LEGITIMATION AND DE-LEGITIMATION PROCESSES OF MEMORANDUM II IN GREECE: FACETS OF STRATEGIC FRAMING IN GREEK PARLIAMENTARY DISCOURSE

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Résumé  
Cet article examine l’opérationnalisation du cadre stratégique comme un instrument de stratégie de communication dans le système de communication politique grecque. Le cadrage est exploré comme un instrument visant à délégitimer l’opposant par des justifications normatives de contre-cadrage. D’autres facettes de cadrage stratégique sont analysées.

Mots-clés  
Cadres, Facettes de Cadrage Stratégique, Analyse du Discours, Mémorandum 2, Grèce

Abstract  
This paper examines the operationalization of strategic frame as a tool of strategic political communication within the Greek political communication system. Strategic framing is explored as a tool of delegitimizing the opponent by counter-framing normative rationales and further facets of strategic framing are analysed.

Keywords  
Frames, Facets of Strategic Framing, Discourse Analysis, Memorandum 2, Greece
introduction

Numerous studies have approached the multidisciplinary term “frame”. Frames have been analyzed, amongst others, by Anthropology (Bateson, 1972), Sociology (Gofmann, 1974, Franceschet, 2004), Linguistics (Kahneman & Tversky, 1983; Lakoff, 2004) and Communication (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; Entman, 1993; Reese, 2001). There is plenty of literature available not only regarding frames and politics (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; Samaras, 2002), but in particular how strategic framing can be expressed as delegitimizing rationale and its effects (Capella & Jamieson, 1997; Samaras, 2002; Aalberg et al., 2011; Hanggli & Kriesi, 2012). Despite these efforts there is a lack of systematic recording of different facets of strategic framing. Aim of this paper is to recognize, define and clarify different facets of strategic framing in political discourse. Each observed facet of strategic framing is recorded, analyzed and defined as well as the normative frames used in the parliamentary discussion in Greece, regarding the voting of Memorandum II.

DEFINING AND IDENTIFYING FRAMES

The term “frame” is neither discipline-specific nor particularly novel (Snow & Benford, 1991, p.136). Bateson (1972, p.187-188) recognizes three levels of abstraction in communication: first-order linguistic or denotative messages, second order metalinguistic or connotative messages and third-order meta-communicative messages or frames that provide tacit instructions for a receiver to interpret the first and second order messages. Within this function, frame supports one interpretation of reality and, by necessity, excludes others. Consequently the term ‘frame’ is defined as a schema of interpretation that enables individuals to locate, perceive, identify and label occurrences within their living space and the world at large (Goffman, 1974, p.21). Frames are principles of selection, emphasis and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens and what matters (Gitlin, 1980, p.6). Frames may be explicit components of messages, implied by word or name or image selections in the message or even activated in the audience without the audience awareness that activation is taking place. Frame can either operate within messages or outside them creating a context within which the message is understood (Cappela & Jamieson, 1997, p.44). According to Entman (1993, p.52), the process of framing is: "to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation". Frame is a way of drawing attention to certain aspects of an issue while minimizing attention to others.

Frames operate both at the level of the audience and at the level of the media content. Kinder and Sanders (1990, p.74) differentiated between frames as internal structures of the mind and frames as devices embedded in political discourse. Scheufele (1999, p.106) formulated this distinction with the terms individual frames and media frames respectively while Entman uses the term frame for the media content and for the cognitive processes of the individual employ the term “schema”¹.

¹ Schema is defined as: "an abstract or generic knowledge structure, stored in memory that specifies the defining features and relevant attributes of some stimulus domain, and the interrelations among those attributes"
The process of framing is inherent in the news-making process since media cannot offer a mirror reflection of reality but involves selection. The selection of a news “angle” or “storyline” that transforms an occurrence into a news event, and that, in turn, into a news report, is a frame. Cappella and Jamieson (1997, p.39) defined news frames as: “those rhetorical and stylistic choices, reliably identified in news, that alter the interpretations of the topic treated and are a consistent part of the news environment.” Similarly, Gitlin (1980, p.7) defined them as “the persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation and presentation, of selection, emphasis and exclusion by which symbol handlers routinely organise discourse whether verbal or visual.” Frames perform four functions: they define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments and suggest remedies (Entman, 1993, p.54). Frames enable journalists to process large amounts of information quietly and routinely: to recognise it as information, to assign it to cognitive categories, and to package it for efficient relay to the audience. Price et all (1995) argue that any news event can be categorized according to one of the following frames: (a) conflict frame that organize the story in terms of the conflict between opposing interest groups. (b) human interest frame that organizes the story by focusing on the victims or (c) consequence frame where the story is organized in terms of its consequence for some group.

Analysts like Zaller (1992) and Edelman (1993) argue that political elites control the framing on issues. For Edelman the framing of issues by societal groups is a result of intentional considerations; he argues that authorities and pressure groups categorize beliefs in a way that marshals support and opposition to their interests. By using the means of mass media they construct opinions and reality by using their societal influence to establish certain frames of reference. According to Edelman (1993, p.232) the choice of frames “is typically driven by ideology and prejudice”. Other researches have examined how elite actors or special interests frame complicated political issues to their advantage and examine what happened when these frames come into conflict. Lakoff (2004, p.xv) proposes that frames are “mental structures that shape the way we see the world”. This means that frames shape our goals, our ideology, our modus operandi in each social environment, evaluate our actions but at the same time people assess the acts of others by their own standards. Identifying frames is not always conscious process, but is a part of the "cognitive unconscious" which contains brain structures, to which people have no conscious access (Lakoff, 2004; Ekstrom, 2004; Kihlstrom, 1987).

**Framing Effects.** It is important to differentiate between the framing of news and the effects that framing can be shown to have to the receivers of a message. While the concept of framing refers to subtle alterations in the statement or presentation of judgment and choice problems; framing effects refers to changes in decision outcomes resulting from these alterations. A framing effect occurs when the frame interacts with cognitive elements within the viewer, activating particular elements over others (Iyengar, 1991, p.11). Analyses of the news content shows only what is potentially available to people but not necessarily what they are processing or learning (Neuman, Just & Cringler, 1992, p.55).

It is beyond the scope of this essay to fully explore the psychological mechanisms of framing effect. It is important to note however that framing, priming and agenda-setting are all

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2 Different authors refer to the same phenomenon use the terms media frames and news frames. In this paper they are used interchangeably.
manifestations of accessibility bias. The "accessibility bias" principle\(^3\) postulated that the influence of media content stems from its power to make information accessible or retrievable from memory. Framing effect can be understood in terms of the accessibility bias. The use of certain frames in media content makes particular acts or characteristics or particular individuals or particular aspects of a situation more accessible than others. Consequently, the power of framing lies in its ability to activate salient cognitive elements, which then influence a viewer’s interpretations, evaluations and judgments (Price & Tewksbury, 2000, p.57).

Previous research has highlighted how frames work as regulators of meaning providing the “key” to understand a message (Kindler & Nelson, 2005, p.107; Kahneman & Tversky, 1983, p. 343). In addition to this regulatory function, Lakoff (2004, p. 4) considers that the process of framing refers to the use of that specific language that suits the individual’s worldview and thus by accepting the sender’s linguistic options the receiver accepts the sender’s worldview. The language used is a means of expression and activation of ideas. Although our cognitive system is not something that can be consciously determined, a good approach according to Lakoff (1980, p.2-6) is the language itself. The approach of Lakoff, namely that the power of political rhetoric is based on the use of certain words or phrases from the political elite, Iyengar (2005, p. 2-5) sets the limitation of media exposure, as in reality the political discourse normally is being presented from the media. That way, the whole speech is rarely covered and the public receives more information through the journalistic commentary or information projected by the media, rather than directly by the political elites. Thus, frames appear either as pre-existing individual interpretation patterns of the recipients, or as external frames in the form of constructions, that aim to change or reinforce the existing individual frames.

Iyengar’s (1991) research on episodic and thematic framing provides evidence on the effectiveness of media frames. Episodic framing depicts concrete evidence that illustrates issues, represents on-the-scene coverage of 'hard news' that is visually compelling and elicits individualistic rather than societal attribution of responsibility. Thematic framing places public issues in more general and abstract reports directed at general outcomes and conditions. According to Iyengar (1991) the dominance of episodic framing in the USA news results in individualistic rather than societal attribution of responsibility. Episodic framing tends to make particular acts or characteristics or particular individuals more accessible, while thematic framing helps viewers to think about political issues in terms of societal or political outcomes (Iyengar, 1991, p.134). Iyengar's research forcefully introduces media effects in the discussion, by providing a link between the de-contextualisation of media content and the de-politicisation of the public. Even though the process of framing and the content of frames have the ability to influence a receiver, it is not imperative that such an alteration of the receivers cognitive structure will appear. There are certain mediators (or moderators) present that modify the intensity of framing effects.

**Mediators of Framing Effects.** The effects of the frames do not seem to have the same power, as between the independent variable "frame" and the dependent variable "frame

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\(^3\) Accessibility can have many sources both individual and contextual. In the world of politics, where people must rely heavily on the media, for information, it goes without saying that patterns of news coverage are critical determinants of accessibility. (Iyengar, S. ‘The Accessibility Bias in Politics: Television News and Public Opinion’ pp.85-102, in S.Rothman (ed.), The Mass Media in Liberal Democratic Societies, New York: Paragon House 1992, p.88)
"effect" underlies the concept of mediators (moderators), both at the individual level and to environmental level (contextual moderators).

According to Lecheler, deVreese & Slothus (2009, p. 402-403) one of the key mediators is the significance of the issue (issue importance) to the individual, which is different for everyone and depends on the individual beliefs. This is supported by research findings of Bizer & Krosnick (2001, p. 567), where significance of the issue seems to play a key role in the accessibility of information. The more important the information on individual beliefs is, the more easily it is withdrawn from memory. Moreover, the more important an issue for the individual is, the more information is expected to be collected for this same issue, which we will use to develop its own arguments (Lecheler, deVreese & Slothus, 2009: 403). Thus, the effect of framing an issue depends on the significance that the issue has on the individual’s cognitive system.

Prominent role in the effectiveness of a frame play the individual values. According to Shen & Edwards (2005) individual core values may strengthen or weaken the effect of a frame. More specifically, the values that are considered important for the individual and are often used, become more easily accessible. For example, if a person has strong humanitarian values, the effect of a frame that emphasizes humanism will be greater, whereas the effect of a frame which stresses individualism will be limited (Shen & Edwards, 2005, p. 803,804). Apart from the individual characteristics that may restrict or enhance the effect of a frame, there are more collective frames, whose existence determines the strength of the effect of a frame. An important mediator, according to Slothuus & deVreese (2010), is the characteristics of the source of the message, since the concept of party identification plays an important role in the acceptance or rejection of a frame (Iyengar, 1991, p.117; Slothuus & deVreese, 2010, p.631). More specifically, it was concluded that people tend to respond more positively to a question that is framed by the political party they support, in relation to the framing of the same issue from a rival political party (Slothuus & deVreese, 2010, p. 662). In case of conflict between two different frames, it was found that individuals with a strong party identity tend to rally around the frame of the political party they support, using the same or corresponding elements of the frames and argumentation of the political party they feel part of (Slothuus & deVreese, 2010, p.633). Druckman & Nelson (2003, p. 741) accepting the belief that citizens' attitudes depend not only on the political rhetoric but also by interpersonal communication, investigated whether the political discussion among citizens may limit the effect of frames used by the political elite. Their survey results show that interpersonal political debates diminish the effects of frames, especially when it comes on opposing political positions.

A significant factor in the effect of a frame is the competing frames. The surfeit of information and antithetic views may lead to more confusion than clarification in so disorienting the citizen and creating a sense of conflict. Frames help to solve this conflict by providing arguments regarding which of the issues or opinions are relevant and important, and to what should be given less importance (Sniderman & Theriault, 2004, p.138; Wedekin, 2010; 620). That way it is rare that a unique frame is prominent, while at the same time there are many different alternative and sometimes conflicting frames, since a problem may be reframed either to support or to degrade of the original frame. It is possible that the more competing frames there are, the more difficult it is for a specific frame to dominate.

**Strategic Framing.** A master frame inherent in the representation of politics is the strategic frame. Cappela and Jamieson (1997, p.39) define strategic framing as
"an organized set of assumptions that implies and often explicitly state that leaders are self-interested to the exclusion of the public good, that their votes can be swayed by monies or special interests that do not serve their constituents' ends, and that they are dishonest about what they are trying to accomplish and driven privately by a desire to stay in power".

The qualifying characteristic of this master frame is that it perceives and organises (political) activity as a strategic game where the players calculate and pursue strategies to defeat competitors. The development of strategic framing is related with conceptualising internationality as a defining attribute of communication in general and political communication in particular. From such conceptualisation two problems arise: (A) A range of phenomena like the slant of information that derives from political socialisation, ideology, hegemony as well as the structural biases of the news may be misinterpreted. (B) By constantly and casually viewing public communication in terms of intentions, there is a risk of the analyst misattributing, or more precisely 'imposing', internationality upon political acts. Attribution, however, is constantly and casually attached by almost everybody to every form of political activity.

There are two mutually exclusive rationales interpreting the perceived motivation of political activity: the normative versus the strategic/manipulative rationale. The first considers public statements and acts as being both truthful and accurate representations of the intentions, policy preferences and ideology of the actor. The second rationale considers political actors as manipulators, their statements as propaganda and is constantly in quest of underlying strategic motivation for there every statement or activity. Underlying the two rationales there are two different, mutually exclusive, conceptualisations of politics: the normative rationale considers politics as a rational and critical discussion, while the strategic rationale considers politics as an inherently manipulative, propagandist activity (Samaras, 2002).

The strategic rationale may emanate from politicians, journalists or analysts. In the first case its use is structured by the prerogatives of attribution theory and/or the requirements of propaganda. Such prerogatives of attribution theory are the fundamental attribution errors and the actor-observer bias. The first refers to a general human tendency to overestimate the importance of personality or dispositional factors relative to situational or environmental influences when describing and explaining the causes of social behaviour (Ross, 1977). The second refers to the tendency of actors to attribute their own actions to situational factors whereas observers tend to attribute the same actions to stable personality dispositions of the actors (Jones & Nisbett, 1971). Combined, the two may explain the over-attribution of internationality and the over-generalisation that are evident in the employment of the strategic frame. Attribution theory is thus useful in explaining why political and media actors habitually employ the normative/democratic rationale for themselves while using the strategic rationale for whoever falls in their conceptualisation of “otherness”. The co-ordination of the strategic/manipulative rationale with propaganda is particularly obvious in blame games. In such cases, in order to obscure the real causes of the problem, the blame often falls on communication phenomena such as the propaganda capacity of the opponent. In the cases when the media are perceived as an autonomous institution in a society, the attribution of responsibility may shift from 'the opponent's propaganda' to 'the media's operation'. In the
process, they construct and perpetuate a mythology of all-powerful media that may subsequently function to subvert the media's freedom.

In the journalistic narrative similar to the strategic rationale are the “game frame” (Lawrence, 2000, p.94; Dimitrova & Kostadinova, 2013, p.76; Aalberg et al., 2011, p.164) and the “horse race frame” (Dimitrova & Kostadinova, 2013, p.83; Aalberget al. 2011, p.164). Their central point is that political actors seem to interact under opponent bipolarism win/loose and their higher goal is winning. Thus journalism presents the political scene as an arena, where politician focus on political competition (Lawrence, 2000, p.93). According to Patterson (1994, p.57-58) the dominant frame for a journalist is constructed based on the belief that politics is a game of strategy, where the candidates are trying to acquire leverage. When journalism focuses on that approach, attention on essential political issues is reduced, since public attention is turned to the political competition and not to the political positions of the parties. By focusing in strategic framing and in identifying strategies, tactics, defeats and victories journalists try to avoid being characterized as biased (Hallin, 1994, pp.6,25; Samaras, 2002, p.83). But in this way interest is focused in strategy and not political issues, thereby undermining political information and participation (Aalberg, Strömbäck & deVreese, 2011, p.165). Thus, the political act is decontextualized from a wider ideological set and contextualized in an undermined form of dispute with winners and losers. The development of strategic framing is related with conceptualizing intentionality as a defining attribute of communication in general and political communication in particular. By constantly and casually viewing public communication in terms of intentions, there is a risk of misattributing, or more precisely 'imposing', intentionality upon political acts.

According to Capella & Jamieson (1997, p.34) the electorate does not see politics as an abstract, rational process, but focuses on the political actors who, as individuals, are judged by their motives. The strategic frame in journalistic reasoning considers that the ulterior motive of political actors is to win the elections. In this way, policy settings are part of a unique and simple frame, that of political victory the power it provides. An emphasis on this motivation is degrading key policy objectives such as social harmony, national targets, improving the status of the socially and economically weaker or any attempt for a "better future". Consequently, political cynicism is growing as means of distrust of citizens towards the wider political process (Capella & Jamieson, 1997, pp.35-37; 59-60; 141-142). That way, negative characteristics are attributed to political actors, whereby political acts are organized and orchestrated with the ultimate aim not of social prosperity, but to serve their own interests and ambitions. This assumption is present not only to the media coverage of political discourse, but in the political discourse itself. More specifically, the strategic frame in the political discourse is used as means of de-legitimation against the legitimizing frame, considering the latter as a manipulation attempt (Samaras, 2002, p.82).

While a legitimizing/normative frame aims to provide arguments and reasoning that justify a political decision in terms of national interest, the strategic frame, as a result of de-legitimization, considers that the political decision was taken in order to serve the politician’s own interests.

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4 The restrictive "news management techniques" employed by military authorities during Falklands, Grenada and Gulf wars were based on this lesson. This blame game projects the image of the media being an independent actor that may have a powerful effect in policy making process, despite evidence from Hallin (1994) that a lot of the news discontent during the Vietnam war simply mirrored the emergence of a sustained opposition to administration policies within Congress, and even within the executive branch itself.
METHODOLOGY

The political actors operate under the “campaign mode”, which expresses their strategic thinking and is motivated by their will to prevail in the elections. For the analysis of political discourse the theory of "black box" is used as means of instrumentalization campaign mode in terms of use and production of strategic thinking. Additionally, the concept of communication strategy is explored, as it is a continuous process, that focuses on creating deliberate choices about when and how the communication activities are aligned with the objectives of an organization (Angelini, 2008, p.16). A political campaign is a continuous decision-making process. Methodological this decision-making process is approached as a "black box" as a phenomenon whose function is not analyzed immediately and directly, but is presumed through the analysis of inputs and of outputs. Taking as central inputs the objective conditions of the campaign and as outflows the illustrations of strategic choices in the various types of electoral communication, the theories connecting outputs to inputs are explored. Central to this process is the concept of "campaign mode".

According to Burton & Shea (2002, p.4) the rationale of the campaign mode is realized on the basis of two important conditions: First, the will to win the elections and secondly, the use of strategic thinking. Regarding winning the elections, it is considered that the mental energy invested for winning the elections pinpoints the commitment of the candidates and their staff to a specific objective: victory. For this reason dedication and passion are needed, the intensity of which can be used as an electoral weapon that underlines the necessity of strategic thinking (Burton & Shea, 2002, p.4,5). Strategic thinking is defined as the ability to link the knowledge of the political track with the knowledge of campaign rules. Knowing the political track means knowledge of domestic political figures, demographics, opposition, financial circumstances, ideologies per issue, resources and everything else that seems important for electoral victory (Burton & Shea, 2002, p.5). The knowledge of campaign rules means knowledge of different (and sometimes contrasting) strategic and tactical rules that are present in the election process.

These elements of strategic thinking that constitute strategic communication are being approached through the correlation of inputs and outflows of the “black box”. In this paper, this was achieved methodologically using qualitative methods to explore, highlight and categorize each facet of strategic framing. The research was conducted on the official transcript of the parliamentary discussion, whose lines were numbered. An observation sheet was constructed that consisted of the following variables: a) the line number, where the facet of strategic frame was found b) the speaker, c) the political party, that the speaker represents, d) the normative frame that was delegitimized e) the statement, f) the facet of strategic framing, g) the reasoning explaining why this facet of strategic framing was chosen and h) if this facet of strategic framing was present directly or indirectly. Additional quantification of results took place, that provides an overview of how facets of strategic framing were used to delegitimize specific normative rationales.

The hypothesis and research questions driving this research paper are the following:
Hypothesis 1: There will be a differentiation between the frequency of strategic framing and political party.

Research question 1: Which are the main normative frames regarding the parliamentary discussion on Memorandum II?
Research question 2: What is the frequency strategic framing per political party?
Research question 3: How were facets of strategic framing employed per political party?
Research question 4: Which facets of strategic framing were employed to deconstruct the main normative frames?

HISTORICAL BRIEF

Despite the inclusion of Greece in the support mechanism and the very tough measures imposed, Greece showed wide variations from the objectives. Thus, on October 23rd 2011 the central aim of the European Summit was to construct a new solid plan to confront the debt crisis, which provided "haircut" of Greek debt in half and an additional financial support package amounting to 130 billion euros. Although, the decisions of the meeting were presented with a positive sign by the Government, strong negative concerns have arisen by other parties on the impact of the agreement on Greek financial reality. Returning from the European Summit to Greece, the Greek Prime Minister Giorgos Papandreou finds the country in great social tension that led to the cancellation of the military parade of the 28th October (national holiday) and to strong protests during the military parade in Athens. Under this regime, George Papandreou announced his intention to hold a referendum to decide whether the Greek people should accept or not the agreement of the Summit, along with the included measures. This decision brought strong reactions not only within the country but also abroad, leading to the final rejection of the proposal and the creation of a government coalition in order to address common economic, political and social crisis in Greece.

On Thursday, November 10th 2011, the coalition included PASOK, ND and LAOS while Mr. Loukas Papadimos was chosen as Prime Minister. The growing rates of unemployment, the deepening of poverty of the Greek population and the absence of effective ease of social inequality plunged Greece into an economic and political pressure. The new financial assistance from the support mechanism was sealed with the signing of a second Memorandum on February 12, 2012. The parliamentary discussion regarding Memorandum II presents many interesting aspects to be analyzed. Regarding this paper, the particular parliamentary discussion was chosen for the following reasons.

1. Because of the extremely harsh measures foreseen in an economy, which was already in deep recession. The Memorandum II introduced among others: reduction by 22% of the minimum wage in the basic salary and 32% for new entrants up to 25 years, an increase in the objective values of properties and consolidation of taxes on property, abolition of 150,000 jobs in the public sector until 2015 (of these, 12,000 in the same year (2012), cuts in pensions, health and defense and abolition of sectorial agreements that were replaced with the individual agreements.

2. Memorandum II was signed by a peculiar form of government, since Prime Minister Loukas Papadimos was not elected directly, which caused intense delegitimizing...
rhetoric from the opposition regarding the lack of popular support and legitimacy of the Government, adding tension to an already tense parliamentary debate.

3. Memorandum II was challenged as being against the Greek Constitution, as well as the parliamentary discussion itself. The Memorandum II was discussed under the procedure of "urgency", which does not provide a detailed and in-depth parliamentary debate. The justification of this selection of the process was based on the assumption that the Greek Parliament had to vote for it urgently, since a Eurogroup meeting was planned three days later.

4. There were intense social explosions in the area of the Constitution Square in Athens during the debate, since many people were protesting in the area of the Constitution Square against the austerity policy and the new measures. Soon, the protest turned into violent incidents and chemicals were extensively used by the Police. In these protests both Mr Manolis Glezos and Mr Mikis Theodorakis (prominent political figures of Greece) were exposed to chemicals and were transferred inside the Parliament for medical examinations.

5. There were many political shifts and changes in the political parties, because of Memorandum II. In particular, PASOK and ND have raised issue of party discipline, threatening to cross out those who would not vote in favor of Memorandum II. At the same time there were alternations observed in LAOS since despite LAOS was in favor of the Memorandum I and supported the Government coalition, voted against the Memorandum II.

The political parties that contributed to this parliamentary discussion were the following. PASOK (Greek socialist party), ND (New Democracy, right wing party), LAOS (Right wing populist party), KKE (Greek communist party) and SYRIZA (Greek left party). The independent members of the parliament that appear in the discussion were mainly former members of the above mentioned parties that expressed opposite theses and were therefore removed from the corresponding parliamentary parties.

RESULTS FROM THE QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Qualitative analysis was employed to recognize and record the normative rationales that were present in the parliamentary discussion, along with facets of strategic framing that were observed.

Normative rationales regarding the parliamentary discussion on Memorandum II. From the qualitative analysis, four main and three secondary normative rationales emerged. The main normative rationales were:

A) The Government is independent and acts in favor of the people and the country’s national interest.

A Government is awaited to act in favour of the interests of the citizens, promote national interest and defend national independence. This legitimizing rationale was observed mainly by speakers that represented the political parties of the governmental coalition. For example:
Yes, dear colleagues, you may not recognize it, but the war I started to give together with the Government and the Parliamentary Group of PASOK and today yes, today we are many more, had many fronts. It was war to save Greece from extinction I mean full extinction- and we saved the country. "(Papandreou, A., PASOK, Line Number: 6215).

Under this statement, Mr Papandreou, former Prime Minister of Greece and former President of PASOK, tries to present his (and his party’s) efforts as means to save the country and act in favor of its national interests. The “war” metaphor enhances the efforts made and shows the difficulty and urgency of the matter. The following example has a similar approach:

Everyone must understand that the dilemma is if with sacrifices we can save the country or with a dramatic judgment, with the demolition of the society we will walk “proudly” towards destruction. "(Venizelos, E., PASOK, Line Number.: 1023).

The above statement, from Mr Venizelos, President of PASOK and member of the governmental coalition, underlines the importance of the issue, pinpointing that the Government’s role is to save the country, despite the harsh measures.

B) Memorandum II is an absolute necessity for the Greek economy

Under this normative rationale, Memorandum II is presented as salvation for the financial and societal balance of Greece, since without it the country would end up bankrupt.

What else is left? Unfortunately, only bankruptcy. And this means, to be perfectly honest, weakness in recapitalization of the banking system, risk of collapse and loss of deposits and interests of the public, further drastic reduction in liquidity at the expense of businesses and workers, a further increase in unemployment, inability to carry out the export and import trade Consider what we import. We import everything: food, medicines, fuel liquids." (Venizelos E., PASOK, Line Number: 4865.)

The above statement supports the necessity of Memorandum II, since if it was not voted, that would lead to financial collapse. The fact that Greece’s production is not self-sufficient leads to major imports, that would be terminated in case of bankruptcy. Thus, Memorandum II is an absolute necessity for the Greek economy. The same normative approach was chosen by Mr Antonios Samaras, President of ND at that time, that was against Memorandum I but in favor of Memorandum II. In particular:

I have to tell you, that if we take that road, we are going straight to bankruptcy and that bankruptcy will lead to the plunder of this country (Samaras, A. ND, Line Number: 6171)

The shift in political orientation of ND is interesting and was justified as a necessity in order to avoid bankruptcy and not as a shift in the party’s ideology.
C) Memorandum II was discussed as “urgent” because of the events

The rationale that legitimizes the urgency of the parliamentary discussion was presented by Mr Venizelos, Vice President of the Government and Minister of Finance:

This draught is urgent, because the country needs to follow an asphyxiating schedule, in order to solve problems of bond swaps before the public treasury is evaluated as “red”. (Venizelos, E., PASOK, Line Number: 1014)

By “red” it is meant that the public treasury will have reached the highest limits of liquidity and that would have an impact of bond swaps. Therefore there is limited time for discussions, since the events themselves push to a particular direction. More illustratively the following verbatim captures more in detail the necessity of the “urgent” procedure.

Before anything else I should give some technical and procedural information. Before the meeting of the Eurogroup, which could be called on Wednesday on Wednesday, the euro-working group will take place, ie the representatives of the finance ministers. The first condition is that the Greek Parliament, reflecting a strong parliamentary majority in post-election perspective, approves the Agreement that is vital to the financial survival of the country” (Venizelos, E., PASOK, Line Number: 1199).

This statement justifies why time was not given for an in-depth discussion in the Greek Parliament. The voting in favor of Memorandum II was framed as a necessity for the survival of the country since in the opposite case there would be extremely negative consequences.

The European Union is a formation of financial and political cooperation that aims to financial and political union, growth and stability and the empowerment of democracy.

The representation of the European Union as an economic and political union is based mainly in the “Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union”. Under the Treaty, the Union is founded “on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights”, “aims to promote peace, its values and the wellbeing of its people” and “shall offer its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice without internal borders”. Therefore, the EU is presented as a means of ensuring the quality of life for European citizens, respecting both the sovereignty of each member state, while respecting human rights.

Three more normative rationales were observed, but will not be thoroughly analyzed in this paper, since they gathered only one facet of strategic framing per normative rationale. These are a) the rationale that legitimized the political shift in LAOS (from member of the coalition to voting against Memorandum II), b) the rationale that legitimized the political shift in ND (against Memorandum I but in favor of Memorandum II) and c) the rationale that legitimized voices of opposition in PASOK.

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5Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union [2], 2012, C 326/15
Each of the four main and the three secondary normative rationales were delegitimized with a variety of facets of strategic framing. From the qualitative analysis the following facets of strategic framing were recorded.

**Facets of strategic framing in the Parliamentary Discussion regarding Memorandum II.**

Besides the broader strategic frame there are individual facets of strategic framing, as grouped sets of often used opposition rhetoric under the strategic frame, that were found from the qualitative analysis of the parliamentary discussion.

A) The **geostategic frame** delegitimizes the legitimizing rationale by degrading the "higher ideals" that justify a political decision and places it in a context of geostrategic interest (Samaras, 2002, p.84). The geostrategic frame delegitimizes the European normative rationale, as well as the rationale of the necessity of Memorandum II. Regarding the European normative rationale, the geostrategic frame reframes Europe as means of serving geostrategic interests, mainly, of Germany. For example:

"Not only Brussels but also Berlin and Paris have become centers of decisions for the lives of people in whole Europe” (Kiltidis, LAOS, Line Number: 2485).

"A top member of Europe found me and told me: “We cannot take any decision. The whole system is controlled by Mrs. Merkel and Mrs. Merkel has made its own club. In a tower outside Berlin, consults with the Netherlands, lately Luxembourg was included-that's why Juncker got furious-, Austria and Finland and decide for all of Europe”. And he says: "You Greeks should do something, you are directly concerned, so that the natural leadership of Europe comes back to its duties”. (Karatzafiris, LAOS, Line Number: 5865)

In both verbatim, the strategic frame not only distances itself from legitimizing European frame regarding respect for national sovereignty, but delegitimizes it fully, considering that the EU is basically a German enforcement vehicle that leads to Germany’s expansion throughout the European area. The statements on specific decision-makers that act outside the regular European institutions, but also that "the whole system is controlled by Mrs. Merkel” refer to a political entity that shows strong deviations from its founding principles as it appears that European policy decisions are taken mainly by Germany.

Regarding the normative rationale that Memorandum II is an absolute necessity, the geostrategic frame re-frames Memorandum II as means of German prevalence. In particular:

"And here we come to why we are doing this, why, this is the question. My answer to this question is: because it is within the limits of a politic, that the Germans want to impose, the "germanization“ of Europe. (Papachristos, Independent, Line Number: 3764).

“The Germans are on a race track on the edge of the razor, to pass the changes of the Treaties. Why is this important? Because until they pass these changes, every country has a veto right. As soon as these changes take place, Germany will not only the strongest country in Europe, that can with its power impose its will, but will also be institutionally vested” (Papachristos, Independent, Line Number: 3766).
In both statements, the strategic frame delegitimizes the frame regarding the necessity of Memorandum II as the country's salvation and bankruptcy avoidance and reframes it in terms of geostrategic interests. Statements such as "germanization of Europe" and that Germany is the strongest country in Europe not only by force but also being institutionally vested, refer again to the attitude that the European Union and the Memorandum II are channels, through which the German sphere of influence is increasing. It is interesting that a member of the Government, Mr. Papachristos, delegitimizes the government normative frame. The oppositional attitude of Mr. Papachristos led to his deletion from the parliamentary group of PASOK, once the voting procedure regarding Memorandum II was completed.

B) The vested interests frame places the political act not only as a concentration of power but as a means of satisfying domestic interests of third parties, based on opaqueness (Samaras, 2008, p.77). One of the key relationships seems to be between politics and the Media. As the political scene uses the media as a channel of communication and salience of political work, media are often accused of cover ups, omissions or selective report messages, in favor of the political elite. Example of this particular facet of strategic framing:

At first, regarding the case of urgency, the Vice President of the most ruthless government that this county has seen for decades, said: “What is the reason of existence of this government? To be ready the opening of the markets on Monday”. For whom, that is? For the rentiers? For whom are you interested in? For the interests of the speculators” (Karathanasopoulos, KKE, Line Number: 2297)

This particular verbatim refuted the normative frame that the government is promoting the adoption of the Memorandum II as not to lose "precious time" and reframes it under service of interests of "speculators" and "rentiers".

Regarding the normative rationale that the government is independent and acts in favor of its people, vested interests reframes the political decisions under the terms of serving interests. For example:

Here is the big question: From that choice that you make today, who will be the winner tomorrow morning? The working people will be the loosers. Who will win? The Hellenic Federation of Enterprises. Business groups, monopoly groups, the foreign multinational enterprises that have branches here? (Karathanasopoulos, KKE, Line Number: 2327).

According to this approach the Government promotes domestic interests. Under this facet of strategic framing the Government does not support the signing of Memorandum II to avoid bankruptcy and reorganize the economy, but to serve the interests of the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises, businesses and bankers.

C) Finlandization is the process by which one powerful country strongly influences the policies of a smaller neighbouring country, while allowing it to keep its independence and its own political system (Mouritzen, 1988). The term literally means “to become like Finland” referring to the influence of the Soviet Union on Finland's policies during the Cold War. In this paper “finlandization” is used as voluntary concession of sovereignty. In Greek this was coded as “Εθελοδολεία” (Ethelodoulia), which means voluntarily giving up independence and sovereignty and implies full submission. This particular facet was observed as a
delegitimizing rationale in regard to three normative rationales: a) the necessity of Memorandum II, b) the independence of the government and c) the discussion's process (urgent).

Regarding the necessity of Memorandum II, this facet of strategic framing places the voting in favor of Memorandum II as a way of voluntary concession of national sovereignty and implies submission to foreign political actors. For example:

“This is what you are called to vote for tonight, ladies and gentlemen of ND and PASOK. The last bastion that enables even a conservative Greek government to adapt to the requirements of European elites, you are giving it up! No resistance! Full submission! Such is the case! (Dritsas, SYRIZA, Line Number: 3650)

“We say no to national humiliation, no to this takeover, blackmail and national amputation. We will not allow that Greek people get chained for the next forty years. No to surrendering of our national sovereignty. We will not hand our country to the hands of economic colonizers. (Chrysanthakoloulos, LAOS, Line Number: 4606)

Common characteristic of these examples is the belief that the vote of Memorandum II is a complete transfer of national sovereignty to the lenders. Additionally, characteristics of “humiliation” and “blackmail” are present, which assist this process. With “finlandization” it is implied that there is a choice, an alternative approach, which is the non-voting of Memorandum II, that the Greek government, and by association those who vote in favor of Memorandum II, does not choose, because they deliberately surrender Greece’s national sovereignty.

This rhetoric is reflected on the normative statement that the Government acts independently and in the interest of the people. This rationale is deconstructed and re-framed in terms of full and deliberate concession. Examples:

“I said that I cannot discuss under the commands and instructions of Mrs. Merkel. I can neither discuss with her marionettes!” (Karatzafiris LAOS, GP 218, Serial Nos.: 1258)

“You are assured and serve those who are devastating the world to save Greece”. (Pafilis, KKE, GP 525, Serial Nos.: 5348)

The words "marionettes" and "serve" directly refer to the concept of finlandization as full concession. This facet is recorded even in the process of discussion (urgency). While the government's approach places the urgent procedure to be necessary due to lack of time, finlandization places it as a result of placing political initiative to the hands of foreign political actors. For example:

Surely, we had the option to discuss normally, giving the floor to everyone in order to utilize both aspects, so that we could have an organized discussion on another basis, and not on the basis that was imposed to us and we have to hastily accept such tactic, that the citizens feel that we do not legislate, but we just serve the directives of our lenders and our country is groaning under the German boot” (Chrysanthakopoulos, KKE, Line Number: 466)
According to the above mentioned statement time pressure is translated as submission to lenders and particularly to Germany, while the metaphor “under the German boot” implies conquest and refers to older historical moments of the German occupation in Greece.

D) The “petit-politics” frame presents internal policies as means of supporting the interests of the political parties (Samaras, 2002, p.84). Regarding the normative statement of the discussion’s procedure, the petit politics facet translates the procedure as a way of promoting the aspects of the protagonists of the political parties. For example:

“So, this is a plan to violate Article 60, paragraph 1, of the Constitution that refers to the free expression of opinion, speech and voting of the members of this Parliament! And at the end, only those selected by the partisan staffs, by the secretariats of Parliamentary Groups will speak, and all those who disagree will be excluded, the independent members will be excluded the Greek people will be excluded from information! (Kammenos, Independent, Line Number: 726)

According to the above statement, the procedure of the discussion promotes specific people to talk, chosen from the political parties, and these representatives were chosen in order to promote the parties’ logic and all the independent members of the parliament will not be able to contribute to the discussion.

E) The foreign agent frame is a facet of strategic framing according to which policies aim at supporting alien interests (Samaras, 2002). Moreover, political decisions in general may be degraded by using this frame, considering that they are not the dominant manifestation of political will, but serve other foreign political forces to defend their own interests. For example:

“So the appointed Prime Minister, the banker of Goldman Sachs, will blackmail the Greek people! And the people's representatives do not have the right to talk!” (Kammenos, Independent, Line Number: 735)

“The commander of Greece is Mr Reichenbach!” (Karatzafiris, LAOS, Line Number: 5868).

The above mentioned statements show a de-legitimation of the normative frame - that the government is independent and is acting in favor of Greek citizens- and is reframing public policy as a by-product of foreign political agents and banks.

Because of the events’ dynamics this facet of strategic framing is not often observed alone, but usually finlandization is implied.

F) The Structural frame, as facet of strategic framing, delegitimizes the normative rationale by attributing its intention to wider structural characteristics (Samaras, 2005, p.17). Under this frame the Greek financial crisis is not a product of political choices but is an unavoidable turnout of capitalism. Even though structural framing is not a facet of strategic framing per se, it shows a detachment from the normative rationale and sees public policy as a product of a wider structure. In this particular research the structural frame was mainly found in the political thesis of KKE. For example:
You cannot handle the crisis. Not only we, not the Greek political system, but nor is the European Commission and the European Union itself able to manage the crisis and this is the new element. You cannot handle the crisis because it is a profound crisis of the capitalist road of development and not at debt crisis. And this weakness is, if you want, of European capitalism is relatively unsurpassed (Papariga, KKE, Line Number: 4274)

You are finished, gentlemen. The capitalistic system can exist no more. There is so much a mess in it. There is such rottenness and stench that leads mankind literally to the Middle Ages many years back and very soon, all of these people you are trying to terrify, one day will tell you “it’s you, the capitalists”, or “us” (Pafilis, KKE, Line Number: 4274).

These kinds of statements are consistent with KKE’s ideology and rhetoric, since as being a communist party it correlates political decisions with a wider anti-capitalist approach.

**QUANTIFICATION OF RESULTS**

In order to explore Hypothesis 1 and Research Questions 2, 3 and 4, the findings of the qualitative approach are quantified. In respect to Research Question 1, regarding the frequency of strategic framing per political party, the Table 1 was constructed (Appendix, Table 1).

It is observed that the majority of the strategic framing is concentrated on the left wing parties, 35% (N = 26) for KKE and 32% (N = 24) for SYRIZA. The low percentage of PASOK (3%, N = 2), which was expected zero as is ND’s since strategic framing as delegitimizing frames are expected to be observed on the opposition, were observation of only one member of PASOK.. Therefore the Hypothesis 1 is verified as there is a difference in the frequency of uses of strategic framing per political party. More specifically, the parties of the governmental coalition (ND and PASOK) showed almost negligible percentages of strategic framing, while 97% (N = 73) of all observations regarding strategic framing was observed in oppositional political parties. In order to investigate the relationship between facets of strategic framing and political parties (Research Question 3), Table 2 was constructed (Appendix, Table 2).

The dominant facets of strategic frames are shown in bold. From the above table an interesting finding is that the majority of political actors, of different political ideologies, delegitimized the normative frames by using the facet ”Finlandization”. In addition, the rhetoric of political parties was concentrated on the facet “vested interests” as well. From the above it is presumed that the total of the oppositional rhetoric delegitimized the normative frames in terms of giving up sovereignty or vested interests. The rhetoric of KKE was primarily focused on “vested interests” but also garnered the highest levels of structural framing. The deconstructive rhetoric of LAOS and SYRIZA focused on the aspect of “finlandization”, which is an interesting finding since these two political parties are of opposite ideology. The dominance of “finlandization” in the rhetoric of LAOS could serve as justification for the fact that LAOS left the governmental coalition and voted against Memorandum II. Under these terms “finlandization” is used as means of the party’s image
restoration while in the case of SYRIZA it is used as means of deconstructing the government’s image.

The qualitative analysis has shown that each of the normative frames was delegitimized by different facets of strategic framing. In order to examine how the facets of strategic framing were employed regarding each normative statement (Research Question 4), table 3 was constructed (Appendix, Table 3).

Regarding the normative rationale of the parliamentary procedure (urgent) the main facet of strategic framing is finlandization. This finding is mainly justified, since the delegitimizing rhetoric was based on the assumption that the Government intentionally ignored the choice of a normal parliamentary discussion, where all matters of Memorandum II could have been discussed in-depth. Regarding the normative rationale that the Government is independent and acts in favor of the people, the frames “vested interests” and “finlandization” arise. These findings places the Government under the spectrum of voluntary surrender of the country’s sovereignty while the rationale that the Government acts in favor of the people is, through the “vested interests” facet, negated. It is implied that the signing of Memorandum II would lead the Greek economy to greater depression and therefore the wages would be lowered. The delegitimizing aspect of “vested interests” places the signing of Memorandum II as means to provide cheaper labour to enterprises.

The necessity of Memorandum II was delegitimized by the facet “finlandization”, because the signing of Memorandum II was translated as an act of willingly surrendering the country’s sovereignty and national interests. The second most frequent facet is “vested interests”, since Memorandum II was framed as an act of serving interests and not as an agreement to save the Greek economy. Additionally, the high percentage of the “structural” facet approaches Memorandum II as a by-product of wider economical systems and in particular, capitalism. The European normative rationale was deconstructed as means of expansion of Europe’s sphere of influence and mainly as Germany’s aim to increase its sphere of influence.

The three secondary normative rationales regarding the political shifts have all been deconstructed by the facet of petit politics, implying that any change in the political behavior of the parties aims at serving the party’s interests and not the national ones.

The qualitative analysis showed that strategic framing was observed directly (85,3%), as straightforward de-legitimizing discourse, and indirectly (14,7%) under the forms of questions or assumptions. Table 4 (Appendix, Table 4) shows that majority of facets of strategic framing were directly expressed. The main facet of strategic framing, directly and indirectly expressed, is “finlandization”, a finding that was observed during the qualitative and quantitative analysis. It could be argued that the oppositional discourse framed the Government and the signing of Memorandum II as a willing, deliberate concession of national rights to the hands of foreign political and business centers. Additionally, the fact that strategic framing was mainly used directly, shows a straightforward clash with the normative rationales and as proof of rhetorical tension during the parliamentary discussion. The facets “structural”, “vested interests” and “foreign agent” were present exclusively directly. Under these facets, the government was directly de-legitimized as a product, or part of, a wider structure with fundamental weaknesses and its political decisions were framed as pressures from foreign political actors.
CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE STUDY

Aim of this paper was to explore the use of strategic framing in political discourse and the different facets of strategic framing. Six dominant facets of strategic framing were recorded and defined in the Greek parliamentary discussion regarding Memorandum II. The employment of strategic framing shows the representations of political actors regarding the normative rationales and the opposition’s efforts to de-legitimize these rationales.

The fact that the normative rationale regarding the necessity of Memorandum II was primarily de-legitimized by the use of “finlandization” is an important finding since under this facet the fact that Memorandum II was accepted, places public policy as an act of submission. Additionally, the Government was de-legitimized under the facet “vested interests” that challenges the normative rationale that the Government is independent and acts in favour of the people. Combined these two findings can lead to the assumption that the Government signed Memorandum II as an act of surrender in exchange with benefits and serving domestic and foreign interests. The image of Europe seems to be degraded into an effort of Germany to increase its sphere of influence. Through this, Europe is presented not as a construct that can promote a political and financial cooperation to the benefit of all European citizens, but more as an abstract and remote center of decision-making.

After three years of the signing of Memorandum II, the political, societal and financial cohesion of Greece is still under distress. The failure or Memorandum II brought to Greece a new Memorandum, under a new government. It would be useful to examine how the changes in political power influence the use of facets of strategic framing. Which are the new normative rationales regarding Memorandum III and how were they delegitimized? To what extent does the shift in political positions affect the use of strategic framing in Greece? A new study could cover the facets of strategic framing in other countries that operate under Memorandums and underline possible differences between the facets of strategic framing and political culture.

REFERENCES


**ANNEXES**

**Table 1. Frequency of strategic framing per political party**

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### Table 2. Facets of strategic framing per political party

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Table 4. Direct and Indirect appearance of facets of strategic framing

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