a causal relation between liberalization and negative effects like care for quality, environment etc.	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
	There is a causal relation between the degree/scenario of liberalization and positive/ negative effects	X				X	X	X		X	
	If technical conditions to buy and sell electricity freely are not fulfilled, liberalization cannot take effect		X								X
	There is evidence for a causal relation between some liberalization of networks and positive welfare effects									X	

rebuttals. The table makes these implicit connections explicit. The first warrant, for example, relates the final advice claim to the argument that liberalization has a positive sum of effects. The argument supports the claim for conditional liberalization.

The warrants in Table 6.6 are divided into three groups. The first refers to values and motives; the second refers to criteria, norms and laws; the third group refers to assumed regularities, causalities and theories. When warrants have a dual character, as in the case of effects, I have only listed the most dominant implied warrant in Table 6.6.

Academics Use Motivational Arguments as if they are Non-controversial

Consultant reports

The results of the previous section show that consultants present a more balanced and critical view in this debate regarding positive and negative effects of liberalization. As a consequence they do not argue that liberalization is desirable. After all, the electricity law legitimizes liberalization; that is not the issue.

Table 6.6 shows that consultants use fewer motivational arguments than academic advisers in the liberalization debate. Consultants refer to the desirability of taking conditions of liberalization more seriously and developing additional policies to neutralize the negative effects of liberalization. They focus on motivational arguments to convince their clients to take these measures. They do not refer to the desirability of a positive sum of the effects of liberalization, like academics do.

Academic reports

Quite contrary to research expectations, four academic reports use motivational arguments to argue in favor of liberalization (Table 6.6). The first academic report (UT, 1996) may have contributed to the design of the electricity Act. For that reason the use of a motivational argument has added value. The UT (1996, p. vi) report argues 'in favor' of strong liberalization since 'the economic benefits of strong liberalization are the biggest, whereas the differences between degrees of liberalization and negative effects are not decisive'. The OCFEB report was published shortly before the introduction of the electricity Act. The report gives an argument in favor of liberalization by claiming that more competition can reduce welfare loss by 25 percent (OCFEB, 1997, p. 41).

After introduction of the electricity Act academics have continued their plea. The Nyfer report argues in favor of more competition between utilities and less regulation. They also argue that 'some liberalization of networks is worth trying' (Nyfer, 2001 p. 14). The SEO report argues: 'market failures due to liberalization are possible, but government failures due to regulation are at least as problematic, and their elimination should get priority' (SEO, 2003, p. i). Four academic reports thus advocate liberalization. When they refer to its desirability, it even seems to be their own conviction and not the clients. Consultants working partly for the same client argue differently. It brings to mind Blaug's remark (1980, p. 129) that economics is about facts and non-controversial values. For academics the benefits of liberalization seem non-controversial. From a consultant's perspective that is naive, especially because some clients seem far less sure about the positive effects of liberalization. Because all academic reports argue in favor of additional policies, academics should admit there is some controversy at least.

Academic Advisers Refer to Laws and Policy Criteria Like Consultants

Consultants and academic advisers both can refer to laws and economic criteria if these warrants are non-controversial. This corresponds to the expectations formulated in Table 4.4. In the liberalization debate

consultants and academic advisers refer to the same laws and criteria to legitimize liberalization (Table 6.6). The implicit expectation is that these laws and criteria have to be followed. That is different from the Amsterdam Airport debate, where academic advisers only applied methodological criteria.

The 1998 electricity Act refers to the non-controversial warrant to follow this law. The other legal argument is the criterion that regulation has to be coherent. The implicit warrant is that coherence of regulation is desirable, since it is a precondition for effective regulation. Lack of coherence between degrees of liberalization for gas, water, electricity and cable creates problems for multi-utilities, for instance. Another example would be a tension in regulation between neighboring countries.

Examples of economic criteria that are referred to in the debate are transparency of the electricity market and freedom of choice for buyers, both of which stem from economic theory. Consultants and academic advisers agree on the desirability of these criteria.

Academic Advisers Use Causal Arguments with more Sophistication

As in the Amsterdam Airport debate, academic advisers show more theoretical sophistication, corresponding to the expectations shown in Table 4.4. Consultants and academic advisers disagree, however, regarding interpretation of the international competitive position and the climate for investments. Which approach is more convincing: sophisticated theory or common sense arguments? To answer this question we have to address deeper levels in the argument than visible in Table 6.5.

Academic advisers apply the concept of comparative advantages with reference to electricity production based on the technique of total energy (UT, 1996, p. vi) and the resulting strong export position (OCFEB, 1997, p. 13).

Consultants (ADL, 1999, p. 26), however, deny this claim of a strong export position and comparative advantage. They argue that overcapacity and high capital costs position Dutch producers non-competitively in an international market. The same facts are known by both academics and consultants, but their conclusions are different. Academic sophistication is countered by consultants' pragmatism.

A second controversy is that academic advisers (Nyfer, 2001, p. 12; SEO, 2003, p. i) argue that the government is 'no better investor' and that the market creates a good climate for investments. Incoherent regulation only delays investments they argue. Consultants, on the other hand, stress that it is more difficult to invest if demand and price are uncertain, which is a consequence of a change to liberalization and international competition

(ADL, 1999, p. 30). ADL thus refers to the market and not to regulation as a cause for delay of investments. That criticism again shows a sense of pragmatism in response to academics' theoretical sophistication.

Evaluation of the Use of Warrants

A result quite in opposition to research expectations and the Amsterdam Airport case is that academics use more motivational arguments in this case than consultants. Four academic reports refer to the desirability of liberalization. None of the consultants uses this motivational warrant. The use of these warrants does not fit academic ethos because they are so controversial. Both professions refer to the desirability of legal and economic criteria, and the electricity Act as warrants. These warrants are hardly controversial. Both professions use causal arguments but academic advisers' warrants are more embedded in theory, as expected, whereas consultants refer more to common sense understandings, as in the Amsterdam Airport case.

ACADEMIC BACKING IS MORE TEXT BASED

Backings have to support the existence of grounds and warrants. Chapter 4 concluded with the research expectation that consultants refer to their own experiences, observations and oral sources to back their arguments; academic advisers rely more on arguments proved by scientific method. Reference to previous research is a popular academic method of backing. In the Amsterdam Airport debate all expectations are illustrated, except the absence of interviews and group discussions by consultants. Table 6.7 presents the use of backings in the liberalization debate ordered by (1) the use of text sources, (2) the use of techniques such as calculations or statistics and (3) reference to experience by means of reflection or discussion with others.

Academics Cite Three Times More Than Consultants

Consultants' citations are more careless

The use of text sources in the liberalization debate (Table 6.7) is similar to the Amsterdam Airport debate and in line with the expectations outlined in Table 4.4. Consultants use on average about 15 sources; academic advisers use on average about three times as many. The use of existing statistics is a specialty of consultants, as in the Amsterdam Airport debate. Again they show a relative preference for empirical sources and non-academic

Table 6.7 Sources as backing for statements in reports about liberalization

	Consultants					Academics				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Text sources										
References to scientific research (reports, books, articles)		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
References to (policy) reports by consultants or private organizations	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
References to policy texts or laws written by government/ministries	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
References to annual reports			X			X			X	
References to public statistics or public databases	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
References to newspapers		X		X						
References according to scientific standards	X			X		X	X	X	X	X
References to more than 50 different sources						X		X	X	
References to 20–50 different sources				X						X
References to less than 20 different sources	X	X	X		X		X			
Technical sources										
Use of statistical techniques									X	
Own calculation of welfare effects	X		X		X	X	X			
Use of economic model						X	X			
Oral or experience-based sources										
Reference to own expertise, experience, interpretation or view authors	X	X			X					
Face to face (expert) interviews	X	X		X	X	X				
Group discussions		X								
Tele-interviews or enquiry			X							
Use of their own database			X		X					

literature, such as policy reports or research journalism, although academics still refer more to these sources in absolute figures.

A difference compared to the Amsterdam Airport debate is that consultants' references to these sources are more careless than in the Amsterdam Airport debate: only two reports follow scientific rules of citation.

However, this is more in line with the expected differences than their more careful citation in the Amsterdam Airport case.

Statistics, calculation and economic models as sources

Compared to consultants academics use more advanced technical sources such as economic models or statistical analysis to back their arguments (Table 6.7), attempting to model the complexities of reality. The UT (1996, pp. 5, 40) report applies a quantitative Scandinavian model known as NEDMOD. The OCFEB (1997, pp. 39–45) report applies a semi-general equilibrium model to estimate indirect effects of liberalization. Both consider an economic equilibrium model the best way to systematically estimate all influences (UT, 1996, p. 41; OCFEB, 1997, p. 43). Nyfer (2001, p. 50) applies statistical techniques.

Since economic models are not perfect and their mechanics hard to understand, consultants often prefer deliberate guesses over the use of what they consider a black box argument. When their guesses are based on calculations, they can be explained rather easily, even to laypeople. In academic reports the results that follow the application of a model are often presented as expert knowledge without detailed explanation of the model. UT's NEDMOD model estimates that the welfare effect of liberalization is about 200 million euros. The model is like the expert or authority in this case and backs the claim.

Consultants' use of experience-based sources

The use of non-text sources in the liberalization debate (Table 6.7) corresponds better to the research expectations than in the Amsterdam Airport debate. Consultants refer to their own experiences, as well as the experiences of other experts and practitioners by interviewing them. KPMG BEA (1998, p. 7) interviewed members of works councils and management teams of five leading utilities. ADL (1999, p. 14) talked with 36 parties in the field. EIM/IOO (2001, p. 6) and EIM (2002, p. 6) based their estimations also on interviews, supplemented with enquiries, and desk research. Capgemini (2006, p. 14) interviewed 16 external and 6 internal experts in the field. Group discussion is also mentioned as an instrument to settle a difference in opinion (ADL, 1999, p. 15). Academic advisers make little use of these common sense techniques to cope with reality.

Academics' Value Statements Poorly Backed

Several issues require valuation in the liberalization debate. The first is whether effects are positive or negative. Employment effects are an

example of different appraisals by consultants and academics. Academics see only the positive side of increased labor productivity; consultants acknowledge the social consequences of a reduction of employment in the electricity sector. The sum of effects caused by liberalization is another issue where academic advisers are more positive in their valuation than consultants.

The expectation was that academics do not use valuations or motivational arguments unless they are non-controversial. In that case they would need no specific backing; they are generally accepted. In the liberalization debate academic advisers refer to values more than consultants. Most of these value statements are controversial from a social perspective. The benefits of liberalization are controversial, but academics treat their value statements as non-controversial, which makes their valuations uncritical and poorly backed.

How could the existence of a value be backed? Investigating the acceptance by means of group discussions, interviews or enquiries are possibilities. People talk about controversial values. In the liberalization debate KPMG BEA (1998, p. 1) and Capgemini (2006, p. 4) express employee worries, bringing in the interest of one group of stakeholders. Since they know that employees and labor unions have expressed concern, they can refer to expressions of stakeholders. That is how consultants back statements expressing local concerns that may conflict with the concerns of employers or taxpayers. These values have an aesthetic character and are seldom non-controversial. Their backing requires the intersubjective agreement of those who are involved.

Evaluation of the Reference to Backings

The backings of positive statements in the liberalization debate are as expected. Academic advisers refer more to text sources than consultants. Academic advisers prefer academic sources; consultants refer more to policy reports and public statistics. Academic advisers also use more advanced techniques of estimation, such as statistics and economic models. Consultants refer more to experience-based sources and common sense beliefs. They often refer to interviews in the liberalization debate to back their estimates.

Academic advisers do not back their value statements in the liberalization debate, yet make more use of them than consultants. That academics do not back value statements was expected since they claim to refer only to non-controversial statements. This approach is problematic since academics' value statements are rather controversial, which was unexpected. Backing should illustrate intersubjective agreement.

ACADEMIC REPORTS DEVOTE MORE SECTIONS TO THEORY

The research expectations about presentation summarized in Table 4.4 are that consultants present their advice and conclusions more expressively with a conclusions-first structure, conclusions in headings, textboxes, diagrams and tables. Academic advisers better show how they come to their conclusions by devoting whole and extensive sections to their methodology and theory and by applying the process structure of scientific research papers. The Amsterdam Airport case illustrated these expectations but with exceptions: consultants paid more attention to their approach than expected and academic advisers did not always use the process structure in their reports. The question is if these exceptions are also visible in the electricity case.

Table 6.8 shows the results for reports about liberalization of the electricity market. The first group of rows in Table 6.8 shows how conclusions and advice are presented. The second group addresses the key line in the text. The third describes special means of accentuation such as headings, highlighted text and use of tables and figures.

Academic Advisers Stress Conclusions More Than Expected

In the liberalization debate there is little difference between academic advisers and consultants in the use of an executive summary and the presentation of conclusions or recommendations (Table 6.8). In two reports academic advisers (UT, 1996; SEO, 2003) begin with an executive summary and end with recommendations or conclusions in more detail. These academic advisers stress their conclusions like consultants.

Consultants, on the other hand, do not present executive summaries and conclusions as often as expected in the liberalization debate: two consultant reports (ADL, 1999; EIM/IOO, 2001) do not present conclusions in an executive summary or introduction. The ADL (1999) report presents conclusions and recommendations at the end of the three main sections on production and distribution of electricity and production of gas. The authors present many conclusions and recommendations throughout the report. It is also exceptional because it is written in PowerPoint. The Capgemini (2006) report is also written in PowerPoint, but more according to the conventions of a consultant report. The reports by EIM/IOO (2001) in combination with EIM (2002) are also exceptional: they present results but no summary. The first report has a conclusion, but the second report only presents information like an appendix. The KPMG BEA (1998) report comes close to the expected consultant format. The last

Table 6.8 Differences in structure and presentation of liberalization reports

	Consultants					Academics				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Conclusions and advice										
Summary or introduction with conclusions and/or recommendations	X			X	X	X			X	X
Conclusions and/or recommendations (also) in the last section		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Key line and subsections										
Key line of main sections has a methodological structure								X		
Key line presents the kinds of economic impact			X	X		X				
Key line presents economic impact of alternatives of liberalization	X				X		X		X	
Key line presents effects per target group		X								X
One or more (sub)sections on methodology or approach	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
One or more (sub)sections on theory before application		X				X		X	X	X
Means of accentuation										
Overall impression: the report has an expressive/conclusive writing style	X	X		X	X					
Conclusions or questions in headings	X	X		X	X				X	X
Central claims in textboxes or in bold	X	X		X	X					
Details or elaborations in textboxes									X	X
Use of diagrams to illustrate outline, a line of argument or a situation	X	X	X		X				X	
Use of diagrams to illustrate general theory		X				X				X
Use of diagrams and/or tables to present results	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Use of tables to summarize conclusions	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Use of tables to evaluate with symbols (+;-) or with words	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	

two chapters conclude with two scenarios, and it presents general conclusions in the summary. An executive summary and elaboration on the recommendation at the end of the report is best visible in CE (2005) and Capgemini (2006).

The Process Structure in Academic Reports Watered Down

EIM/IOO and CE have a key line that discusses different economic effects (Table 6.8). The structure is appropriate since they have to investigate effects. CE (2005) discusses how the effects of the new electricity Act can interfere with the three political objectives of clean energy (no pollution), reliable energy and low-priced energy. The first objective is discussed in one section, since it is the most important objective for the client. The other two objectives are discussed in the last section before the conclusion. KPMG BEA and Capgemini follow institutional alternatives in their key line. They focus on the different options to reorganize utilities given the new electricity Act. The last kind of structure applied by consultants discusses the effect of liberalization for certain groups. ADL (1999) discusses the effects of liberalization in terms of producers and distributors of electricity.

The ESM (1999) report is the only one with a methodological process structure (Table 6.8). There is no unity in the subjects of the main sections such as discussion of different effects. Two other reports that show elements of a methodological structure apply an economic model (UT, 1996; OCFEB, 1997), but the methodological structure does not dominate. The UT (1996) report discusses different effects in the main sections, such as welfare, innovation and competitiveness of the Dutch economy. The key line is about effects and is the most dominant element. The most popular academic structure is organized along institutional alternatives and their effects. The OCFEB report has four main sections about the electricity sector. From there the sections follow the institutional change: two sections discuss effects preceding the new electricity Act, and two sections discuss effects following the new electricity Act. Nyfer (2001) discusses the regulation options of Dte, the legal supervisor of the electricity market, as a way to organize the report. SEO (2003) discusses effects of regulation in the two subsectors of the electricity market, distribution and production.

Consultants Do Not Write About Theory Like Academics

Similar to the Amsterdam Airport debate most academic advisers show a strong preference to elaborate on theory in subsections while consultants do not, as expected. Two consultant reports devoted subsections to methodology in the Amsterdam Airport debate, but in the liberalization debate all consultants show their approach in subsections, which is even more unexpected. Academic advisers also do that in four reports, but that result presented in Table 6.8 is as expected.

Academic Advisers Hardly Differentiate Between Details and Main Points

Research expectations assume that consultants write more expressively than academic advisers. The Amsterdam Airport debate confirms this expectation: consultants use conclusive headings, textboxes, diagrams and tables to stress their most important claims. Academic advisers also use many of these means but in a different way. Headings present the subject or function of a section in a neutral way; textboxes are used to elaborate on details such as footnotes and diagrams; tables are mainly used to present results. Does the liberalization debate likewise illustrate these expectations?

Headings

Consultants use conclusive headings intensively (Table 6.8). The reports in PowerPoint by ADL (1999) and Capgemini (2006) start most sections with the conclusion of that section. An example (ADL, 1999, p. 29): 'We expect 10 big electricity producers and some niche players in Europe in the near future'. After that heading four subconclusions summarize the research. The research accounts are presented on the next page in more detail. An example from Capgemini (2006, p. 22): 'Continuation of the current situation will result in a loss of 5400–5600 fte.' This conclusion is supported by five claims, which are the conclusive headings of five subsequent subsections. The CE (2005) report also uses conclusive headings. CE (2005, p. 9) starts the third section with the heading 'Consequences for pollution'. The subsections present a list of consequences. An example from the list (CE, 2005, p. 11): 'Stagnation of total energy'. The KPMG BEA (1998) report uses few conclusive headings. It addresses weaknesses in regulation in a subsection, which begins with the heading (p. 17): 'Ambiguities and uncertainties in regulation'.

Academic reports hardly have conclusive headings. The best examples are (Nyfer, 2001, p. 75): 'Natural monopoly?' and (SEO, 2003, p. 29): 'Does the European market exist?'. In both cases the authors argue that there are good reasons to question the claim presented in the heading. As in the Amsterdam Airport debate, academic advisers prefer subject and functional headings.

Tables, textboxes and bold texts

Textboxes and bold text are other means used by consultants to stress important claims (Table 6.8). These are pieces of the argument a reader should not miss, even in browsing the report. Most consultant reports use textboxes or bold text as expected: only the report by EIM/IOO 2001 does not. Academic advisers use textboxes less frequently and also differently.

Nyfer (2001) and SEO (2003) use textboxes like footnotes that elaborate on theory or report details.

Consultants and academic advisers both use diagrams to present results in pie charts, scatter diagrams, bar charts and so on, but diffently. Consultants draw diagrams to outline their reports (KPMG BEA, 1998, p. 7; ADL, 1999, pp. 3, 16), to illustrate a market (ADL, 1999, pp. 5–7, 18; EIM/IOO, 2001, p. 6; EIM, 2002 p. 7) and to illustrate dependencies and interrelations (KPMG BEA, 1998, pp. 2, 12; ADL, 1999, pp. 12–13, 19; Capgemini, 2006, pp. 7, 9). Academic advisers are less used to visualizing the logic of their arguments with drawings like consultants do. SEO (2003, p. 20) and UT (1996, pp. 39, 66, 69) use diagrams such as supply and demand curves or Porter's model of five competitive forces to illustrate the theories they present. Only the Nyfer (2001, p. 31) report illustrates how the market has worked after introduction of the 1998 electricity Act, thus illustrating their line of argument on a more global level.

The differences in the use of tables in the Amsterdam Airport debate are also visible in the liberalization debate, but Table 6.8 is not very conclusive in this respect because it does not count how often consultants and academics use tables. Academic advisers sometimes use tables to summarize, present overviews or evaluate, albeit less frequently. Consultants often use tables this way. Academics often use tables to present a lot of information in as much detail as possible, whereas consultants hardly use tables that way. If academics present an evaluative table that gives a nice overview of the effectiveness of instruments, as in the ESM (1999) report, they present it in the appendix, whereas consultants would have started a main section with such a table.

Evaluation

The structure of academic reports is more like consultant reports than expected. Only twice do consultant reports pay detailed attention to recommendations at the end of the report and three times more globally in an executive summary. That is not more than academic advisers in the liberalization debate. Only one academic report follows the process structure, which makes their presentation even more like consultants.

Academic reports do meet the expectations regarding elaboration on theory and methodology in special subsections. As expected, consultants do not elaborate on theory. Regarding sections on methodology the differences remain small, since all consultant reports quite unexpectedly devote subsections to methodology.

The elements of presentation that show expected differences between consultants and academic advisers are not on the level of text structure but

on the level of writing. These differences are visible in the more expressive use of headings, tables and diagrams by consultants and the more neutral use of headings by academic advisers. Academic advisers mainly present information in a neutral way while consultants stress what they consider important.

INTERMEDIATE EVALUATION OF THE LIBERALIZATION CASE

The liberalization debate illustrates most research expectations based on Chapter 4 regarding consultants. One exception is the presentation of research methodology. The Amsterdam Airport case showed a similar exception, that consultants paid more attention to methodological rebuttals than expected. For both professions the expectation about the difference in breadth and depth of argumentation is not illustrated in the liberalization debate. It even shows results contrary to the expectation: academics argue not as specialists and consultants present more specialized detail in arguments than academic advisers. For consultants these are the only two aspects where expectations based on their ethos are not visible in the reports. These deviations do not really undermine consultant ethos in the case of their relatively specialized approach and even add to it regarding their methodological awareness.

Academic advisers do not meet almost half of the expectations based on their ethos in this debate. Some of the exceptions found in the Amsterdam Airport debate appear again, adding something new to traditional academic ethos or undermining it. Examples that undermine their ethos are that they give normative advice, draw evaluative conclusions and disregard negative effects compared to consultants. Also unexpected is their lack of attention to methodological rebuttals in this debate and their use of motivational arguments. Unexpected results regarding the use of practical rebuttals and presentation can be seen as positive additions to their advice practice, not conflicting with their ethos.

The conclusions that follow in chapter 7 will summarize the results of the two cases in more detail. The purpose is to find out what elements in the practice of academic advisers can still be seen as exceptional and what elements show that traditional academic ethos and advice practice really conflict with each other. It may be that some aspects in academic ethos and practice have to become better aligned.

7. Conclusions and discussion

The analysis of advice practices performed by academic advisers and consultants allows us to now compare their (dis)similarities and to see if they confirm or contradict the ethos for both professions and in both debates. The two comparisons are necessary to triangulate the results. When both cases show similar advice practices, the evidence grows that they illustrate the character of consultants and academic advisers. When these practices, as visible in advice reports, correspond with the self-reflections of both professions it is further support for the adequacy of the characterization. Differences between ethos and practice, or between the practices in the two debates, renders the results more ambiguous, but it also may point to significant statements regarding the real character of either academic advisers or consultants compared to their ethos.

The results based on triangulation enable a comparison of the performance of both professions. The actual practices of advice argumentation in the debates are most important here, but whether consultants and academic advisers argue as they say they do is also relevant. A difference between ethos and practice will undermine the ethos and effect disappointing practices because they are not what the clients expect. The comparison of performances is necessary to answer the main research question that asks why the market views consultants as better than academic advisers.

Apparently consultants and academic advisers do something differently. That is visible in the two cases, it is visible in their ethos, and it is visible in the way the professions characterize each other. Academics especially characterize consultants in a humiliating way: charlatans who lack an accepted body of knowledge, are overpaid, tell clients nothing new and are sometimes responsible for corporate failures. Consultant practices are seen as superficial and based on empty rhetoric (Fincham, 1999, p. 338; Salaman, 2002, p. 250). Consultants, however, have their own suspicions towards academics. Academics seem only able to talk, and not do what really matters (Czarniawska and Mazza, 2003, p. 277).

Some academics admit that they feel uncomfortable with the situation that the market takes consultants more seriously than academic advisers. Consultants have a larger market share and receive higher fees. Because

senior executives take consultants seriously, these academics argue, academics should take them seriously as well (Kieser, 2002, p. 212; Salaman, 2002, p. 251). Consultant methods are not academic, but do academics know how they work? Why are consultants more effective? What do they do differently? Academics should be able to answer these questions.

A related issue is the academic conceptualization of advice. Economists and other social scientists have defined advice in an instrumental way. An academic adviser has to deliver the relevant causal relations that are to help a client reach his ends. Such information is considered useful. Is that definition of academic advice sufficient to cover the practice of academic advisers? If not, what other elements belong to academic advice in practice? Is advice only based on scientific knowledge and research, or are other human activities involved?

From a philosophical perspective advice is more than pointing at the means to reach an end. It is also a speech act whose intent is to influence action. By this intention it creates a new social reality. Even though advice is not a command, it is not something that is easily denied. Supporting why we choose not to follow a recommendation is socially expected, especially when the recommendation is well prepared and supported with good arguments.

What concept of advice can best characterize the advice practices of academic advisers and consultants? A rhetorical analysis can answer this question by analysing whether academic advice is based on the argument by cause, as required in instrumental advice, or on more and different arguments, such as the motivational argument. The cases have offered some evidence that a philosophical perspective to characterize advice is more promising than the instrumental advice concept of economists. We still have to find out if this evidence is fundamental.

The cases have also indicated that academic advisers do not always follow their own ethos. In some respects they seem to imitate consultants. The question, however, is how frequent and how fundamental these imitations are. Are they exceptions to the rule, or do they point to primary characteristics of academic advice practices? The imitations are surprising: academics have no inside experience as consultants and as is often said they do not appreciate the way consultants work.

In the Amsterdam Airport case academic advisers often performed as expected. In the liberalization case, however, their performance was more often unexpected. What conclusions can be drawn after collating the results? Do academic advisers have an ambiguous character, or is it partly ambiguous and partly unequivocal? Do consultants perform as they suggest on behalf of their ethos, or do they too have some ambiguous elements in their character?

Before turning to these questions I must address my own academic ethos. I cannot draw conclusions like I could as a consultant. The cases suggest that academic advisers do not give advice in a neutral way but rather present normative arguments as uncontroversial when they are not. Is my research design strong enough to draw these firm conclusions as an academic? For a consultant the results of the cases are strong enough to suggest action and maybe they are enough for academic advisers in person, but will the strength also suffice in the context of academic legitimization? What conclusions can I draw, and what conclusions lay beyond the scope of this research?

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The cases show different results partly because of the content of the debates. For that reason, the chosen research design to compare academic advisers and consultants within topical debates gives better results than a comparison of reports independent of content. For some categories the latter would do; backing and presentation preferences, for example, seem content independent. Other categories are more content dependent. A comparison of academic reports about liberalization with consultant reports about Amsterdam Airport would yield less reliable results. A benefit of the research design is the increased reliability stemming from the comparison of both professions within focused debates.

A limitation of the research design is that it does not cover all relevant sources of knowledge. It is not only written communication that effects advice; consultants talk at length with their clients, and often prepare their written conclusions on that basis. Indeed, stressing the importance of oral communication is embedded in the consultant ethos. Traditional economic research practices, however, exclude oral arguments from my investigation; I can only claim their importance through my own experience and reflections in the literature (Skovgaard-Smith, 2008, p. 141). Direct knowledge about oral processes is hard to assess. It requires observations and the quality of such data is more difficult to guarantee than written sources. The advantage of reports as data is their high quality. Reports can be analysed carefully and the analysis can be replicated.

Because oral sources are excluded from the research design, I have not talked with clients and therefore cannot say anything about what happened with the recommendations after publication. I do not know if clients appreciated consultant recommendations more than academic advice and thus cannot say that these clients confirm that consultants

deserve the higher fee that they are paid. The conclusions about the advice style of consultants and academic advisers do have consequences for clients, however, and I will try to infer them in the next chapter.

I have not talked to academic advisers or consultants. I have observed their argumentation practice in their writing, but cannot ask them to justify it. Given the clash between academic ethos and practice, that merits attention. Why are academic advisers so unbalanced and normative in their arguments as demonstrated in both debates and why so in disagreement with each other regarding their positive statements as demonstrated in the Amsterdam Airport debate? These are questions for discussion with academic advisers; it is impossible to glean the motives of academics from the reports or derive them from the literature on their ethos. Is it their personality? Is it a consequence of academic research practice? Or is it both? Rhetoricians would argue that it is a consequence of excluding humanist values from their advice practice by defining it as an instrumental, modernist/positivist enterprise. That creates a moral vacuum, which unduly challenges the personal integrity of the academic adviser. What would academic advisers say to this? That question deserves further research.

My analysis is rhetorical and interpretive. I have investigated the argumentation practices and preferences in detail. The interpretations are as transparent as possible by presenting quotes, paraphrasing the arguments and making comparisons, albeit the interpretations are not always as transparent as I would like them to be. Qualifying attention to modality, for example, is difficult. I have found that academics stress uncertainties more than consultants, but that is my interpretation based on my reading. It is a judgment based on impressions, much like teachers' assessments of students' essays. Language-based interpretation is problematic, but as Alvesson and Kärreman (2000, p. 154) argue it can give sensible results.

The question of how representative the conclusions are will be discussed in more detail at the end of this chapter. The conclusions can be general in two ways. First, they are representative for the whole group of consultants or academic advisers if the triangulation of literature and report analysis shows only similar results. If the cases show different results compared to the reflections in the literature, the results from the literature are contested. The implication is that ethos is not visible in practice, which undermines the characterization of the profession based on the literature review. However, that is a second way in which the conclusions can be representative because it will result in the general claim of an ambiguous character. The remaining question is how general that ambiguity is. Is it a Dutch, a European or an even more general phenomenon?

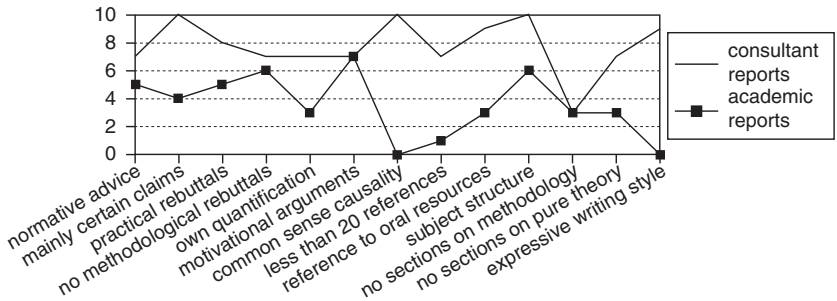

Figure 7.1 Number of reports that meet consultant ethos (top) or academic ethos (bottom)

OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

Figure 7.1 summarizes the ten reports written by consultants and the ten reports written by academic advisers. It shows if the reports meet consultant or academic criteria, and therefore how often and to what degree both professions confirm their ethos. Categories on the x axis correspond to consultant ethos if their value is close to ten, which implies that ten reports give normative advice, or present certain claims and so on. Normative advice is meant as opposition to instrumental advice. The opposite values close to zero express academic ethos, which implies that none of the academic reports gives normative advice, that they address uncertainties and so on. The upper line shows consultant practices, the lower line academic practices. Not all categories are included in Figure 7.1, such as attention to negative effects or a balanced valuation of effects; in those cases consultant and academic ethos overlap too much. Other categories cannot be counted in terms of reports, such as having a generalist or specialist orientation in the debate.

Figure 7.1 illustrates that academic advisers and consultants perform differently, but less differently than we would expect according to their ethos. Academics move in a consultant direction, and in some respects perform like consultants, but according to consultant criteria never do better than consultants. When academics imitate consultants, they do not meet their own criteria.

The upper line shows that consultants and their ethos have a relatively good fit. Only the category on methodology shows an imitation of academic practices. The lower line often veers up, which implies that academic advisers often do not act in accordance with their ethos. The practice of academic advisers sometimes even drifts in directions that conflict with

their ethos. On average 3.5 of the ten academic reports did not meet academic ethos. Consultants meet their own ethos better: on average 2.2 of the ten consultant reports did not meet consultant ethos.

Do these academic adaptations help in competing with consultants? If so, at what cost? Some adaptations such as paying attention to practical rebuttals would not remain in conflict with academic ethos because they are an improvement of academic performance. Other adaptations, such as giving normative advice or using motivational arguments, will always be in conflict with the ethos of the neutral adviser. These adaptations show the identity crisis of academic advisers regarding their advice methods as suggested by of a number of self-critical academics (Argyris, 1996, p. 393; Berglund and Werr, 2000, p. 652; ten Bos, 2001 p. 45; van Baalen, 2001, p. 70; Weggeman, 2001, pp. 112–115; Alvesson and Johansson, 2002, p. 230; Kieser, 2002, p. 222; Salaman, 2002, p. 251).

In the following sections I discuss the categories which address differences in advice argumentation, including those omitted in Figure 7.1. I summarize the results of the two cases, compare the analysed practices with the expectations based on ethos, and compare the performances of academic advisers and consultants. Where possible I discuss implications for the conceptualization of economic advice.

THE DEGREE OF SPECIALIZATION IS SIMILAR

Consultants claim to argue in a more generalist way and academic advisers claim to be specialized experts that provide well-supported knowledge. An analysis of the contribution of both professions in the two debates does not confirm these results. Considering both debates, the degree of specialization and generalization in the arguments is the same, and consultants and academic advisers use a similar number of arguments. Table 7.1 summarizes the propositions (formulated in Chapter 4) and the most important case results concerning the degree of specialization in the argumentation (see Chapters 5 and 6).

Not as Expected

In both debates the argumentation of consultants and academic advisers is similar with respect to the number of arguments presented. Staying with a generalist or specialist style of argumentation is not clear; the differences actually cancel each other out and most can be related to differences in the assignments. No differences can be attributed to the ethos of the professions.

Table 7.1 Specialist or generalist argumentation

Consultant use of arguments	**Academic use of arguments**
Proposition: More breadth of argument: generalist approach.	Proposition: More depth of argument: specialist approach.
Amsterdam Airport case • Somewhat generalist argumentation; • Similar number of arguments.	Amsterdam Airport case • Somewhat specialist argumentation; • Similar number of arguments.
Liberalization case • Somewhat specialist argumentation; • Similar number of arguments.	Liberalization case • Somewhat generalist argumentation; • Similar number of arguments.

Differences Between the Cases

In the Amsterdam Airport debate the expectation that academics argue more like specialists is to some extent illustrated. The liberalization debate shows the reverse. Consultants present more detailed argumentation. There is no good reason to assume that the debates can explain this difference, or that academic microeconomists argue in more general terms than academic transport economists. It seems incidental to the formulation and scope of the individual assignments.

Performance Compared

Academics have claimed to present more profound knowledge in their reports compared to consultants who present fashionable, superficial knowledge and who are even characterized as charlatans (Bloomfield and Danieli, 1995, p. 39; van Aken, 2001, p. 314; Armbrüster, 2006, p. 2). If consultants are charlatans, academic advisers are as well in terms of degree of specialization: academics are not more specialized and do not use more or substantially different arguments than consultants. Since the contributions are equivalent, these results cannot explain why consultants can ask for higher fees or why their consulting has more value from a client's perspective.

THE CENTRAL CLAIMS IN ADVICE ARE NORMATIVE

Claims can be conclusions about situations, or recommendations for improving a situation. In the debates most claims suggest improvements

in a normative sense, advice claims in the common sense of the word. The research expectation states that consultants present concrete and normative advice and academic advisers instead give only neutral and instrumental "if-then" advice.

Claims can be presented as certain or with doubts (modality), and claims can be refined with rebuttals. Consultants claim to stress chance or likelihood whereas academic advisers stress uncertainty. Regarding the rebuttals in the argument, we would expect that both consultants and academics pay attention to all relevant positive and negative effects. Negative effects are rebuttals that partly undermine the force of the positive effects. We also expect that consultants present more concrete rebuttals whereas academic advisers mention more theoretical or methodological rebuttals. Table 7.2 presents the proposition as formulated in chapter 4 and summarizes the most important case results of Chapters 5 and 6 concerning claims, modality and use of rebuttals.

As Expected

Table 7.2 shows that consultants perform as expected in both debates regarding the use of claims and their modality, and the use of rebuttals. Only their awareness of methodological rebuttals in the Amsterdam Airport debate is unexpected. Academic advisers, on the other hand, hardly practice what they preach. The only expected difference is that academic advisers pay more attention to uncertainties than consultants, but even here we see exceptions. In the Amsterdam Airport debate academic advisers perform more according to their ethos than in the liberalization debate.

Not as Expected

None of the academic reports gives economic if-then advice, which would focus on the delivery of useful knowledge that helps to reach given objectives. There are five academic reports that give normative advice, four in the liberalization debate and one in the Amsterdam Airport debate. These academic reports give advice on the level of policy, which is outside the theoretical boundaries of academic advice.

In the case of liberalization academic advisers conclude positively that society will benefit from liberalization of the electricity market, leaving their neutrality or distance behind. In the Amsterdam Airport debate three academic reports refer to positive effects in their conclusions and argumentation. In the liberalization case it is one. Consultants' conclusions are more balanced than those of academic advisers because consultants pay more attention to negative effects. That makes academic advisers less

Table 7.2 Treatment of the claim

Consultant treatment of the claim	**Academic treatment of the claim**
Proposition: Concrete and evaluative conclusions and advice. Emphasis is on chance and on practical conditions of rebuttal.	Proposition: General and neutral conclusions. No normative advice. Emphasis is on uncertainties and on theoretical conditions of rebuttal.
Amsterdam Airport case • Four reports give advice; • Four reports present evaluative and one neutral conclusions about the sum of effects; • All reports mainly present certain or bold claims; • All reports mention negative effects; • Four reports give practical conditions of rebuttal; • Three reports present methodological conditions of rebuttal.	Amsterdam Airport case • One report gives advice; • Three reports present evaluative and two neutral conclusions about the sum of effects; • Three reports stress uncertainties; • Two reports mention negative effects; • No report presents practical conditions of rebuttal; • Four reports present methodological conditions of rebuttal.
Liberalization case • Three reports give advice; • All reports present neutral conclusions about the sum of effects; • All reports mainly present certain or bold claims; • All reports mention negative effects; • Four reports pay attention to practical conditions of rebuttal including the effect of scenarios; • No methodological conditions of rebuttal.	Liberalization case • Four reports give advice; • Four reports present evaluative and one neutral conclusions about the sum of effects; • Three reports stress uncertainties; • Four reports mention negative effects; • All reports pay attention to practical conditions of rebuttal, including the effect of scenarios; • No methodological conditions of rebuttal.

neutral than consultants and even undermines their academic ethos as the neutral expert.

Beyond Expectation

Academic advisers pay more attention to practical rebuttals than expected and consultants pay more attention to methodological rebuttals than

expected. Both practices can be seen as strengthening the ethos of the two professions.

Differences Between the Cases

The two cases show strong variation in results. For both professions the Amsterdam Airport case confirms most theoretical expectations regarding treatment of advice, conclusions, modal qualifiers and practical conditions of rebuttal. In the liberalization debate academic advice comes close to the expected character of consultant advice.

Performance Compared

Academic advisers vary greatly in their performance between the debates. In the Amsterdam Airport debate they work more like academics, in the liberalization debate more like (but not quite the same as) consultants. Academics' advice is not neutral if-then advice; their conclusions are often evaluative. The variation in academic performance includes a significant number of academic advisers willing to argue quite one-sidedly. Do they give up their neutral approach because they believe consultants do? If consultants do forgo a neutral approach, they at least do it more subtly. Consultant argumentation is never as unbalanced as academic argumentation in the two cases.

The variation in the quality and character of academic advice can contribute to explaining why academic advisers are paid less than consultants. The academic accusation of consultants' shallowness and immoral attitude (Alvesson and Johansson, 2002, p. 229) strikes back. Academic advisers' one-sided arguments, unexpected due to their ethos of neutrality, make their service inferior compared to consultants, but also disappointing compared to the raised expectations.

ECONOMIC ADVICE NEEDS NORMATIVE GROUNDS

The proposition on the use of grounds in Table 4.4 states that consultants present effects more concretely, meaning that they try to quantify them. Academic advisers quantify less, but aim at higher standards of measurement. This expectation is illustrated by most reports. The proposition also states that consultants present positive or negative characterizations as grounds. Academic advisers claim that their ethos of distance, neutrality and positive science disallows giving controversial valuations. In practice, however, they do. They are necessary to draw the opiniative and

Table 7.3 The use of grounds

Consultant use of grounds	**Academic use of grounds**
Proposition: Use of positive statements and valuations as grounds, both concrete and straight.	Proposition: Exact and reliable statements preferred as grounds, but little fact production. No valuations.
Amsterdam Airport case • Three reports produce own quantifications; one uncritically cites BCI estimations. Consensus; • Relatively balanced valuation of effects in all reports.	Amsterdam Airport case • One report produces its own quantifications; one uncritically cites BCI estimations. No consensus; • Focus on positive economic effects. Three reports do not mention concrete negative effects.
Liberalization case • Four reports produce own quantifications. Consensus about results; • Balanced valuation of effects in all reports, paying more attention to negative effects and rebuttals regarding positive effects.	Liberalization case • Two reports produce own quantifications applying academic method. Consensus with consultants; • Balanced valuation of effects in four reports, paying more attention to positive economic effects. One report does not mention negative effects.

evaluative conclusions discussed in the previous section. Table 7.3 summarizes the proposition and the most important case results of Chapters 5 and 6 about the use of grounds.

As Expected

Table 7.3 shows that consultants perform as claimed regarding quantification and valuation of grounds. They present concrete estimations of their grounds and try to create a credible representation of the world, so that clients feel more confident about the effects of their actions. Academic advisers are expected to stick to exact, reliable measurements. However, that academic advisers disagree so much with each other in the Amsterdam Airport debate regarding quantification is unexpected and undermines their expert ethos that emphasizes scientific method.

Regarding valuation consultants prefer an "all-partial" perspective (van Luijk, 2001, p. 266). They pay serious attention to negative effects, and they present a more balanced view than academic advisers in both cases. They stay close to common sense valuations. That implies they acknowledge

negative environmental effects. This balanced and also critical approach of consultants was expected based on consultants' self-reflections. That academics argue less balanced was not.

Not as Expected

Quite unexpected is the one-sided academic presentation of the values of the effects. Four out of ten academic reports present only positive effects and three of them are rather biased. The neutral and distant approach that dominates academic ethos disappears in the practice of giving economic advice. Academic advisers also present controversial valuations. Effects of liberalization were valued more positively by academic advisers than by consultants, and their treatment of positive and negative effects in the Amsterdam Airport case was unbalanced. Academic advisers even tried to redefine negative environmental effects of Amsterdam Airport as positive. Economic ideology regarding liberalization and economic interests in the case of Amsterdam Airport seem to strongly influence their judgments. They are not as neutral as they claim and therefore they are not honest about their consulting methods. They seem, though, to implicitly admit the necessity of normative argumentation as academic advisers. What else could explain risking the accusation of hypocrisy?

Performance Compared

Academic advisers do not perform well in normative advice debates. Their arguments are often unbalanced and they lose credibility by claiming a neutral attitude like Stiglitz (1998, p. 52) and other traditional economists just as they present one-sided arguments.

Concerning positive grounds, presenting such different results in the Amsterdam Airport debate harms the academic claim of methodological rigor. They demonstrate that they do not really know the effects and as a consequence do not benefit from their scientific methods. In the liberalization debate the few quantifications of academics add little to consultants' findings.

Thus, regarding quantification of grounds and their normative interpretation, academic advisers are relatively bad performers compared to consultants. They quantify less, less well and they present relatively biased results. These differences certainly contribute to explaining the lower market value of academic advisers.

Table 7.4 Implied warrants on the first and second argumentation level

Consultant use of warrants	**Academic use of warrants**
Proposition: Warrants mainly based on common sense causality, not on high theory. Often reference to values, motives, norms and criteria.	Proposition: Warrants mainly based on theory embedded in economic disciplines and on non-controversial normative principles, values or motives.
Amsterdam Airport case • Four reports refer to controversial motives or values; • Three reports refer to completeness as a criterion for social cost-benefit analysis; • All reports apply causal arguments, but they are little embedded in theory.	Amsterdam Airport case • Two reports refer to controversial motives or values; • Four reports refer to criteria of economic methodology. No consensus; • All reports apply causality and often in the context of theory.
Liberalization case • Three reports refer to controversial motives or values; • All reports refer to the electricity law, three to controversial political or economic criteria, none to methodological criteria; • All reports apply causal arguments and they are little embedded in theory.	Liberalization case • All reports refer to controversial motives or values; • Four reports refer to the electricity law, three to controversial political or economic criteria, none to methodological criteria; • All reports apply causality and often in the context of theory.

ECONOMIC ADVICE NEEDS NORMATIVE WARRANTS

Unexpectedly, academic advisers and consultants use similar kinds of warrants in both debates. That undermines the proposition that consultants refer more to controversial motives and values in their argument than academic advisers. The expectation regarding the use of causal warrants still stands.

Warrants legitimize the argument. Reference to the positive effects of Amsterdam Airport is an argument for growth. If Amsterdam Airport grows, the positive effects do too. Implicit assumptions are that Amsterdam Airport causes these positive effects, and that these positive effects are desirable. These implicit assumptions are the warrants. Warrants characterize the argument and they explain why a ground supports a claim. Warrants by causality and motivational warrants that refer to laws, regulations, economic principles and motives or values are popular in the

context of advice. Table 7.4 summarizes the proposition on the use of warrants and the most important case results of Chapters 5 and 6.

As Expected

Table 7.4 shows that consultants perform as expected regarding the use of motivational arguments in both debates. They also refer to economic norms, criteria or laws in both debates. Academic advisers betray their ethos with respect to the use of motivational warrants and criteria by using controversial normative warrants as arguments.

Both professions perform as expected in their use of causal arguments. Academic advisers are more theoretically elaborate about causality in both debates; consultants illustrate their minimal use of theory by hardly embedding their arguments in theory.

Not as Expected

In the Amsterdam Airport debate one academic report applies controversial motivational arguments; in the liberalization debate motivational warrants are often apparent, again a departure from academic ethos by showing a partial and personal position. Many academics treat the desirability of liberalization as uncontroversial. However, clients brought liberalization to them as a controversial issue.

Academic advisers' arguments are also controversial when referring to criteria and norms. The Amsterdam Airport debate shows no consensus about the methodological criteria that should be applied, but they are at least discussed. That discussion fails in the liberalization debate. The liberalization debate shows critical reflections on regulation problems, which again implies that academics are involved in a controversial debate.

Academic advisers do the right thing from a consultant perspective in participating in controversial normative debates, but should revise their ethos to practice this way. Their current approach undermines their credibility. They argue as moral economists in the liberalization debate, implicitly admitting that academic advice is not instrumental or limited to supplying useful causal relationships.

Beyond Expectation

Consultants discuss how to apply cost-benefit analysis appropriately regarding investments in Amsterdam Airport. The methodological awareness of consultants in three reports is unexpected and adds positive value to their ethos: it is good to be aware of methodological questions.

Difference Between the Cases

The use of criteria, norms and laws as warrants differs between the cases. In the Amsterdam Airport debate consultants and academic advisers both discuss methodological criteria. In the liberalization debate they both discuss market principles and the law. The dynamics of the debates drives which warrants are used. Both professions are flexible enough to use field-specific arguments that belong to a specific conversation.

Performance Compared

Academics show greater use of theory in their arguments, but the added value is dubious. Their argument of the Dutch electricity market's competitive advantage is countered by consultants who give contra arguments based on common sense. Sophistication may lend academic advisers some kind of competitive advantage, but it does not result in a serious threat to consultants.

In their use of motivational warrants, norms and criteria academic advisers claim that they do not use controversial arguments (Blaug, 1980, p. 129), but in their practice they do. That undermines the professional credibility of academic advisers. Most problematic is that they present controversial warrants as if they were non-controversial, meaning they are presented without backing.

Controversial arguments are necessary in an advisory capacity, but that it is a professional opinion should be clearly stated. Academic ethos claims that academics deliver general, objective knowledge and that they only apply universal values. That is not the case; they need a new ethos. Traditional academic ethos inspired by positivist/modernist methods misleads academic advisers and their clients.

NEUTRAL SCIENTIFIC BACKINGS DO NOT SUFFICE

The use of backings is as expected. Academic advisers refer more to texts, consultants more to experiences. A backing confirms that a warrant or a ground is true. If a motive is the warrant, the backing could be that a client confirms that he shares that motive. References to inventors of theories that prove the existence of a causal relation are the specialty of academic advisers. Table 7.5 summarizes the proposition about backings and the case results from Chapters 5 and 6.

Table 7.5 The use of backings

Consultant use of backing	**Academic use of backing**
Proposition: Backing based on experience, rough estimates, personal valuation and intersubjective agreement. Outcomes should be "common sense" proof and "experience proof".	Proposition: Backing based on scientific method and existing academic literature. Little sympathy for backing by "quick and dirty" research, experience and common sense.
Amsterdam Airport case • Two reports refer to some scientific texts; • Four reports refer to public statistics; • On average c. 15 text sources; • The three reports that refer to technical sources only use calculations; • Four reports refer to oral/personal sources; • Common sense and experience backing of value statements.	Amsterdam Airport case • All reports refer to scientific texts; • Two reports refer to public statistics; • On average c. 50 text sources; • The three reports that refer to technical sources use calculation, statistical analysis and models; • Two reports refer to oral/personal sources; • Sophistic discussion of common sense valuation.
Liberalization case • Three reports refer to some scientific texts; • All reports refer to public statistics; • On average c. 15 text sources; • The three reports that refer to technical sources only use calculations; • All reports refer to oral/personal sources; • Common sense and experience backing of value statements.	Liberalization case • All reports refer to scientific texts; • Three reports refer to public statistics; • On average c. 50 text sources; • The three reports that refer to technical sources use calculation, statistical analysis and models; • One report refers to oral/personal sources; • No backing of value statements.

As Expected

Table 7.5 shows that the use of backings is similar in the two cases. Backings do not depend on the subject of discussion, but entirely on the ethos or character of each profession. The corresponding expectations based on ethos are clearly visible in the cases.

Most differences between academic advisers and consultants are a

matter of degree, since many sources are used by both. Academic advisers prefer scientific sources whereas consultants prefer public statistics. The number of references to scientific texts differs strongly. If consultants refer to scientific texts it is often only once, whereas academic advisers have many references to scientific sources. Overall academic advisers use three times more text sources than consultants.

Technical methods to back an argument are used by both groups. Economic models and statistical techniques mainly appear in academic reports as technical backing. They seem too sophisticated for most consultants and suit academic advisers much better. For consultants, calculation techniques are the most popular way to back arguments.

Consultants rely on experiences, interviews or group discussions to back common sense judgments or rough estimates. Academic advisers sometimes mention interviews, but refer much more to text sources. Consultants use a greater variety of sources than academic advisers, which enables them to triangulate sources.

Consultants use oral sources to investigate the interests of important stakeholders and back controversial value statements. Academic advisers do not back their value statements, even if they are controversial. They stress or deny the existence of positive or negative effects to influence value judgments that depend on these effects. Examples are the denial of negative environmental effects (UvA, 1992; EUR et al., 1997) or positive indirect labor effects in the Amsterdam Airport debate (RuG, 1997).

Performance Compared

The performance of academic advisers and consultants regarding the use of backings is different. Academic advisers rely mostly on text sources but sometimes use economic models, statistical techniques or calculations to back their arguments. They hardly refer to oral sources, thus shrinking the domain of backable statements compared to consultants. Academic advisers cannot back their valuations and motivational arguments, rendering their advice vulnerable to criticism. They also have a hard time backing new trends, which are first subjects of conversation, later written down in newspapers, and last discussed in scientific texts.

Compared to academic advisers, consultants make more balanced use of the different kinds of sources: text sources technical sources and experience-based oral sources. Within the domain of text sources consultants perform less well, but the greatest difference is that they hardly refer to scientific sources. The added value of these sources is questionable, however, in the context of advice. Academic advisers do not convince better with their statements. Their backings of multipliers of indirect

effects in the Amsterdam Airport case are questionable, since different academic advisers deliver contradictory results. What then is the added value of this scientific method?

Given the limited relevance and questionable reliability of scientific text sources as backing for economic arguments in the two debates, consultants seem to perform better by relying on empirical data, reports from the field, their own experiences and the experiences of those involved in the projects. The knowledge generated from these different sources enables triangulation. Individually, the reliability of these sources is questionable, but in combination they sufficiently compensate for weaknesses. The biggest advantage is that consultants can discuss a greater part of reality with the help of their backings. That was also visible in the number of quantifications consultants could give regarding their grounds. Academic advisers had great difficulties with quantification.

Academic advisers are serious competitors with their techniques of backing positive statements due to their ethos, although their results are not convincing. They completely lose competition in the backing of normative statements because they lack an appropriate methodology. They can only present normative statements as if they were non-controversial even when they are controversial – a significant omission in the methodology of academic economists who consider themselves positive economists but work in a situation where they argue like normative economists. That omission could add to the explanation of why academic advisers perform less well from a market perspective. Academics charge consultants with weak methodology; ironically, their own advice methodology does not cover the backing of normative statements.

ADVICE DEMANDS EMPHASIS OF CONCLUSIONS

There are different ways to present a management summary, introduction, conclusions, headings, diagrams, tables and so on. We can expect consultants to stress advice and academic advisers to elaborate on theoretical arguments. In practice they do, but academics have learned from consultants to start with an executive summary. Table 7.6 summarizes the research expectation of Chapter 4 regarding the presentation of advice, followed by the case results of Chapters 5 and 6.

As Expected

In the traditional structure of scientific reports theory and methodology are important sections. Table 7.6 shows that seven academic reports present

Table 7.6 Styles of presentation

Consultant style of presentation	**Academic style of presentation**
Proposition: Accentuation of advice, conclusions and line of argument by text structure, headings, diagrams and tables.	Proposition: Accentuation of scientific backing by manifest presentation of methodology and theory in report structure.
Amsterdam Airport case • Four reports present both conclusions or recommendations and a summary; • No methodological process structures; all report structures follow the kind of effects; • Two reports have (sub)sections on chosen methodology/approach; • No reports have (sub)sections on theory before application; • All reports have an expressive writing style.	Amsterdam Airport case • Two reports present both conclusions or recommendations and a summary; • Three reports have a methodological process structure; two structures follow the kind of effects; • Three reports have (sub)sections on chosen methodology/approach; • Three reports have (sub)sections on theory before application; • No report has an expressive writing style.
Liberalization case • Two reports present both conclusions or recommendations and a summary; • No methodological process structures; all reports follow the kind of effects, the effects per alternative or effects per target group; • All reports have (sub)sections on chosen methodology/approach; • One report has a (sub)section on theory before application; • Four reports have an expressive style.	Liberalization case • Two reports present both conclusions or recommendations and a summary; • One report has a methodological process structure; other reports follow the kind of effects, effects per alternative or effects per target group; • Four reports have (sub)sections on chosen methodology/approach; • Four reports with (sub)sections on theory before application; • No report has an expressive writing style.

methodology and seven present general theoretical elaborations in (sub) sections. Only once do consultants present theory before application.

The expected differences in style are clearly visible in most reports. Consultants present themselves as communicators by using many means of emphasis such as conclusive headings, textboxes and overviews in tables or diagrams. They help clients follow the line of argument and understand the main message. Academic advisers make less use of this conclusive writing style, they never present results expressively like consultants.

Not as Expected

Academics are accustomed to a methodological structure in writing articles or scientific reports, but in contract research they often use alternative structures. Only four of the ten academic reports have the traditional methodological process structure. Sections in traditional reports correspond to steps in the research process. The alternative structures focus more on the main contributions or arguments that support the final conclusion.

Beyond Expectation

Academic advisers have been convinced by consultants to present their most important findings in an executive summary. They are shifting from a focus on method and process structure to a conclusions-first writing style. Academic advisers show with their executive summaries more awareness of the needs of their clients than expected: clients want to know what to do.

In general consultants pay more attention to their research approach than expected. In the Amsterdam Airport case this is apparent in only two reports, but in the liberalization case all consultant reports make their methods explicit in a (sub)section. Consultants are thus more aware of their methodology than expected.

Performance Compared

Although not all differences between the presentation in reports by consultants and academic advisers are as strong as expected, consultants perform as they claim and some academic advisers tend to imitate consultants. In one respect, acknowledging methodology, consultants imitate academic advisers.

Can the differences explain why consultants sell their services more easily and receive higher prices than academic advisers? Only the writing style is substantially different. The consultant writing style is more conclusive, expressive and transparent: helpful for those who have little time to read. It is better marketing as well. This adds to the explanation, but is insufficient without the more fundamental differences discussed above.

ACADEMIC HYPOCRISY, OR THE ETHOS AND PRACTICE GAP

The way consultants use and present claims, grounds, warrants and backings illustrates the research expectations of consultant argumentation,

based on their ethos. The only exception is that they present and discuss methodology in their reports, which belongs to the ethos of the academic. Overall, consultants perform as they say they do and consultants have the character they claim to have.

The academic adviser character is ambiguous compared to the consultant character. Only the academic use of backings aligns well with their ethos. In many respects the ethos of academic advisers becomes diluted in practice, since they take some steps into the ethos of the consultant. In the Amsterdam Airport debate most expectations based on academic ethos are visible, but with exceptions. What are the exceptions in the Amsterdam Airport debate become the rule in the liberalization debate. Academic advisers act more like consultants in their use of claims, in their treatment of grounds and warrants, and in their presentation.

Table 7.7 summarizes to what degree the ethos of consultants and academic advisers is visible in the reports with respect to advice argumentation practices. A plus sign (+) indicates that the results correspond to the expectations derived from ethos in at least four of five reports. A minus sign (−) indicates that practice differs strongly from ethos and is used when at least three of five reports give unexpected results. A plus-minus sign (+/−) indicates that two reports show unexpected results and three reports show expected results. Sometimes it is not possible to count the reports this way, as in the case of specialist or generalist argumentation or the kind of references used in backings. In those cases a global judgment is made, where "+" means according to expectation, "+/−" means weak support and "−" means not according to or contrary to the expectation.

In Table 7.7 the argumentation categories are presented in bold if the expected differences between consultants and academic advisers are visible in both cases. Categories are underlined and italicized if academic advisers imitate consultants. Categories are underlined if consultants imitate academics. Categories are presented in normal case if both professions make adaptations. A deviation from ethos for one of the professions is noted when at least two reports in each case give unexpected results, indicated by two plus-minuses, or when at least three reports in one case give unexpected results, indicated by one minus.

All categories in bold indicate expected differences in approach for both cases and both professions. These differences seem to relate to the core values in the academic ethos, since the corresponding academic practices are not moving away from academic ethos due to market forces or learning experiences. The strong academic values are preference for scientific backing and use of theoretical warrants. Academic advisers also argue more abstractly than consultants because they less frequently quantify their grounds and more frequently elaborate on theory. They sometimes devote

Table 7.7 Confrontation between ethos and the practice of advice argumentation

Bold: differences in line with ethos 2*(+); max. 1*(+/–) Normal: adaptations by both professions ≥1*(–) or 2*(+/–) *Underlined italics*: academic adaptations ≥1*(–) or 2*(+/–) Underlined: consultant adaptations ≥1*(–) or 2*(+/–)	**Consultants**		**Academic advisers**	
	Amsterdam Airport	Electricity market	Amsterdam Airport	Electricity market
Debate				
• Specialist or generalist argumentation	+/–	–	+/–	–
Claims				
• *(No) normative advice*	+	+	+	–
• *(No) evaluative conclusions*	+	+	–	–
• *Modality*	+	+	+/–	+/–
• *Negative effects as rebuttal*	+	+	–	+/–
• *Practical rebuttals*	+	+	+	–
• Methodological rebuttals	–	+	+	–
Grounds				
• **Occurrence of quantification**	+	+	+	+
• *Rigor*	+	+	–	+
• *Balanced valuation*	+	+	–	+/–
Warrants				
• *Motivational arguments*	+	+/–	+/–	–
• *Use of criteria/norms/laws*	+/–	+	+/–	–
• **Use of causality/theory**	+	+	+	+
Backings				
• **Kind of text references**	+	+	+	+
• **Number of text references**	+	+	+	+
• **Use of technical sources**	+	+	+	+
• **Use of oral or experience-based sources**	+	+	+/–	+
Presentation				
• *Executive summary*	+	+/–	–	–
• *Structure*	+	+	+/–	–
• Sections on approach	+/–	–	+/–	+
• **Sections on theory**	+	+	+/–	+
• **Expressive writing style**	+	+	+	+

whole sections to a theory before applying causal arguments. Finally, academic advisers write more neutrally and less expressively than consultants. No tensions between academic ethos and practice are in evidence so far.

Most categories in Table 7.7 are underlined and italicized, meaning consultants argue as they claim to and academic advisers do not. When academic advisers step out of their ethos, they adapt their performance to what they probably consider the performance of consultants, although consultants would not necessarily recognize themselves in these academic imitations. Academic imitations include omitting the modality of their claims (which conflicts with their ethos), offering more practical rebuttals than expected (which can be seen as positive addition from an academic perspective), structuring their reports in a non-methodological way and writing executive summaries. The farthest step they take from the academic ethos is in presenting normative advice and evaluative conclusions; that is, they give up their neutrality. Academic ethos claims that discussions about objectives, policies and strategies are outside its realm, but academic advisers step into it. Many use motivational arguments, which implies suggesting what their clients should prefer. With these contributions they undermine the ethos of neutral, distant and objective scientists. The same applies to their use of criteria, norms and laws. Some criteria and norms are written down, such as law, but many are controversial, such as motivational arguments referring to locally shared preferences. Only when criteria, norms or laws are in accepted literature can academic advisers refer to them. The conflict with their ethos starts when controversies arise. According to their ethos academics then should be silent, but they are not. They value effects as positive or negative in controversial ways and sometimes even argue in a polemical way, such as denying negative environmental effects of Amsterdam Airport's growth. The many interests involved generate ambiguous and controversial arguments in such debates.

When academic advisers give up their neutral attitude but stand by an ethos that requires it they become vulnerable to accusations of hypocrisy. These will not cease until they explicitly address that academic advice is not neutral but part of normative economics. And this cannot be done without changing academic ethos. Hypocrisy means that ideas about how to act are different from the related action (Brunsson, 1993, p. 502). It occurs in situations where things that have to be done cannot be acknowledged due to moral principles. They can only be done "in silence". The neutral approach of academics is a handicap in the context of giving advice. Academic advisers must try to free themselves from it because advice often demands a normative argument to support a normative claim. Academics presenting claims as non-controversial when they are not is unacceptable.

Academic advisers are not the neutral experts they claim to be. In the

investigated cases there were no examples of neutral economic if-then advice. Arguments by cause did not dominate most academic reports. With this practice academic advisers undermine their ethos and raise doubt as to whether they have adequately conceptualized advice. When the very practice of academic advising is external to its concept, the concept is invalidated.

It could be argued that the conclusions based on my characterizations of consultants and academic advisers are tentative, but many academic practices point in the same direction. Even if one or two of the underlying claims did not hold in a third or fourth case study, the general conclusions would still be well supported: that academic advisers do not understand their own practice of giving advice, have an ambiguous character, and are hypocritical by reaffirming their traditional ethos of neutral experts while acting differently. Academics' accusations of consultants swing back like a boomerang. They do not meet their own standards as academic advisers; at the same time, their being attuned to academic standards holds them back from doing as well as consultants in backing their positive and normative arguments. Do these differences in argumentation account for the market success of consultants versus academic advisers?

EXTERNAL VALIDITY

How Representative are the Conclusions about Consultants?

Since most results from the literature review and the two cases show similar results about consultants, we can conclude tentatively that the characterization of consultants not only applies to Dutch consultants, but also those consultants included in the literature, that is, Western Europe and the Anglo-Saxon world. Because consultants' methodological awareness found in the reports is not discussed in the literature, we might conclude this is a characteristic specific to Dutch consultants, but the fact that "hybrids" are an international phenomenon leads me to assume that it is more general. To some extent the whole profession is hybrid due to the academic education of consultants. An international research design is needed to support this methodology proposition with more empirical evidence.

How Representative are the Conclusions about Academic Advisers?

The results for academic advisers based on the reflections in the literature and based on both cases show similar results regarding academics' (1) style of backing, (2) extensive use of theory, (3) reluctance regarding

quantification and (4) neutral writing style. For these results the characterization of academic advisers is unambiguous. For reasons regarding the breadth of literature discussed above, we can conclude tentatively that most academic advisers in Western Europe and the Anglo-Saxon world will practice an academic style of backing, a relatively extensive use of theory, a reluctance regarding quantification and a neutral writing style. The cases show no contradiction.

The frequent occurrence of academic advisers' non-neutral conclusions, unbalanced valuation of effects, use of controversial criteria and use of motivational arguments are four unexpected results that point in the same direction. They therefore confirm each other. Academic advisers argue opiniatively while cultivating an ethos of neutrality. This hypocrisy certainly is a Dutch phenomenon, and the question is if these results also apply to Western Europe and the Anglo-Saxon world. Clark and Majone seem to suggest that it could be a more general phenomenon: 'Since the Second World War, scientific information and analysis have been sought increasingly as aids to the resolution of practical policy problems. This growing demand for usable science has encouraged a rapid increase in the supply of would-be scientific policy guidance and advice' (Clark and Majone, 1985, p. 6).

The characterization of academic advisers in the literature and in their performance in practice nonetheless shows many ambiguities. It indicates a "lack" of character of academic advisers – seemingly their most fundamental and robust characteristic. Further international research is needed to support the proposition empirically that this lack of character is an international phenomenon as well.

In Anglo Saxon literature the bias in academic advice is also discussed in some places. For example, by Weinstein (1992, pp. 75–76) who criticizes the one-sided contribution of academic advisers in the context of decision making and political debate. Mandel (1999, p. 113) criticizes economic advisers who are testifying as a witness: they are allied with one side in an adversarial context and therefore not neutral. Rivlin (1987, p. 9) attacks economic experts for lack of neutrality. They should make their preferences and their advice role explicit to show that they are not neutral. Jones and Cullis (1993, p. 73) argue that politicians dominate their advisers. Given the results from my case studies there is now more and stronger evidence that adds to these Anglo-Saxon observations. We can therefore formulate the proposition that academic neutrality disappears in the context of academic advice.

Performance of Academic Advisers is Related to their Discipline

Academic advisers perform differently in the Amsterdam Airport debate compared to the liberalization debate; consultants do not. Why? I will

Table 7.8 Cases where academic argument varies between debates by three or more reports

	Occurrence in Amsterdam Airport reports	Occurrence in liberalization reports
Normative advice	1	4
Practical rebuttals	0	5
Motivational arguments	2	5

discuss three of these cases where differences between debates are evident in three or more reports (Table 7.8).

The three aspects are related to each other vertically: normative advice requires motivational arguments to strengthen the notion that the client will benefit from the recommendations. Normative advice is meant as the counterpart of instrumental advice. Practical rebuttals regarding how or when to follow the recommendations are close to advice as well, since they are part of an advice claim. The highest level question is therefore: why do academic advisers give more normative and more concrete advice in the liberalization debate as opposed to the Amsterdam Airport debate?

Two explanations come to mind. The first is that uncertainty in the Amsterdam Airport debate concerning effects makes academics reluctant to further their argument with concrete advice. This is not very convincing, though, in light of the fact that effects in the liberalization debate are even less certain than the effects of infrastructural projects. We should therefore ask the deeper question: why do academic advisers take uncertainties less seriously in the liberalization debate? Why is their belief in the positive outcome of liberalization so strong?

A more promising answer has to do with the research traditions of transport economists vis-à-vis microeconomists. Microeconomists have strong opinions about the benefits of the market. Uncertainties about effects are less relevant because they are sure that the market will in the long run take care of short-term negative effects. The academic reports strongly show this positive belief in the market. Transport economists, on the other hand, are more used to comparing modes of transportation. They have a tradition of measuring the effects of alternative investments in infrastructure and comparing them in a neutral way, like they show in the *Handboek Economische Effecten Infrastructuur* (Ministerie van Verkeer en Waterstaat, 1996). Microeconomists have no such empirical research tradition and dwell less on concrete effects. Exploring differences in academic research traditions within subdisciplines as a possible explanation for the difference in argumentation style thus seems worthwhile. The same would

not apply to consultants because they are far less influenced by academic research traditions in subfields. The individual debates did not show a difference in the degree of specialization between consultants and academic advisers regarding the breadth and depth of the argumentation, however, the research expectation that academic advisers are more specialized than consultants is to some extent visible in the academic differences between the two debates.

What follows the observation that the results partly depend on the debate's subject is the assumption that the results could be different for academic advisers with a background in non-economic social science disciplines. These differences could apply to the backings of academic advisers, for example, because social scientists with a preference for explorative field research are unlike economists. Other characteristics would probably hold for all social scientists, however, like the academic preference for literature analysis or suspicion towards experience as a source of knowledge.

Some Differences Between the Cases Depend on the Debates' Content

The two cases show two different results for both consultants and academic advisers regarding their reference to laws in the liberalization debate and to methodological criteria and rebuttals in the Amsterdam Airport debate. These differences are not dependent on professional ethos, but shared by both professions. They depend on the subject of discussion or dynamics of the debate. Similar differences could occur in a third debate.

In the debate about liberalization of the electricity market a law had to be developed and evaluated as part of the assignment, and many reports refer to it. The growth of Amsterdam Airport had no such law. There are also many relevant norms and criteria in the liberalization debate that should be fulfilled to make a market more efficient or transparent. These economic norms and criteria are only referred to in the liberalization debate due to their relevance.

In the Amsterdam Airport debate academic advisers and consultants refer to methodological criteria to develop a proper cost-benefit analysis, and to estimate welfare and multiplier effects, on which the benefits of Amsterdam Airport's growth depend. These methodological questions are not discussed in the liberalization debate; they are not an issue. A political explanation for their inclusion in the Amsterdam Airport debate could be that it is rather controversial. Consultants and academic advisers both serve critical clients with a strong interest in the environment. They ask for evidence of positive effects and investigation of negative effects. Another explanation is that the attention to measuring positive and negative economic effects in infrastructural projects has some history in transport as

well as regional economics. Information about the assessment of economic effects of infrastructural projects is collected in the *Handboek Economische Effecten Infrastructuur* (Ministerie van Verkeer en Waterstaat, 1996). These differences cannot be attributed to the character of consultants or academic advisers. They belong to the content of the debate or the shared conversation about the economic effects of infrastructural projects. No such conversation now exists in the economic effects of liberalization.

Stability of Academic Practices Over Time

The difference between the two debates regarding academic advisers leads to the speculation that academic advice might be developing in a direction away from traditional advice practices. Amsterdam Airport reports cover the period 1993–2002; the reports about liberalization of the electricity market cover the period 1996–2006. However, differences between the cases cannot be seen as a development in time because the periods are more overlapping than different. Nor are the earlier reports more in line with academic ethos than the later ones. Thus the research design does not allow conclusions about developments in time. The phenomenon that academics do not always act according to their ethos is not necessarily a recent development. It could have started long before this research.

Do the Conclusions About Academic Advisers Apply to Other Academics?

The conclusion that academic advisers do not meet their own ethos in many respects applies to my sample of academic advisers, but not necessarily to all academic economists. Academics who write for the academic community are not in competition with consultants. They feel institutional rather than client pressure. They are rewarded for international publications and work for a different audience. Therefore my conclusions about academic advice and contract research cannot be generally extended to all academic practices. It would require a different research design to back postmodernist claims that modernist social science research assumes too much neutrality and objectivity. Given the criticisms of post-positivists and postmodernists, however, an appropriate research design might show a similar kind of hypocrisy at these levels of academic research.

WHY DO CONSULTANTS PERFORM BETTER?

We started this investigation with the observation that consultants can ask for higher fees and have a larger market share than academic advisers. At

the same time academics criticized consultants for their methods and their morality. They suggested with these criticisms that they could do much better.

After this investigation we have seen that academic advisers do not have the neutral truth-loving character they pretend to have, and that their criticisms towards consultants apply even more to themselves. Academics can question their own methods, since they cannot reach agreement on statements of fact such as the estimation or indirect labor effects. Academics can question their own morality since many of them support advice with biased argumentation, paying attention to positive effects only. These are two main reasons that directly explain why consultants perform better, or why academic advisers underperform when giving advice. That academic advisers adapt their way of writing reports, that they use more literature than consultants and that they apply more theory in their warrants does not compensate for that. That academic advice is normative instead of neutral is more of a problem for academics than for clients, as long as academics acknowledge it. Raising wrong expectations does not add to client satisfaction.

The deeper questions behind these direct explanations are why academics still claim superiority over consultants in the context of advice, when they know their market share is so small, and why they support their instrumental advice concept and perform differently in practice? Why this hypocrisy?

Academic Hypocrisy as Explanation

Because of the limitations of the research design I cannot answer all the questions I raise but some of them deserve further attention, especially those which delve deeper into the character of the academic adviser. I can only suggest directions for further explorations. Why have academic advisers' arguments such unexpected elements? Their hypocrisy is not to their advantage, especially in the long run. What motivates this hypocrisy of academic advisers? Is it something like projection, seeing in the other what applies more to oneself? Asking academic advisers in interviews or during their work is the best way to find out more about their motives. But the literature might also offer some suggestions.

The research by Blaug (1980, p. 150) and Peacock (1992, pp. 1215–19) could give a first clue. Both acknowledge that academic advisers are not taken seriously by clients if they follow their ethos. Their involvement in normative discussions is required. However, if academic advisers openly stated what they do in their practice as academic adviser, such as in 't Veld (in 't Veld and Verhey 2000, pp. 118–21) and Frissen (2000, pp. 59–60) do

in their reflections, they probably would not be taken seriously by their academic colleagues, which is also important to them (Peacock, 1988, p. 5). Frissen (2000, p. 57) also admits that academic advisers benefit from the authority of their traditional academic ethos in practice, so they cannot deny it too openly. That could be why so few academic advisers state openly what they do. Consultants who are honest about what they do earn little respect from the academic community, so honest academic advisers may fear a similar fate. Consultants do not care, they live in another community, but academics do care. Keeping up appearances is a way to prevent criticism by colleagues. That explanation suggests hypocrisy indeed.

The second reason not to state explicitly what contract research implies is that it is not rewarded at universities (Frey and Eichenberger, 1993, p. 192, 1997, p. 38; Klamer, 2007, p. 42; Weggeman, 2001, p. 115). Unlike publication of scientific articles in A-level journals, reports do not lead to promotion, further a career or garner the respect of colleagues. Contract research is not cited in academic articles and rarely can be used for publication in international journals because the relevance of the knowledge is often too local. These facts explain why contract researchers are not proud of their work.

There is no supporting academic culture for contract research. Consultancies often include general conditions in their contracts. Clients can refer to them if they consider consultants' work inadequate. Many consultancies are also ISO certified, whereas contract researchers work individually, or within an institution without such certification. What contract research is, how it should be performed and what the most important criteria are to judge the quality of contract research is not a subject in discussion. It seems a means to merely earn money. This attitude is criticized by KNAW (2005) in a report about contract research by universities and written for the Dutch government. The authors recommend that all research institutes of universities sign a declaration of independence. It is a plea for more ethical backbone and more ethical awareness. Such standards are mostly implicit and not very influential yet.

A Wrong Conception of Advice

There is a lack of understanding of what contract research is or should be in academia. The dominant conception is that of presenting useful knowledge of causal relations. Clients can apply this instrumental knowledge to realize their objectives. However a theory of academic advice cannot be applied in practice if this instrumental theory does not support what contract researchers do. The assumptions of traditional modernist/

positivist theory are of little use in the context of practice, as suggested by post-positivists and postmodernists of many kinds. Reasons are that advisers should tell small narratives instead of grand narratives, they should pay attention to local reality instead of what is general, and to change instead of stability as required by theory. This should motivate academics to reconsider their scientific advice theory along the lines of the knowledge they apply. Knowledge by experience, by observation and intersubjective agreement as practiced by academic differences deserves more attention.

The practice of giving advice crosses the borders of what can be done according to the instrumental modernist conception of advice. That applies to the practice of academic advisers and consultants. Consultants act more in line with postmodernist assumptions in their use of knowledge. They refer to more sources of knowledge than modernist academics would accept as acceptable, and claim local rather than general validity and usefulness. In that sense consultants have a more postmodern character, although they may be unaware of it. Therefore one could better conclude that postmodernists such as ten Bos (2000, 2001) have a more realistic view of the research practices of consultants and academic advisers than positivist/modernist philosophers of science.

The research orientation of postmodernists such as Czarniawska (2001) is mainly positive though, whereas the practice of consultants and academic advisers is often normative. That makes even an extended concept of knowledge problematic in the context of advice. Positive knowledge is never rich enough to appraise values, assess interests or argue for improvements. More than positive knowledge is necessary to appraise that something is useful, valuable or important. Advice requires an epistemology beyond positive knowledge claims. A rhetorical perspective as adopted by Habermas (1988a) or Toulmin (1994) can discuss different types of knowledge, but also the normative and personal side of advice, as demonstrated in my advice analysis. Although attention to this analytical perspective has been renewed in the last century, rhetorical analysis is a rather old perspective. It is pre- rather than postmodern. Consultants and academic advisers therefore practice more along the lines of pre-modern principles than postmodern assumptions. Consultants especially are pre-modern characters by not claiming scientific sophistication. Their approach implies common sense and some of the basic results of scientific research. Academic advisers do not admit that this pre-modern approach would give them more guidance and inspiration in their work than the modernist approach they pay lip service to. By this mere nod to their traditional ethos, they do not prove that they understand their own advice practice.

Is the Riddle Solved?

The riddle stated in the introduction was: why do consultants perform so much better than academic advisers as measured by market share and fees despite their weak methods? The answer is that academic advisers and consultants both show weak methods in their practice of economic advice as measured by traditional scientific standards. Disagreement regarding the multiplier of indirect labor or one-sided presentation of positive effects are only two examples. Citation practices of consultants are a third example. The riddle, however, is created by these standards. Without them, it was already clear that academic advisers perform less well, because then the standards of the market would not be questioned by academic standards. The traditional academic standards, however, create the riddle as long as academic advisers do not question these standards in the context of advice.

My experience with these academic standards is that they are relevant while writing an article or a scientific monograph. Their relevance, however, resides more within the context of academic research for the academic community than within the context of academic advice. The needs of academic advice may therefore evidence flaws in academic methods. This is an argument for modesty and against the academic disrespect shared by economists towards experience-based knowledge and normative deliberation. Consultants present no contradicting estimates like academic advisers in their advice by allowing experience-based methods, personal expertise and intersubjective tests. Their argumentation regarding special interests is less biased. That implies that academic advisers can improve their methods by learning from consultants and stepping away from their traditional ethos.

It was necessary to apply the values and standards of academic ethos to academic advice simply because it had not been done. That solved the riddle to some extent, but rather than explaining why consultants are more successful, it merely mitigated academic judgments against them, because most academic advisers also did not meet their own standards. The underlying problem, however, is that the traditional academic standards of economists and policy scientists regarding the production of knowledge are inadequate to the discussion of advice practices. It is unlikely that a positivist/modernist analysis would have identified experience-based knowledge and the ability to discuss and support controversial normative claims as the primary success factors of consultants over academic advisers. The rhetorical advice analysis of argumentation practices in this book has offered these explanations. It has also shown features of advice that are helpful to better understand advice practices and their quality. A market value does not explain; it can only indicate value.

8. Advice on advice

As demonstrated in the introduction, academics show disrespect for consultants' approaches in their reflections. By this, we are made to expect that academic advisers follow their own ethos when competing with consultants. Many of them, however, seem to imitate what they *believe* consultants do, which is not what consultants really do. Consulting takes time to learn.

Some adaptations that do not conflict with academic ethos positively affect academic advisers' service by adding something new to it and they may add to its market value. Examples are academic advisers' paying attention to practical rebuttals to strengthen conclusions or advice, and writing more like consultants by beginning reports with an executive summary. Not all academic adaptations harmonize with their traditional ethos, though, such as when academic advisers claim to be neutral experts, but present opiniative and unbalanced evaluations of positive and negative effects. These academic practices are problematic from the consultant's perspective: academic imitation is partial and academic practices change while its ethos remains traditional.

Consultants can argue based on opinion and they can value effects, but consider it a problem when valuations are unbalanced while claiming a neutral or impartial approach. We do not expect balanced argumentation from lawyers nor do we think of them as hired guns: it is perfectly clear that their contributions will be one-sided. Problematic is the ambiguous and often unbalanced valuation of academic advisers in contrast to their ethos and even compared to consultants. That practice contributes to an explanation of the lower market value of academic advice services.

In other respects academic advisers follow the expectations based on their ethos. They produce knowledge as expected, evident in their backing of positive grounds and warrants; consultants instead use 'quick and dirty' methods. However, academic advisers are restricted in what they can say by their standards of quantification and by the academic requirement to discuss questions from a theoretical perspective. Not all advice questions, however, can be so discussed. Some are too practical; some concern new social or economic realities not yet theoretically described. The domain of knowledge accessible to academic advisers is therefore smaller than consultants'. Academic advisers try to compensate for this disadvantage with

the claim that their knowledge is of better quality. The cases, however, do not provide such evidence. Academic estimates of the effects of Amsterdam Airport's growth vary more than estimates by consultants. Compared to consultants, academic advisers say less, and what they say is not reliable. The lower market value of academic advisers might also be explained by the academic treatment of positive claims.

Since academic advisers and consultants perform differently, and since these differences can relate to the lower market value of academic advice, the sections that follow discuss what this implies for clients and academic advisers, and how academics can develop an advice theory that aligns more with their and consultants' practices. Clients should know when and under what conditions to seek out a consultant or an academic adviser and academic advisers should know how to adapt or develop their advice practices. An academic theory of advice should better describe the academic practice of advice giving in order to increase its external validity.

THREE DIMENSIONS TO COMPARE ADVICE APPROACHES

Practitioners argue that knowledge has to be simple to be useful in the context of action. Consultants pay attention to this principle (Rasiel and Friga, 2001, pp. 98–9) and it is acknowledged in academic discussions (Argyris, 1996, p. 402). Since the conclusions of Chapter 7 are many, it is necessary to integrate them to give the recommendations more focus.

Three dimensions of advice can characterize the use of claims and arguments and help describe differences in consultants' and academic advisers' styles. The first addresses the balance in positive and normative claims and underlying arguments. Traditional academic advisers stay on the positive side according to their ethos and consultants more in the middle, which means that they both present value and positive judgments in the context of advice. The second dimension has local and universal knowledge as its extremes. Traditional academic advisers claim to apply universal theory and non-controversial values; consultants use local and historical knowledge and values in their arguments. Consultant claims can therefore often be characterized as aesthetic or therapeutic, following Habermas (1988a, pp. 38–45). Criteria to evaluate the quality or validity of these claims are not 'general or universal truth' but authenticity or truthfulness (therapeutic claims) and intersubjective or cultural standards about what is acceptable (aesthetic claims). The third dimension addresses whether claims are used with the idea that they are rigorous and non-controversial from a scientific perspective, or whether they need discursive support. Consultants have more of a

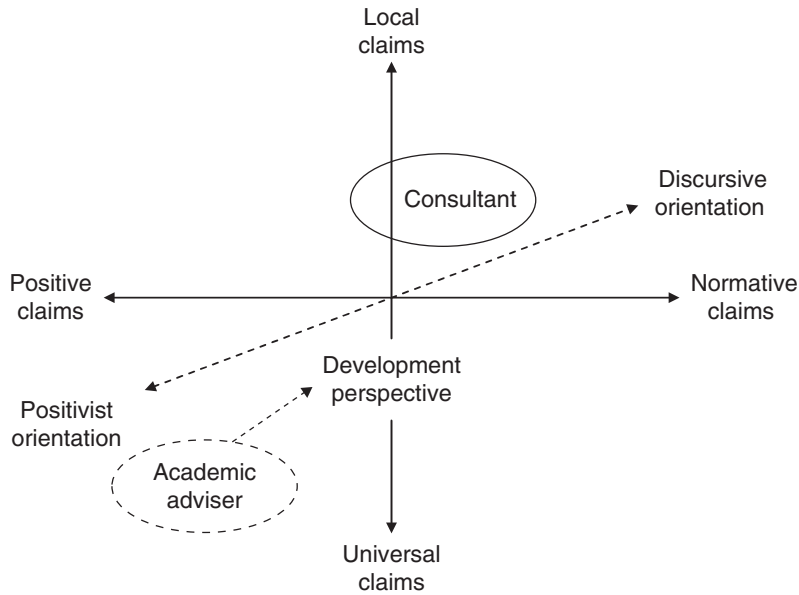

Figure 8.1 Three dimensions that characterize advice

post-positivist position because most of their claims are local and contextually deliberative; academic advisers follow the positivist tradition by their adherence to universal claims. But are academic theories really as universal as they claim to be? Post-positivists often ask this question, since it is misleading to claim universal validity with locally valid arguments. Regarding academic advice post-positivists have a case indeed, as argued in Chapter 7.

The dotted dimension in Figure 8.1 indicates willingness to consider claims as controversial and to back them with evidence: a discursive versus a positivist view. Consultants' ethos is more modest in this sense, but academic advisers create a discursive shortage by treating controversial claims as non-controversial as they did in both cases. Figure 8.1 also summarizes consultants' and academics' positions regarding their use of normative/positive claims and arguments (horizontal dimension) and their preference for local or universal claims and arguments in giving expert advice (vertical dimension).

The ovals in Figure 8.1 show the stances of the professions according to their ethos. For consultants this oval also characterizes their practice; that is, they act according to their ethos. They use both positive and normative claims, and the claims are rather local. Their orientation is discursive in the sense that they acknowledge a 'quick and dirty' approach based more

on approximation, estimation and evidence than on scientific facts. The academic adviser's situation is different. Because their practice does not overlap with their ethos in all respects, their oval is dotted. Their ethos is positivist, claiming application of universal and positive theory, but they present more controversial normative claims than their ethos allows. The dotted arrow suggests the direction toward which academic advisers could develop their ethos to lessen their vulnerability to hypocrisy. That implies a less universal presentation of normative and positive claims, and explicit discursive support of the findings and opinions used in academic advice argumentation. The academic position can be more universal than the consultant's position, but it cannot be as positivist as academics claim on behalf of a traditional ethos.

Although academic advisers have not yet moved in a consulting direction by admitting that their positive judgments have a local character, it would not be revolutionary for them to begin to do so. It would be the first expected move away from their traditional ethos. Post-positivists and postmodernists argue this way. Also academic advisers such as in 't Veld (in 't Veld and Verhey, 2000, p. 121) criticize the traditional scientific way of backing positive statements by references to universal theory or scientific literature, since it pays too little attention to the added value of experience-based backings used by laypeople or in everyday decision making. Qualitative research approaches that resemble consultants' approaches are available to some extent already. Lyotard (2001) advises that academics tell more 'small narratives' instead of 'grand narratives'. However, for academic economists such approaches are groundbreaking. Traditional academic advisers are loyal to the positivist/modernist academic standards even though they hinder their observance of a part of the world accessible to consultants by their more experience-based 'quick and dirty' research approaches. Consultants' knowledge is rejected by academics as too subjective although consultants and their clients consider it relevant. It illustrates the tension between rigor and relevance of knowledge (Argyris, 1996; Baldridge et al., 2004; Kubr, 2002, p. 58; Schön, 1983).

A more fundamental tension between academic ethos and academic practice results from the suggestion to apply norms, values or motivations in advice argumentation. Few academics argue that academic advisers should embrace a less neutral approach like Argyris (1996, p. 390). However, the practice of academic advisers shows how they repeatedly break from being neutral experts, while claiming they do not. It appears ethos-impossible for academic advisers to be involved in normative discussions. Even more problematic is that normative deliberation has not belonged to academic expertise for a long time (Alvey, 2000, p. 1231; Blaug, 1980, p. 152). As a consequence they have no accepted methods to discuss

controversial values. In practice they treat all values as non-controversial, as if they are taken for granted and need no further support.

Related to my advising the use of more local knowledge and supported normative arguments is the move to a more discursive orientation in academic advice. Academic advisers already use normative arguments – a necessary aspect of giving advice – but fail to support their normative claims when needed, that is, when they are not generally accepted. Even though academic economists seem to believe in non-controversial normative claims, such claims rarely exist in practice. Normative claims are always controversial in the aesthetic context of economic life, where many economic interests and values have limited, local or intersubjective validity. This process of discursive backing is even more important to academic advisers than consultants because academic ethos claims transparency of the research process and their orientation is directed to the more general claims within the field of aesthetic knowledge and values.

The suggested development perspective for academic advisers (the dotted arrow in Figure 8.1) considers academic advice more an aesthetic practice in the way Habermas (1988a) uses the concept, which means that the validity of norms and truth claims is limited to the relevant social and cultural context. Claims can have intersubjective validity within such a local and historical context. Scientific arguments can be part of academic deliberation, but ultimately advice has to be connected to the local social reality with all its ambiguity, values, controversy and interests. Academic advice should fit the local situation and has to be acceptable to the client, like consultants' advice is. To deliver a true academic service, academics need to be explicit about this aesthetic approach when they give advice. If they are not, everyone will expect them to follow dominant academic rules, which assume that the values applied by academics are non-controversial and the knowledge they present is generally valid and proved. However, in their advice practice academics cannot stand by these standards, given the contradictory results they produce in the Amsterdam Airport case and their controversial judgments in both cases.

If academic advisers work like consultants, they should do so explicitly. They should make clear that their advice role is different from their normal research practice, as Rivlin (1987, p. 9) argues. Consultants have no need to clarify; everyone knows that consultants work like consultants with predictable use of 'quick and dirty' methods. No tensions exist between their ethos and practice like academic advisers. For academic advisers explication of the consulting elements in their approach is the only way to overcome hypocrisy and to increase scientific honesty. It may result in advice claims that are more modest, better supported and, consequently, less controversial within the relevant local context.

The differences between consultants and academic advisers give reason to (1) consider whether a client should contract a consultant or an academic adviser, (2) explore the possibilities of improving academic advice and (3) reconsider the traditional conceptualization of advice theory that so poorly guides the practice of academic advisers. There is no reason to consider the practice of consultants or give them advice. They seem able to integrate valuable elements of their academic education into their practice, their ethos and practice connect closely and they perform relatively well on the market for economic advice.

MY ADVICE TO POTENTIAL CLIENTS

Clients have to decide whether to give their assignments to academic advisers or consultants. The current performance of consultants and academic advisers has to be the ground for their decision, not how academic advisers might perform after considering my recommendations. However, how likely is it that academic advisers will follow these recommendations? I suspect many will not, since the more local their orientation becomes, the more difficult it is to connect contract research with the demands of international publication (Frey and Eichenberger, 1993, p. 192), which increasingly becomes the academic's core business despite the demands of policy makers. Contract research rarely adds anything to the academic track record; it is time consuming and requires abilities not supported by current university culture.

Given that academic advisers do deliver economic contract research, their performance is less predictable than consultants'. Consultants' ethos finely articulates what clients can expect. The performance of economically oriented academic advisers is variable. Some follow academic ethos; others move away from their ethos by presenting normative judgments, normative advice or even by presenting one-sided argumentation. Stable characteristics are the more theoretical orientation of academic advisers and the backing of statements with references to literature. Formulating advice less expressively and quantifying less than consultants are also predictable. Apart from that, academic advisers do not have the homogeneous character of consultants, despite their longstanding tradition and strong ethos. However, academic ethos is not reliable, it is misleading.

Assessment

Before clients invite an academic adviser to write a proposal they need to know the type of academic adviser they have before them. Is it one who

limits research to positive questions such as instrumental if-then advice and fact finding, or is it an economist or social scientist willing to apply 'non-controversial' normative judgments and evaluations? How do academic advisers differentiate between non-controversial and controversial normative claims? Would they be willing to use and defend controversial normative arguments? Are they willing to argue that their valuations are non-controversial? How would they do that?

Other questions concern the motives of academic advisers. Is their only motive to make money? Are they willing to devote attention to local issues that are important to the client but have little scientific relevance? How important is their academic career? Do career goals conflict with client needs?

Acceptable research approaches are another consideration. Are academic advisers willing to use local and historical observations as recommended in case study research, or will they only be satisfied with literature analysis and research methods that aim at generalization like most economists? Economists are rarely familiar with explorative research methods; management scientists often are. A client has to know the academic adviser's research repertoire to critically discuss the fit of proposed research methods to the assignment.

Clients need to know these things to better decide if the academic adviser can help them with a research, evaluative or advice assignment. It seems the only way for clients to adequately counter the ambiguous nature of the academic adviser. If they proceed to ask an academic adviser to write a proposal, they must give critical attention to the connection between the assignment and the approach. Absent a reliable indicator of what academic advisers will do, advisers should have – and clients should demand – an explicit approach.

Research Assignments

When clients have a research assignment they should consider their own capacity to give critical direction to the academic adviser. They have to define the research question such that the research becomes relevant to them. Traditional academic advisers that follow their ethos focus on positive research and avoid controversial normative arguments. They expect clients to define the problem at hand. Clients should thus be able to precisely define assignments, give the academic adviser all necessary information to complete the assignment, have a good overview of their demands for help and know the type of expertise they need. In the literature this model is characterized as the 'purchase model' (Pellegrinelli, 2002, pp. 344–6), since the client buys a predefined service. In practice

clients often cannot fulfill these requirements (Schein, 1990, p. 59) and will benefit from a more collaborative approach in which client and adviser together define the problem and approach. If clients know they cannot fulfill the requirements of the purchase model, consultants can probably offer a better service than academic advisers.

In some respects consultants are the better researchers in the two analysed debates, even with their 'quick and dirty' approach. The strength of their more collaborative approach is that they gain entry to relevant local knowledge and can define the assignment in consultation with the client. In most situations the research skills and knowledge of consultants suffice to complete the assignment successfully, but there are situations where they do not. In such situations clients could suggest that consultants subcontract academics.

The advantage of such a co-production is that clients who cannot fulfill the conditions of the purchase model have consultants to mediate between them and the academic advisers. Berglund and Werr (2000, p. 652) argue that consultants have a talent in bridging the world of clients and the world of academics. They are better able to connect the general academic questions and approaches to the local situation of the client than academics can themselves. Even though consultants do not have the background to do specialized academic research, they know enough of the academic world to connect it to the world of clients.

Evaluative Assignments

Things become more complicated when clients find out that the academic adviser is willing to evaluate and appraise economic alternatives, situations or effects. The case results show that the majority of academic advisers is willing to do so. However, their ethos implies that they refer to the values, preferences and objectives of their client.

Clients who look for support of their own view may feel satisfied with the academic reports that evaluate effects, since they are likely to support their view: the academic adviser will take it as the norm for his evaluation, not discussing this view critically. The cases show this: the evaluations of effects in the academic reports are all in favor of the growth of Amsterdam Airport or liberalization of the electricity market if the client has such an interest. The academic reports for Eneco and EnergieNed are somewhat more critical. Overall evaluative academic reports have a bias towards positive economic effects compared to consultants. Academic advisers therefore do not show the ability to critically discuss the normative views of their clients and, as a consequence, cannot claim independence in evaluative assignments. They have to take their client's opinions, value

judgments or preferences for granted. It is thus tempting for clients who look for support of their own normative opinions to ask academic advisers to confirm them: according to their instrumentalist view on advice, advisers cannot oppose. They can only accept the normative views, preferences and objectives of their client.

I cannot advise potential clients to ask an academic adviser for an evaluative assignment, since it would undermine their integrity in the end. Most academic advisers do not show the ability or have the methodology to discuss normative questions in a balanced way. If clients would like to give evaluative assignments to academic advisers, assessing them is a necessity. An advice proposal that pays attention to the method of evaluation could reveal whether the adviser has developed a more promising post-positivist methodology. Academics' ambiguity allows this possibility, but it is not yet the norm.

Consultants perform more independently in normative discussions due to their ethos. All consultant reports present to some degree a balanced argument. Though some clients may have asked for an opiniative and one-sided report, consultants seem to know that clients will not benefit from one-sided reports because they do not convince in the end. The results of Köbben and Tromp (1999, p. 23) suggest that academic advisers are probably somewhat more independent than consultants concerning positive research questions. My cases show that academic advisers have little backbone regarding evaluative discussions, whereas consultants show a more critical and independent attitude. The professional inability to critically discuss normative points of view is the weakest spot I have found in academic advice methodology.

Advice Assignments

In five of ten reports in the two cases academics give advice about what to do. The only academic report (EUR et al., 1997) giving advice in the Amsterdam Airport debate is based on one-sided normative argumentation, which makes the argumentation unreliable. One of the reports (UT, 1996) in the liberalization debate is also grounded on a rather one-sided evaluation of effects. The three other academic reports give advice based on a more balanced evaluation of effects, address specific conditions to realize positive effects and suggest additional policies. Two reports (Nyfer, 2001; SEO, 2003) present recommendations similar to consultants. One (ESM, 1999) suggests additional environmental policies based on evaluating the impact of different policy measures and comes closest to traditional academic if-then advice.

Academic advisers thus show they can give useful advice, but there is no

guarantee. Some point out practical conditions to realize desired effects like consultants, but others give biased advice, based on biased evaluations. Therefore it remains necessary for a client to identify what kind of academic adviser she is looking for and see if he meets the requirements. Differences between academic advisers are huge. Clients would be wise to read previous reports to get an idea about the kind of advice they might expect as part of their assessment.

If a client needs balanced advice because she really does not know what to do, I would recommend against asking an academic adviser. Consultants have a better professional background to guide clients in situations of uncertainty. If academic advisers want to be able to be helpful in these situations, they must improve their advice methodology and substantially change their attitude of giving advice.

MY ADVICE TO ACADEMIC ADVISERS

The analysis of reports about Amsterdam Airport and liberalization of the electricity market shows that academic advisers do not follow their ethos in many respects. Only regarding the use of backings do they argue as expected. In the presentation of claims, rebuttals, grounds and warrants many do not argue as they claim in their reflections.

Van Dalen and Klamer (1997, p. 87) have also found that academic economists do not follow their intentions. An economist 'wants to combine economic theory with practice or empirical research but he sticks to his specialization'. The observation applies to the pure academic, who claims to produce empirically backed theoretical research with practical relevance, but does not or cannot. The academic adviser seems to experience a similar problem with theory and practice, but turns in another direction by undermining a neutral attitude, not discussing client objectives, interests or preferences, but taking them for granted. The result is one-sided argumentation.

Should academic advisers return to their traditional ethos? Should they only accept research assignments? Few clients give pure research assignments; they often have additional demands. The context of economic advice assignments therefore does not offer many opportunities for academic advisers to work in line with their traditional ethos. If there are such assignments consultants often get them, since they are better able to quantify and generate data in time. It would be better for academic advisers to acknowledge this and adapt their ethos, or resign as academic advisers, such as Lucas would do (Klamer, 1983, p. 54). The knowledge they gain will contribute little to their scientific work: it is often too local and too

embedded in a creative, active and fashionable context. It makes Peacock (1988, p. 8) write: 'I have every sympathy with those who would prefer to avoid trying to use their professional skills in this area.'

If academic advisers do not resign, a development perspective would be to consider advice a deliberative practice. The cases show the deliberative and controversial character of academic advice. Because many values, interests, norms and motives are controversial in these debates, the quality of academic advice would benefit by better supporting the underlying arguments that refer to these values, norms and interests. Even the most universal, normative economic claims about the desirability of economic growth, the benefits of liberalization or better distribution of welfare are controversial for the stakeholders involved, and thus require firm support in a debate. Most economic interests are local and thus controversial, since the interests of different groups often do not overlap. However, a deliberative approach would require explicit methodological acknowledgments, since it is a new approach that does not follow traditional academic ethos.

This proposed development perspective implies that academic advisers make more use of their own and others' senses to gather experiences, not only to get ideas in the discovery stage but also as a source of knowledge that contributes to a 'proof by experience' in the context of triangulation. Second, it implies that they do not only apply values, norms or criteria that they consider are taken for granted but that they are willing to discuss and support controversial normative claims. Finally it implies that they formulate advice that is explicitly connected to their argumentation. Advice 'in private', which has no professional connection to an academic analysis as suggested by traditional economists (Alvey, 2000, p. 1243; Hennipman, 1977, p. 89; Robbins, 1952, p. 150), will not do.

Proof by Experience

The conclusions based on the analysis of academic practices of establishing positive claims in advice reports give some clues for improving academic advice. First, academic advisers could better address the margin of error of their claims; second, they could limit their theoretical elaborations; third, they could enrich their method of backing.

Academic advisers have the tendency to say something only when they are sufficiently sure. In the context of advice that is often impossible. Therefore they should not pretend a precision that is not realistic. The exactness of measurements based on inquiries or interviews has to be addressed just as those based on citation. When academic advisers cite consultant estimates uncritically, they suggest that they meet academic

standards, as in EUR et al. (1997). Consultants' estimates have a wide margin of error most of the time, since they are based on 'quick and dirty' methods. Everyone knows it; it is part of their ethos. A core academic value is honesty about the quality of positive statements. Citing consultant estimates without addressing that they are best guesses is not the most honest academic solution. The other more popular alternative is to say nothing or remain vague. That is more honest, but less effective. Majone (1989, p. 59) argues likewise that the pitfall in policy research is not the margin of error, but not addressing it.

The reports of academic advisers show that they like to present their causal arguments in the context of theory, which does not necessarily require much text. It is a nice feature of academic advice to back causal relations with citations or paraphrases, as long as it does not mean extensive theoretical elaboration, as visible in some of the academic reports. For academic advisers reference to theory is important, but it would be too rigorous to demand theoretical backup for all causal relations that are applied in the context of advice: not all are embedded in theory, can be supported by theory or are measurable (Majone, 1989, p. 3). This does not imply that these causalities do not exist. Majone therefore argues like Weinberg (1972) that many policy questions are trans-scientific, or unanswerable by science. The existence of the multiplier effect of Amsterdam Airport is an example of a causality that is taken seriously by consultants and some academics, but cannot be measured satisfactorily and has no well-developed theory or model. Some academic advisers therefore deny the existence of a multiplier; others estimate the highest multiplier in the discussion. The academic position becomes problematic if causalities that cannot be backed by accepted theory are denied by some and overestimated by others. Academic advice would improve if the margin of error was addressed, if academic advisers made clear that academic advice is not solely based on hard facts, and if they admitted to less rigorous kinds of evidence if and when using them. That requires a more honest research style.

The most robust feature in academic advice is academic backing by reference to literature. Academic advisers stay close to their ethos in that respect. Backings assure that statements of fact are true, or that values, norms or motives are shared or accepted. Consultants question the added value of scientific backing in their work though. It takes time to read the many sources academics refer to and they are often not quite to the point. Consultants therefore use fewer text sources and more oral sources than academic advisers. If consultants argued like academics, they could not say what they wanted to and would find it too laborious. Academics who have left university for some time have experienced this tension (Allen,

1977). Since academic advisers stay close to their ethos in this respect they do not have the consultants' freedom in what can be said.

Oral sources such as interviews have the advantage of asking a respondent exactly what the adviser needs to know. However, economic advisers do not trust oral sources such as experience, group discussions or interviews due to the economic research tradition advocated by Friedman (1970, p. 31). Economists are not used to doing research by means of observation or reference to past experience. They have not developed a tradition of qualitative research. Social scientists with non-economic backgrounds consider interviews or reference to observations and documented experience very helpful. It is not against academic ethos to use these sources, but they are not acceptable to mainstream economists. However, three academic reports refer to oral sources and social tests of acceptability. When oral sources are an addition to other sources even economists cannot have fundamental problems with them, apart from questioning their added value. Given their current performance, however, they might reconsider this skepticism. They have little to lose, since the ambiguities in their positive statements in the Amsterdam Airport debate do not show the benefits of traditional academic backing. They obviously need stronger and more reliable backings. Oral sources and intersubjective or social tests can serve this purpose by contributing to a 'proof by experience'. The results based on literature and theory are then triangulated with experiences derived from group discussions, interviews, observations or introspection.

Consultants test their claims against their own experiences and the experiences or estimates of others. They organize interviews with experts to hear their experiences and organize group discussions to test and develop their views. Consultants feel a need for personal agreement with their conclusions since they have to take responsibility for their advice. When managers or consumers make important and consequential decisions, experiences are often an important point of reference, be they their own, their friends or their colleagues. Why do academic economists think they do better without these sources? Why do they consider them unreliable? Is it because the results do not confirm their theories? The alternative explanation would then be that their academic theories are not always reliable.

Academic advice could improve by becoming more open to qualitative research methods that encourage triangulation. The research strategy of triangulation is a way to discuss the reliability of findings based on different sources such as theory, interviews and experience; sources unreliable on their own, but reliable if combined. That gives better results than relying on one source, even if it is the most reliable, because contradictory outcomes require explanation and similar outcomes confirm each other. Triangulation is a common tactic in case study research (Eisenhardt, 1989,

p. 538; Yin, 2003, pp. 13–14, 97–100). Advice research resembles case study research in several respects. Advice is an intervention in a real life context and should be based on research in that context. The researcher has no control over the research situation, which would be necessary for an experiment. Advice is about a case in a historical and local context, which often makes it a complex social question that is not limited to the field of one social science discipline.

The reliability of research necessary for academic advice increases with triangulation of different data sources such as in case study research. Experiences gathered by interviews, group discussions and introspection contribute to the reliability of the research when they are compared to the results of the more abstract and general academic research approaches, such as literature searches or statistical analysis. Reports by other advisers or policy documents (gray literature) can also be a valuable source of knowledge. Like experiences, they are an entrance to local knowledge, relevant to the involved parties. By its focus this knowledge also helps to select the theoretical knowledge that best fits the case. The proof by experience understood this way applies to all relevant human senses while making practical decisions as argued by Bourdieu (2002, p. 124). Bourdieu's reference to experience and the use of senses including common sense also helps to acknowledge the 'action present' (Schön, 1983, p. 62), because it concerns knowledge about the present situation that requires action.

Academics have characterized the consultant as 'the guy who borrows your watch to tell you what time it is'. One could say in response that consultants are clever enough to ask and observe when they do not know. They have the ability to learn local knowledge they do not possess from clients, instead of relying on theories that do not fit, which Argyris (2000, p. 6) characterizes as a result of 'skilled incompetence'. A client is an expert regarding his own situation and consultants acknowledge that. It improves the outcome of the consulting process when a client shares this often tacit knowledge with the consultant (Sivula et al., 2001, p. 85). It would thus help economists improve their academic advice by being less cynical about this aspect of the consultant approach.

Explicit Normative Deliberation to Overcome Academic Hypocrisy

The academic ethos of economists assumes that one can refer to non-controversial values as a positive economist (Blaug, 1980, p. 129), but the two cases illustrate that valuation is subject to discussion in the context of advice. The positive or negative character of effects is not indisputable but ambiguous, just as the evaluative conclusions about the sum of effects of liberalization of the electricity market and growth of Amsterdam Airport

are, because valuation depends on the many interests of different clients and their stakeholders. As a consequence academic advice practices stay in conflict with academic ethos without firm acknowledgment, because academic advisers claim to deliver only useful knowledge or instrumental advice, tasking the client with defining the objectives. They only identify the most efficient means or causal relations that enable clients to reach their goals.

According to ethos academic advisers should not get involved in controversial normative debates. Peacock (1992, pp. 1215–19), Blaug (1980, p. 150) and Majone (1989, p. 34) have argued that this strategy will not meet much acceptance and consequently meet pressure from their clients. Academics respond in two ways: deliver useful positive research in line with their ethos (the minority) or use controversial normative arguments as if they are non-controversial (the majority). The lack of honesty regarding this normative approach is hypocritical.

Most academic advisers refer to economic criteria, norms and laws in the liberalization debate and some do in the Amsterdam Airport debate. Norms and criteria are often subjects of discussion like motivational arguments. Criteria such as efficiency, the need for efficient markets or a balanced investigation of cost and benefits meet acceptance among economists, but for a more general audience these concepts can be controversial. Laws meet the requirement of general acceptance better, although their national and often historical validity subjects even laws to political discussion. When criteria, norms and laws are controversial, academic advisers should not use them, or they should explain and argue their use like normative economists.

Academics are not accustomed to backing motivational arguments or valuations with the help of group discussions or interviews. If they use motivational arguments or make valuations – which happens more often than one would expect – they have no proper backing. They are treated as non-controversial, which inevitably results in one-sided argumentation. Consultants have no problem with normative statements, but cannot appreciate academic advisers' one-sided argumentation: their ethos stresses an all-partial approach to help take different controversial interests or conflicting perspectives into account (van Luijk, 2001, p. 266).

It should be part of the normative science of economic advice to develop techniques to back normative arguments: these arguments are rarely non-controversial since their acceptance depends on the preferences, interests and motives of groups or individuals. Techniques of backing normative arguments are rarely developed in an academic context. Most academic methodology aims at positive science, since normative deliberation conflicts with the ethos of positive and neutral scientific practice. Normative deliberation is a methodological requirement of advice

however. Consultants' approaches to back normative statements, such as referring to experience, introspection and intersubjective testing, therefore deserve academic attention to improve their argumentation techniques in the context of advice.

However, the first thing academics should do is shed the hypocrisy by acknowledging that they make controversial normative claims as economic advisers. Their advice would improve if their normative orientation were more transparent. They must thus re-establish their ethos in different terms. That will happen when they substantiate their normative claims and make clear their use of normative arguments. Some of these claims may seem non-controversial in an economic context, but many are highly controversial in a social context, as illustrated in the two cases. Academic advisers must make clear that they argue like advocates of their clients' economic point of view, instead of presenting themselves as scientists or researchers who present objective truths as their ethos claims to do. They have to make very clear that their role as academic adviser is different from their role as traditional academic. In practice, giving advice on economic questions is not positive nor positivist science, and academic advisers have to be sure that they do not implicitly suggest that.

The second step would be to develop a methodological perspective that enables discussion of controversial motives, interests, values or norms. That is the domain normative economics pays attention to (Alvey, 2000; Blaug, 1980, pp. 129–33; Hausman and McPherson, 1993, pp. 677–9). Academic advisers can be the first contributors to the revival of normative economics, not as an abstract science but as a concrete and practical academic advice methodology. The objective of economic advice would be to reach local consensus and convince clients and relevant stakeholders that an economic recommendation or normative judgment is acceptable for them and well supported by intersubjective agreement.

The proof by experience will show its worth again in backing the existence of local values, motives or interests. The best way is by asking people what they consider valuable and why. It is only by means of discussion that we know what clients or stakeholders consider important. Although the most efficient way is to ask the people involved, sometimes written accounts of opinions or normative views are also helpful, as in the case of investigating the values that belong to consultant and academic ethos outlined in Chapter 4.

Explicit Advice

Academic advisers show a preference for arguments that could support a recommendation, but hesitate to draw advice conclusions themselves,

in line with the view that they deliver useful knowledge. Some economists such as Marshall in his letters (in Alvey, 2000), Robbins (1952) or Hennipman (1977) argue that if economists are asked for advice they should give it in private. Giving advice is not something an economist should do based on a academic analysis and evaluation. This attitude is still visible in academic advice reports. Academic advisers all give a general analysis. Many may add general evaluative judgments, but they rarely give detailed and concrete advice to a particular client, paying attention to specific conditions relevant to the client. They do not write advice reports such as a personal letter, with tailored recommendations that follow from their analysis. They stop before applying their analysis and evaluation to their client's situation, something that makes their advice, if they give it, less relevant to their client.

Academics' attitude is to have the client draw specific conclusions. Although they often give more advice and pay more attention to practical conditions of rebuttal than expected on behalf of their ethos, consultants do so more frequently, more explicitly and in more detail. For academic advisers there is room for improvement in this direction, although the adaptation to give advice explicitly demands a methodological acknowledgment regarding the use of normative arguments, as argued above. However, the attention to rebuttals does not conflict with academic ethos, and has been suggested before by Argyris (1996) and Schön (1983).

Since the analysis of academic advisers is not based on experience or a collaborative approach including intersubjective tests, academics gain little knowledge about the relevance of their findings. With so little client contact, it is hard to acquire detailed knowledge about what is important to the client. The academic appraisals in the two debates do not acknowledge the many controversial interests involved. They seem less aware about what is and what is not beneficial to whom, as demonstrated in the discussion of environmental and employment effects in the two debates. Therefore it is more difficult for academic advisers to take responsibility for specific advice.

Experience regarding the subject of analysis and normative deliberation about effects, objectives or policies are two building blocks necessary to make advice tangible, but not sufficient to give advice, which is the third building block. Advice has to be an advocative claim that suggests a course of action. Advice has to say what to do and how to do it. Otherwise it is a research or evaluative assignment based on only one or two building blocks. Advice addresses the interests of some specific person, group or organization. That makes it even more specific, local and concrete than the above building blocks, which can only contribute to bespoke advice conclusions.

If academic advisers are willing to follow the first two suggestions concerning analysis and normative judgments, they can gather enough local knowledge to give explicit advice to a specific, real life client. That makes their analysis more valuable to a client. If academic advisers do not use their analysis to give advice, how can they expect clients to draw the appropriate conclusions themselves? Academic advisers should draw these advice conclusions to show the reasoning necessary to use their analysis in the context of possible actions and to make the connection between knowledge and action. To establish the relation between knowledge and action is not easy. Only by knowing the relevance of knowledge will it stimulate action, but often this relevance has to be explained to a client. Advice argumentation pushed to the end is therefore more valuable to a client, even when the advice is contentious. Clients can draw other conclusions, but even then they are challenged to explain why the adviser's conclusions are (un)worthy, what interests are insufficiently acknowledged by recommendations and what assumptions seem to be flawed. Academic advisers can thus improve their service by a stronger focus on the discursive aspect in advice, by making their argument as explicit as possible and by arguing to the end to answer the client's question of what to do.

Academic advisers can improve their service without undermining their ethos if they make clear what they are going to do as adviser. They have to re-establish their advice ethos. Individual academic advisers can build their own ethos by saying what they will do and explaining how they will do it in the report's methodology section, in the proposal and in oral clarifications. They will do that, however, as pioneers against traditional academic ethos. An advice theory with attention to normative and positive deliberation, and a focus on explicit support of advice claims could give these pioneers extra support in building a more effective advice ethos because most assignments require more than instrumental advice based on causal argumentation.

MY ADVICE TO DEVELOP AN ECONOMIC ADVICE THEORY

Traditional economic advice theory defines academic advice as neutral and instrumental. Academic advisers deliver knowledge about means to reach ends. They supply useful theoretical knowledge to their client. Useful theories are based on causal relations in a means-end argumentation (Robbins, 1952; Stiglitz, 1998; Tinbergen, 1956). Academic advice is thus limited to a supply of positive knowledge to help a decision maker improve the quality of a decision.

Normative discussions about objectives, policies, preferences and so on do not belong to the domain of academic advice. However, this traditional concept of academic advice is criticized (Blaug, 1980; Majone, 1989; Peacock, 1992; Weinberg 1972) since clients often demand help with the description of preferences, objectives and policies, and the distinction between means and ends does not overlap with the distinction between positive and normative questions. Often clients are not certain about what to do or how to define a problem. Such problems are characterized as ill-structured (Mason, 1969; Mitroff and Mason, 1980). March and Simon (1958) and Thompson (2004) refer to the notion of bounded rationality to explain that so many problems remain ill-structured for decision makers. To make sense of them, clients ask for help with problem definition, the choice of objectives and the design of policies. Since the concept of academic advice is related to the decision-making process, these insights about decision making must be acknowledged in a theory on academic advice.

The rhetorical analysis of advice reports provides an empirical argument that neither consultants nor academic advisers give advice in a way that fits the traditional instrumental advice concept. There are no reports in the two cases that give pure instrumental advice as Robbins and Tinbergen would like. None of the reports identifies the relevant means-end relations in economic theory to select means that can help reach client-given objectives. There are even a few examples where academic advisers have a neutral research assignment. Academic contract research crosses the border of positive academic advice more often than not. Therefore the practice of advice undermines the external validity of academics' conceptualization of advice, probably because the conditions of academic expert advice cannot be fulfilled most of the time (Majone, 1989; March and Simon, 1958; Mason, 1969; Schein, 1990; Thompson, 2004).

Traditional academic advice theory is invalid as a descriptive theory for that reason. A better theory on economic advice has failed up to this point. Such a theory should be able to describe the practice of economic advice. My advice to economic advice theorists is therefore to define economic advice more broadly, in line with discussions about the rhetorical character of advice as proposed in philosophy and speech act theory. In different policy sciences (including management science and political economy) authors such as Fisher (1995), Fisher and Forester (1993), Habermas (1988a), Klamer (2003, 2007), Majone (1989), McCloskey (1983, 1992, 1994), Toulmin et al. (1984), Weinberg (1972) and Von Werder (1999) have argued for more rhetorical awareness in decision processes, because policy decisions and management decisions cannot be based on scientific research only. The underlying questions are often trans-scientific because their character is positive but unanswerable by scientific investigation, or

normative and beyond the traditional domain of scientific investigation. In practice decisions are largely dependent on good reasoning and careful deliberation. They are man-made and therefore a product of human imagination. A theory about advice has to take these insights into account.

Among the several insights that have to be acknowledged in an academic advice theory is the philosophical insight that advice is a performative speech act. This notion points to the social character of advice. A performative speech act, like the recommendation that certain conditions need to be satisfied for a successful liberalization of the electricity market, changes the responsibility of those receiving advice. Knowledge that relates to people's interests or motives influences responsibilities. Therefore giving advice is a social act. That does not influence a client directly. Advice is not manipulation or command. Effectiveness of advice is therefore not equal with acceptance, but with improvement of the decision-making process. Mason (1969) illustrated this nicely with his dialectical approach to strategic planning in two contradictory proposals for a decision that can give rise to new deliberations and that may result in a third and even better alternative. If advice is taken seriously it may induce new deliberations, and better decision support. Advice provokes serious attention from those who receive it since it is related to their interests. That makes it a performative speech act.

The second insight to be acknowledged is that the link to economic interests is also a link to normative considerations about what is good for some organization, group or individual. In the case of advice these considerations are mostly local. They are about the interests of a firm and its stakeholders, a local government department or a national ministry. These interests and their related values are not universal but fit the domain of aesthetic deliberation as defined by Habermas (1988a, p. 41). Aesthetic deliberations with a normative character are at the heart of economic advice, as demonstrated in the analysis of the two debates. The rhetorical analysis of these debates shows that advice claims, conclusions and grounds in most reports imply several motivational arguments based on interests, values, norms or criteria. Before economists turned to positive questions, this view was common among them. In practice the view has probably always survived.

A third insight is that advice theory should reconsider the character of positive statements since they often have a local character, such as the normative statements in advice. There are situations where general theory about causal relations can be used in the argument to estimate effects, but application to the local context of a client is necessary. More often the applied knowledge is not as rigorous as economic theory claims: those who give advice or those who have to make a decision do not have

the time and mental capacities to explore in detail questions necessary to validate a theory. They have to live with their bounded rationality. The analysis of the reports shows that the positive knowledge generated in the context of advice does not meet the criteria of a rigorous scientific contribution. Consultants acknowledge that, and academic advisers should admit that after reading the analysis of their colleagues' contributions in the Amsterdam Airport debate. Advice theorists should therefore reconsider their definition of useful knowledge since useful knowledge is not necessarily a universal, rigorous means-end relationship. Sometimes it is an indication of effects, sometimes it is about observations, and sometimes it refers to others' experiences or appraisals.

Most positive and normative claims in advice belong to the realm of aesthetic judgments and sometimes even to the domain of personal judgments. A fourth insight is that claims that belong to these domains have only subjective or intersubjective validity. Therefore the way to back these local statements requires attention as well. Such backing is not well understood in traditional theory on academic advice. Consultants have developed their own practices of backing local claims, but academic economists are only trained to back universal causal relations with academic research methods, even though they are less successful in backing than their colleagues in the natural sciences. Replication of economic research is therefore more difficult than most economists assume (Theeuwes, 1997, pp. 92–5, 103). Other social sciences pay more attention to local realities like culture. Their research methods are different from those preferred by economists; they are more often explorative and based on observations and interviews, which, in the context of advice, are most effective to back local knowledge and values. General theoretical arguments can be relevant in the context of advice, but only as one source of knowledge to be applied and interpreted with the help of the sources offering local knowledge. Theoretical knowledge is not the most important kind of knowledge in the context of advice and consultants acknowledge this openly. It is visible in the text sources they use and in the other sources of knowledge they refer to. A theory of advice has to do justice to the relevance of local knowledge and local values. That requires appropriate research strategies, which can be referred to in the context of backing.

Finally a theory on economic advice should be able to analyse the discursive and deliberative activities that are at the heart of giving advice. A theory on advice, therefore, has to be a rhetorical theory. The argumentation analysis of advice debates regarding growth of Amsterdam Airport and liberalization of the electricity market shows that it is possible to explore the phenomenon of expert advice from the inside by this approach. That claim has been made by Aristotle, who considered deliberating

about questions concerning future action as a rhetorical genre. Since the context of advice rarely offers non-controversial statements, all statements forming the backbone of advice need some kind of support. This does not only apply to normative statements in both debates, but also to positive statements, as we saw in the Amsterdam Airport debate. Such a rhetorical theory offers detailed knowledge of advice practices, including a sense for the content of advice. Such a rhetorical theory on advice is different from the view that the success of consultants can be explained by their empty rhetoric (Salaman, 2002), or by their impression management (Clark, 1995). Both views consider rhetoric as something technical, which is the most common use of the word (Kennedy, 1999), and not philosophical rhetoric, the perspecive in this book.

Advice is a discursive practice in which the application of general and abstract scientific theory should proceed cautiously and even skeptically in lieu of the local and often controversial realities that remain hidden from it. Since advice is to some extent contentious, the adviser must support positive and normative claims with arguments. These arguments show the character and content of advice, as they did for consultants and academics in the two cases. In this last section I have therefore made explicit the implicit advice theory behind my own analysis: advice as deliberative activity, and advice as a rhetorical genre.

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