Framing Europe: television news and European integration

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Chapter 1

1 In this book I refer to 'news about European affairs', public opinion about 'Europe' and 'European news' interchangeably. The term 'Europe' refers to issues of European integration.

2 Between 1994 and 1999 the turnout level in Britain dropped 12 percentage points. In Denmark this was three and in the Netherlands six points. The most significant drops were in Finland (down from 60% to 30%) and in Germany (down from 60% to 45%).

3 The Eurobarometer is the most consistent source of information about longitudinal developments in European public opinion and has been conducted since 1973 (sponsored by The European Commission). Since 1993 public support for the European single currency has been recorded as well and since 2001 public opinion is also monitored in the EU-candidate countries.

4 This classification is derived from Gabel (1998). He identifies five groups of studies, but there is considerable overlap between several of the categories. Consequently I distinguish three groups.

5 Recent research suggests that in addition to cost/benefit analyses, support for the EU can also be explained in terms of perceived cultural threats (see McLaren, 2002).

6 This interpretation of support for European integration has been challenged by studies of European referendum campaigns that suggest that predispositions on the question of European integration, sometimes referred to as the level of EU-skepticism or EU-attitudes, is a key predictor of the vote (Siune and Svensson 1993; Siune, Svensson & Tonsgaard 1994).

7 Research informed by a Habermasian notion of the necessity of a European public sphere has critically evaluated current media practices for being counter-productive to the ideal of a genuine public debate (e.g., Kunelius & Sparks, 2001).

8 The study also assessed the impact of other influences on the vote and found different levels of support for hypotheses concerning the influence of key variables such as ideology, economic evaluations, and government approval (de Vreese & Semetko, 2001; 2002c).

9 A few notable exceptions to this rule include the two Danish movements 'The June Movement' and 'The People's Movement' that both run for office in European elections and campaign in referendums on European issues, but are not part of domestic politics.

10 A number of studies discuss the changes in the last two decades (see e.g., Blumler & Hoffmann-Riem, 1992; Blumler & Nossiter, 1991; Blumler & Gurevitch, 1998; Hultén & Brants, 1992; Humphreys, 1996; McQuail, 1990; Siune & Hultén, 1998). Changes pertain to technology, market structures, media policies, and audience
preferences. Prior to the 1980s, European broadcasting was essentially publicly funded and controlled (with few exceptions such as Britain). The late 1980s and early 1990s marked a paradigmatic shift in the broadcasting scene and in the early 1990s the changes were coined by a distinction between public broadcasting monopolies and ‘dual broadcasting systems’ where public and commercial networks operate in the same markets. In 1980 all Western European countries (except Britain, Italy, and Luxembourg) had a public broadcasting monopoly. By 1990 this had changed so that only a few countries did not have a dual system of broadcasting with commercial and public broadcasters operating in the same market. By the end of the decade, all countries had entered a stage of dual broadcasting on liberalized market conditions.

11 TV2 may become fully privatized if new broadcasting legislation is adopted. In addition, the Danish language private network TV3 operates out of London.

12 In addition, SBS has two daily news bulletins.

13 Comparative studies of media and election campaigns (Blumler, 1983; Semetko et al., 1991; Semetko, 1996), European television news (Heinderyckx, 1993), and US versus European news (Hallin & Mancini, 1984) are key cross-national comparative studies from the last decades.

14 Other approaches to content analysis exist in which the emphasis on systematic analysis is less prominent (see McQuail (2000) for an overview).

15 Other ‘classic’ definitions of experimentation include Berelson (1952): “Any investigation that includes two criteria: (a) manipulation or control of some variable by the investigator and (b) systematic observation or measurement of other variables. In short, it means we actively intervene on the phenomena of interest to see what, if any, effects are produced by the intervention”. Tannenbaum (1958, p. 67): “Research in which one or more independent variables that are assumed to be relevant are systematically manipulated and their effect, both independent and interactive on some dependent variables are observed under objective conditions with the possible contamination effect of other independent variables held constant”.

16 However, it is possible that, despite random assignment, experimental conditions differ in their composition, and tests verifying successful random assignment are therefore appropriate.

Chapter 2

1 A substantial part of extant research focuses on election campaigns and the central role of (news) media (see, e.g., Altheide & Snow, 1979; Bennett, 1992; Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995; Norris et al., 1999; Patterson, 1993; Semetko et al., 1991; Swanson & Mancini, 1996).

2 Much research on framing is inspired by Goffman’s observations that individual perceptions of events are cognitively processed and categorized (see, e.g., discussions in Gamson (1992; 1996), Pan and Kosicki (1993)).

3 The research by Loftus (1979) and later also by, for example, Kinder and Sanders (1996) address the effects of question wording. This is a long-standing research tradition in, for example, survey research. Specifically in relation to European integration, Saris (1997) demonstrated that subtle changes in question wording were capable of directing public opinion about the European Union.
It should be noted that the framing process as described here is different from the temporal perspective in Miller and Riechert (2001) where the framing process is discussed in terms of an ‘emergence’ phase, a ‘definition/ conflict’ phase, a ‘resonance’ phase, and an ‘equilibrium/ resolution’ phase.

Scheufele (2000) discussed individual-level consequences, but societal level consequences should be considered too.

Another overview of framing research (Simon, 2001) takes a more science philosophical approach and distinguishes between ‘positivist studies of framing’ (which compare to D’Angelo’s (2002) cognitive paradigm) and ‘constructionist studies of framing’ that equal D’Angelo’s (2002) constructionist paradigm.

D’Angelo (2002) argues that the three paradigms, much to the benefit of the field, co-exist.

A comparable classification to the issue-specific frame was recently suggested by McCombs and Ghanem (2001) who refer to issue-specific frames as ‘ad hoc frames’.

The studies have appeared in international peer-reviewed journals or are large-scale internationally renowned research projects (e.g., Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Iyengar, 1991; Neuman et al., 1992; Patterson, 1993). Some of these studies are parts of larger research endeavors that also include investigations of the effects of the news frames (e.g., Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Iyengar, 1991; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). The effects studies are discussed in the subsequent section on framing effects.

In recent years several book chapters as well as dozens of conference presentations have been related to framing. At recent conferences of e.g. the International Communication Association (ICA) and the American Political Science Association (APSA) special sessions have been devoted to framing research.

In fact, some authors find the two news frames to be so closely related that the terms are used interchangeably (e.g., Lawrence, 2000).

The horse race frames has also been found to appear in election news coverage in a European context (e.g., Brants & van Praag, 1995; van Praag & Brants, 2000) without any indication of an increase in use during the 1990s.

The distinction between episodic and thematic frames is an example of a more generically driven news frame that transcends issue and time/ space limits. But this particular example is also problematic. There is some dispute as to whether the episodic and thematic ‘frames’ are in fact frames or whether what is described as a frame in the study is a format or a ‘news bias’. What Iyengar (1991) defined as ‘episodic’ has elsewhere been discussed in terms of a structural bias in the news towards ‘personalization’ and ‘fragmentation’ by which news becomes “hard to assemble in to a bigger picture and appear as rather self-contained, isolated happenings” (Bennett, 1996, p. 40).

Conceptually, the frames identified by Neuman et al. (1992) such as ‘human impact’ and ‘conflict’ share a lot of common ground with Bennett’s (1996) distinction between four modes of news representation. Based on a discussion of news values he gauged a number of key characteristics of US news coverage by distinguishing between ‘personalized’, ‘dramatized’, ‘fragmented’, and ‘normalized’ strategies of news representation. Bennett (1996, p. 48) suggested that personalized news, for instance, can be defined as “the journalistic bias that gives preference to the individ-
ual actors and human interest angles in events while downplaying institutional and
political considerations that establish their social context”. This identification of a
mode of reporting bears great resemblance with Neuman et al.’s (1992) ‘human im-

15 pact’ frame.

The de Vreese et al. (2001) study is dealt with in length in Chapter 4.

16 McLeod et al. (1994, p. 136) and McLeod et al. (2002, p. 226) distinguish four types
of individual level effects of political communication: opinion formation, cognitive
changes, perceptions of the political system, and political participation. They clas-
sify framing as a ‘cognitive change effect’. However, previous research suggests that
framing effects may also be found on several attitudinal and behavioral measures.

17 No empirical research so far has provided evidence showing direct behavioral ef-
fects (such as political participation) following exposure to a specific frame. Initial
steps have been taken by Shah et al. 1996 and Valentino et al. (2001) who discuss
effects on behavior intentions.

18 Some studies listed as drawing on ‘issue-specific’ frames deal with the framing of
specific issues though the nature of the frame suggests that other issues may be
framed along similar lines (e.g., McLeod & Detenber, 1999; Shah et al., 2001). This
aspect is not discussed in the studies.

19 Druckman (2001b) additionally investigated the role of message endorser. He
found that framing effects are most likely to occur if the frame is sponsored by a
more credible source (e.g., the New York Times) than a less credible source (in his
example the National Enquirer).

20 A dominant news frame, such as the episodic frame, may, for example in the case of
covering terrorism, “encourage viewers to attribute causal responsibility for terror-
ism to personal qualities and of terrorists and inadequacy of sanctions” (Iyengar,
1991, p. 45). Similarly, episodic framing of poverty increases attributions of individ-
ual responsibility while thematic news frames increases attributions of societal re-
sponsibility.

21 Differences in definitions and discussions about the relationship between agenda-
setting, priming, and framing (see Chapter 7) notwithstanding, agenda-setting can
be defined the ability of media to increase to public perception of an issue’s impor-
tance by devoting attention to that issue. Priming can be defined as the ability of
the media to influence the importance attached to an issue or character trait when
persons make evaluations of, for example, the president.

22 Agenda-setting emerged from McCombs and Shaw’s (1972) exploratory study of
the 1968 US election that synthesized the agenda-setting ideas into a systematic and
testable hypothesis. They compared key issues in the media coverage of the election
with a sample of undecided voters’ perception of key issues in the campaign and
found a strong positive correlation between the media and the public agenda.
Agenda-setting has been explored and tested from a variety of research methods
ranging from survey data (e.g., McCombs & Shaw, 1972), in-depth interviews (e.g.
Neuman et al., 1992) to experiments (e.g., Iyengar & Kinder, 1987).

23 There is also considerable terminological inconsistency. Luskin (1990) refers to ‘po-

titical sophistication’, Fiske, Lau, and Smith (1990) to ‘political expertise’, Price
to ‘political knowledge’.
Priming is known from research in cognitive psychology (Fiske & Taylor, 1991) and had earlier been identified in a political communication context by Patterson and McClure (1976) as an important potential effect of television political advertising. Priming has been defined as "the effect of a prior context on the interpretation and retrieval of information" (Fiske & Taylor, 1984, p. 231). In terms of news, priming refers to 'the ability of new information to alter the standards by which the public evaluates political leaders' (Krosnick & Kinder, 1990). When the US news media, for instance, covered the 1991 Gulf War extensively, US President Bush's performance was evaluated on his warfare abilities, but when the news media a year later focused on the American economy, Bush was evaluated on his economic performance (Jaspersen et al., 1998)

Nelson et al. (1997) and Druckman (2001b) modeled a number of attitudes as mediators of framing. Frames in the news activated and made certain attitudes and considerations more salient which affected tolerance towards the KKK. No direct effect of exposure to the frames were found, but indirect, mediated effects were found across different studies.

In the study Cappella and Jamieson (1997) refer to knowledge as a surrogate for 'news reception' following the advice by Price and Zaller (1993).

In addition, Price et al. (1997) found 'residency status' to be a moderator of framing effects for perceptions of university funding so that students living in the state produced less consequence-related thoughts than out of state students who would be more affected by tuition increases according to the news material used in the study.

Chapter 3

Parts of the material from this chapter have been published in de Vreese (2003; 2001b; 2000).

One example is the agenda-setting approach with hundreds of studies investigating the relationship between the media agenda and the public agenda (Dearing & Rogers, 1996). Comparatively few studies have addressed the specific dynamics of agenda-building (Lang & Lang, 1991). Notable exceptions have studied the influence of politicians' agenda on the news agenda (e.g., Weaver & Swanz, 1985) or by investigating the influence of routine sources on building the news agenda (e.g., Berkowitz, 1987).

One study discusses the negotiations taking place at the public service news program in Israel over how to frame a story about football fans at a victory celebration welcoming the Prime Minister (Liebes, 2000). Though stressing the importance of obtaining knowledge about "what goes on on the floor" the study does not rely on observations or in-depth interviews, but instead on a comparison between raw footage from the event and the broadcast news story supplemented by "unstructured discussions among a group of scholars and editors" (Liebes, 2000, p. 304).

The June 1999 elections took place in the aftermath of the introduction of the common European currency, the euro, in January 1999 and the resignation of the European Commission in March 1999. The 1999 turnout was significantly lower than in 1994 and in some countries the news media that repeated projections of low turnout were 'blamed' for contributing to this decline.
The general literature on production of news is too large to be discussed in detail here. One strand of research conceptualizes political news as the result of (1) the position of politics and politicians in a society, (2) journalists' and editors' orientation towards politics and politicians, (3) the degree of professionalization of politics, and (4) the degree media competition (adapted from Semetko et al. (1991)). These factors influence the autonomy and extent to which news media can exert discretion—that is independently defining their own policies and choices—in their coverage of politics. They thereby define the parameters within which news organizations operate.

In Europe significant cross-national variation is found on several of these parameters. The 'valuation' of politics differs between countries in the EU and citizens in these countries show very different levels of trust in government and political institutions (Nye, Zelikow & King, 1997). The orientation towards politics and politicians by news people also varies greatly in Europe and the journalistic culture in terms of covering politics differs between countries. The degree of professionalization of politics campaigns and the degree of competition in the media market show some trends of convergence in a European perspective. First, the European media landscape has profoundly changed during the past two decades so that all countries have full-blown competition in broadcasting and all operate in a dual system without a public service broadcasting monopoly (McQuail & Siune, 1998). Second, with respect to the professionalization of politics, shared European-wide trends are discernable at the national level of governance (see Chapter 1), although little is known about changes at the European level of governance.

The importance of the news organization in particular is stressed by Manheim (1998) who sees the newsroom as the key locale for defining news. He defines news as a product of internal behaviors and values of the institutional needs of the newsroom. Some studies suggest that news organizations are active players in defining the news agenda (e.g., Tuchman, 1978). Others studies suggest that news organizations are merely the place where culturally defined norms of news values and selection criteria are manifest (e.g., Galtung & Ruge, 1965; White, 1950).

The distinction between sacerdotal and pragmatic approaches refers to the approach to elections, but can also be applied to discuss and identify the approach to politics in general, outside a campaign period.

An additional source of information comes from newsroom observations at the television news programs in the three countries. This observational component consisted of periods of two or three days of presence in the newsroom. I attended central editorial meeting and monitored discussions between journalists, editors, and correspondents. The newsroom observations could not take place on the same days which makes any direct comparisons and conclusions at best tentative. In Denmark, the observations were carried out on June 7-8, 1999, in the Netherlands on June 10-11, 1999 and in Britain after the EP elections in late September 1999. The observations can therefore only be seen as illuminating background information for understanding the editorial decisions discussed in the interviews.

The interviewees appear in this study by title/function in the newsroom rather than by name. These titles vary per program and comparable, and most concise titles are used here.
At the time of writing (October 2002), BBC has its main evening news program at 10 p.m.

Until March 1999 (and again in 2002), ITN broadcast its main news bulletin at 10 p.m.

It should be noted that some of the organizations and in particular the BBC are large organizations with many outlets and many staff involved in covering European affairs. The observations made in this study pertain specifically to the television news programs of these organizations and do not reflect, for example, radio news or current affairs magazines.

All interviews were transcribed prior to the analysis. Various strategies have been applied in analyzing interview material with journalists in other studies (see Kung-Shankleman, 2000). I only refer to themes if more interviewees addressed the same topic and provided 'consistent' answers. The findings are presented reflecting the situation at the time of the interviews.

BBC parliamentary journalists covering EU affairs, for example, serve no less than five radio stations, two terrestrial television channels (including the several daily BBC news bulletins), BBC World, and the 24-hour domestic news channel (source: Interview with senior BBC political correspondent).

Observation in the newsroom, June 1999.

Chapter 4

Parts of this chapter have been published in Peter & de Vreese (2002), Semetko et al. (2000), de Vreese (2001b; 2001d; 2001e), and de Vreese et al. (2001).

This was a general pattern, but included countries such as Italy and Spain where the coverage was either neutral or positive (Norris, 2000, p. 198).

Other scholars have stressed the crucial role that media play in shaping public opinion and creating a 'shared European identity' (e.g., Kunelius & Sparks, 2001). These studies have, by and large, acknowledged that pan-European projects aimed at promoting a common communicative space and European identity have failed (e.g., Schlesinger, 1997; Venturelli, 1993). National news media appear the more important forum and the making of "a common European culture and identity via trans-border flows of European-made television seems today an almost naïve aspiration" (Schlesinger, 1997, p. 13).

The results reported in Norris (2000) are based on the monitoring study conducted by the European Union itself. Norris (2000) deals only sporadically with the design of this study and does not address issues of data quality or the reliability of the coding.

See comments about changing schedules in Britain in Chapter 3. In the period between March 1999 and 2002 ITN broadcast at 6.30 p.m.. This bulletin is used in this study with the exception of the euro introdcution period where the News at Ten was used.

In this period, the following programs are omitted from the analysis due to technical problems: BBC 25-28 December, ITN 25-30 December, TV2 31 December, NOS 19, 21, 22, 26, 27 December, 5, 10 January and RTL 26, 27 December and 9, 10 January.

The routine period consisted of the following weekdays: January 5-8 and January 11, 1999.
8 During the EP campaign, the following programs are omitted from the analysis due to technical problems: BBC 28, 29 May, ITN 30, 31 May and 6 June, DR 29 May, NOS 31 May, 1 June, RTL 1 June.


11 The content analyses reported here are integral to a larger research program investigating news and public opinion about European affairs. For example, while this study focuses on Britain, Denmark, and the Netherlands, the analysis of the European election campaign covered all EU countries and involved a team of 37 native speakers of the 10 languages spoken in the EU. This study analyzed about 7,000 news stories. Additionally, the summit and routine news analyzed in this book is integral to a larger study also involving Germany and France for specific periods. For this study more than 16,000 news stories were analyzed.

12 Other studies of news content have focused on specific words (Jasperso et al., 1998) or segments of news stories (such as a 'communicator sequence', see Blumler, 1983). For the purpose of this study the news story was considered the most appropriate unit of analysis.

13 The total number of stories coded consisted of 3,134 British (BBC 1,597, ITN 1,537), 4,072 Danish (DR 2,012, TV 2,060), and 3,582 Dutch (NOS 1,705, RTL 1,877) stories.

14 To identify political/economic news, a screening question about the political/economic nature of the topic was included. A story about cuts in the health sector, for example, may be a candidate for both the category 'Politics' (in terms of social politics) or 'Social welfare'. The additional screening question ensured that all political or economic stories were coded in the categories 'Introduction of the euro', 'Politics' and 'Economy' and that the remaining categories exclusively contained non-political/non-economic stories.

15 The other items were: "Does one party/individual/group/country reproach another?", "Does the story refer to two sides or to more than two sides of the problem/issue?", and "Does the story emphasize the achievements and/or actions of an individual/party versus the achievements and/or actions of another individual/party?". Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) did not use the final item in their analysis. Others, however, argue the centrality of assessments of publicly elected figures' achievements in news (e.g., Cappella & Jamieson, 1997). This is why this item was included after pre-tests.

16 The other items were: "Is there a reference to economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action?", and "Is there a mention of financial losses or gains now or in the future?"

17 An actor is not necessarily a person, but may also be a government, an institution, organization or another type of entity. An actor does not have to act, that is func-
tion in the news story as actively doing something. An actor can also be the object or target of actions. Journalists are only actors in the story if the news report is about the journalist. Spokespersons are always coded according to the person/entity whom they represent. An actor was coded only once per news story.

18 In other analyses (see Peter & de Vreese, 2002), the tone measure is calculated as a percentage-based measure because it, in this case, had to be taken into account that the absolute number of EU representatives differed considerably not only within but also between the countries analyzed there. The evaluation differential was therefore to be preferred to a mean evaluation.

19 The measures of news frames and focus of the news utilized in the euro study are not applied.

20 For the European elections new candidates for the European Parliament were also coded as EU actors. However, these candidates were assigned a special code, as they are in essence domestic politicians and it is therefore interesting too see whether the Parliamentary election coverage consisted of national candidates or EU level actors. For each actor, it was coded whether the actor was as an individual or group, related to the EU or any other level than the EU (e.g., regional, domestic, or world). For the current analysis this distinction is not applied as it is elsewhere (Peter & de Vreese, 2002).

21 'Other political news' was identified by a screening question asking: "Does this story address local/national/international politics, political institutions/actors?"

22 In the content analysis of the summit coverage and the routine weeks the fourth item was omitted from the conflict scale.

23 The indicators for strategic news coverage used in this study are limited. Jamieson (1992) defines strategic news as consisting of five components (see Chapter 2). Scholars have argued that the presence of polls should not be considered part of an index of strategic news coverage as the mere presence of polls does not affect audience responses to the news (Valentino et al., 2001a). Of the remaining four indicators, only two are used in this analysis. This, however, is not considered a problem because the aim in this study is not to assess the level of strategic news and compare this to, for example, US news.

24 Sports and weather was also a common component of both the routine news period, as well as the event period, with the amount of time during the routine period at a low of 7% in Denmark and a high of 13% in the Netherlands with Britain (8%) in between. Weather and sports are placed within the news bulletin in some programs and in special independent segments in other programs.

25 The Dutchman was appointed to lead the European Central Bank for a term of eight years, and he took office at the time the euro was launched. His appointment had been the subject of much debate because he was supported strongly by the Germans but initially rejected by the French, who insisted that a Frenchman have the seat after only four years.

26 This observation should be interpreted with caution given the modest number of cases ranging from 8 EU actors in Denmark to 33 in the Netherlands.

27 On Election Day the British and Danish networks carried exit polls. On June 11 and 12, 1999 most programs made only brief reference to the European elections. The actual results of the elections were publicly available until Monday June 14, 1999. This time lag was due to a regulation stating that all election results in the EU
member countries were to be made public simultaneously. The remaining countries all went to the polls on Sunday June 13, 1999.

28 This aggregate list of topics in the news should be interpreted with caution because the six news periods are presented together.

29 This number is an average. Some summits received significantly more coverage than others. The Nice summit (2000) for example received almost 20% of the news in Denmark and between 10-15% in Britain and the Netherlands (see de Vreese, 2001b).

30 While the content analysis in this study supports the claim that 'expected low turnout' was a prominent theme on the news agenda, often initiated by the news media themselves, no clear conclusions about negative real-life effects can be drawn from the literature. On the one hand there is hardly any evidence to suggest that polls predicting the level of turnout in elections has large effects. Studies of demobilizing effects of the publication of polls yield either minimal or no effects on voters to turn out to vote (Ansolabehere and Iyengar, 1994; Sudman, 1986). On the other hand, Zaller (1992) has suggested that the most significant effects of media content are likely to occur in a situation where the information environment is dominated by coverage of an issue with a consistent directional bias. It is therefore unclear, and also beyond the scope of this study, to assess what (if any) effects the prevalence of the 'turnout' theme in the campaign news coverage had.

31 It should be noted, however, that the coding relied upon by Norris (2000) allows for multiple codings of topics in a news story whereas this current study assigned one, dominant topic per news story.

Chapter 5

1 Parts of this chapter were presented at the 2001 ICA annual meetings (de Vreese, 2001c).

2 KLO [Kijk- en Luisteronderzoek] is the Audience Research Department of the Dutch public broadcasters.

3 The author thanks reporters at NOS Journaal (in particular former editor-in-chief Nico Haasbroek).

4 An overview of all the stories in the experimental bulletin can be obtained from the author. A post-test item asked participants to evaluate the trustworthiness of the experimental and other stories. The evaluation of the experimental story did not deviate from other stories.

5 The cross-talk and field report versions were made to explore effects of format differences on appreciation of news. The traditional field report and the live cross-talk version contained identical information. The correspondent, in the cross-talk versions, not only paraphrased, but in fact cited literally what the MPs and the President of the Dutch Bank had stated in front of the camera in the field report versions. The full script of each story can be obtained from the author. For more details on the effects of format differences, see Snoeijer et al. (2002).

6 The essence of an experiment is the elimination of intervening variables through random assignment to experimental condition. To check whether the randomization procedure was successful, an ANOVA was conducted for a number of individual characteristics such as gender, age, education level, political knowledge, and
political interest. This revealed no significant differences between participants in the experimental conditions on any of the measures, suggesting a successful randomization.

7 A control group would have to be treated to a ‘frameless’ television news story which would violate the conventions for the nature of television news stories. To omit a control group in the design is in line with the procedures used in experimental framing research by, for example, Domke et al. (1999), Iyengar (1991), McLeod & Detenber (1999), and Nelson et al. (1997).

8 This procedure was chosen because the final questionnaires provided information that could cue participants to alter answers to previous questions. A single questionnaire would enable participants to go back in the questionnaire whereas the chosen procedure with separate questionnaires and envelopes made this impossible.

9 The other items are, for the conflict frame: “Does the answer refer to one or more parties reproaching each other?”; “does the answer refer to two or more sides of the issue/problem?”; “does the answer refer to the performance of an individual/group/country?”; “does the answer refer to political disputes over the issue?”. For the economic consequences frame the items were: “Does the answer refer to financial consequences of pursuing or not pursuing an action?”; “does the answer mention financial losses/gains, nor or in the future?”; “does the answer mention the impact of Dutch economy/tax payers?”.

10 A GLS factor analysis confirmed the loading of the items on the two factors. The factor analysis explained 44% of the variance and resulted in a non-significant \( \chi^2 (22.08, 19) = .28 \) indicating a satisfactory fit.

11 The question read: “We are also interested in what you can remember from the story about the enlargement of the European Union. Please write below how you would tell this story to a friend that has not seen the story. You can think of, for example, persons and countries mentioned, what happened, why it happened, and what the consequences are. Please write down everything you can remember”.

12 The question wording of the three items was: ‘The European Union should be enlarged with central and eastern European countries such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Romania’, ‘It is a good thing that the Netherlands participates in the euro’, ‘Turkey should become member of the EU’.

13 To check for potential interaction effects, a MANOVA with frame (conflict versus economic consequences) and format (live cross-talk versus field report) as between-subject factors and use of frames (as identified in the participants thoughts) as within-subject factor yielded a main effect for frame condition for the conflict scale \((F(1,144) = 48.45, p < .001)\) and for the economic consequences scale \((F(1,144) = 86.52, p < .001)\). The MANOVA showed no significant main effect for format (live cross-talk versus field report) neither for the conflict scale \((F(1,144) = 3.62, p = .06)\) nor for the economic consequences scale \((F(1,144) = 0.31, p = .86)\). The MANOVA also showed no significant interaction effect between frame and format, neither for the conflict scale \((F(1,144) = 2.01, p = .16)\) nor for the economic consequences scale \((F(1,144) = .43, p = .51)\). Post-hoc Scheffé tests for the framing condition yielded a clear structure in homogeneous subsets, revealing that the experimental framing condition had a significant effect on viewers’ use of frames in their thoughts.

14 An ANOVA controlling for potential interaction effects with the two formats yielded no significant main effect for condition neither for the core part \((F(3,145) = .70,\)
p = .55), the part pertaining to the conflict frame ($R(3, 144) = .82, p = .49$), nor the part pertaining to the economic consequences part ($R(3, 144) = .01, p = 1.00$).

15. The effect of the frame was significant in both the conflict condition ($R(1, 144) = 59.92, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .30, p < .001$) and in the economic consequences condition ($R(1, 144) = 96.82, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .41, p < .001$).

16. Political knowledge ($R(1, 144) = 2.82, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .02, p < .10$), verbosity ($R(1, 144) = 3.75, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .03, p < .05$).

17. An ANOVA controlling for potential interaction effects with the different formats yielded no significant main effect for condition for the level of European integration support ($R(3, 144) = .62, p = .60$).

Chapter 6

1. Parts of this chapter have been presented at the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association, Boston, August 29 - September 2, 2002 (de Vreese, 2002b).

2. Cappella and Jamieson (1997) investigated the effects of strategy news in two contexts. The first series of experiments assessed the effects of issue and strategy frames in the news coverage of a 1991 mayoral political campaign. The second series of experiments investigated the effects of the two frames during the 1993-94 Health Care reform debate in the U.S. In both contexts they found the strategic news frame to fuel public cynicism about politics.

3. Brants and van Kempen (2002) discuss their findings in the light of the different composition of the audience for the two news programs in terms of, for example, education which point to a process of self-selection.

4. Experiments with a temporal component in the design are not common in other areas of communication research either. One recent study drawing on a 'prolonged-exposure design' found cultivation effects of repeated exposure to talk shows with specific content (Rössler & Brosius, 2001).

5. The authors do not directly address this potentially confounding aspect of their design. They draw on aggregate-level time-series analysis to further substantiate their arguments about the persistent and cumulative effect of agenda-setting (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987, pp. 26-33), but these analyses are correlational and do not include individual level exposure and attention measures or any information about topics salient in news to which the respondents were exposed to.

6. The design does not include a control group which would have to be treated to a 'frameless' television news story which would violate the conventions for the nature of television news stories. To omit a control group in the design is in line with the procedures used in most experimental framing research (Domke et al., 1999; Iyengar, 1991; McLeod & Detenber, 1999; Nelson et al., 1997; Valentino et al., 2000a). Since this study is designed to test the effects of strategic news coverage on a variety of dependent measures, the other group (exposed to issue-driven news) may effectively be considered the functional equivalent of a control group (Brown & Melamed, 1996).

7. The key feature of experimentation is the elimination of intervening variables through random assignment to experimental conditions. In this study the randomization procedure was successful: chi-square tests revealed no significant differences
between the different conditions on demographic dimensions: gender ($\chi^2 = .33$, $df = 1$, $p = .57$), age ($\chi^2 = 50.53$, $df = 45$, $p = .26$), education ($\chi^2 = 7.53$, $df = 8$, $p = .48$).

The experimental bulletin was somewhat shorter (six minutes) than a regular 8 o’clock news bulletin. Participants were informed that the remaining time would be news about the aftermath of the September 11 events in the U.S. They were informed that this news was changing so rapidly that it was not possible to include it in the proof recording.

8 Measures of political cynicism have been the focus of much scholarly attention, but there is little agreement on how to conceptualize and tap political cynicism. Some scholars have linked discussion of cynicism to measures of political efficacy (Acock & Clarke, 1990; Acock, Clark & Stewart, 1985; Craig, Niemi & Silver, 1990; Niemi, Craig & Mattei, 1991). At the core of cynicism is an absence of trust (Agger, Goldstein & Pearl, 1961). However, conventional measures of political trust, such as those used in the American National election studies, are often criticized (see, for example, Lodge & Tursky, 1979; Muller & Jukam, 1977). Moreover, equating standard measures of political trust, alienation, and efficacy, is not appropriate in the attempt to gauge specific dimensions of cynicism about politics (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997). I build on the research by Cappella & Jamieson (1997) and therefore use their items to investigate effects of the strategic news frame on political cynicism. The items in this study are worded slightly differently to apply to a policy debate rather than a specific election campaign.

9 The questions were: ‘Sometimes politics is so complex that people like me do not understand what is going on’, ‘People like me have no influence what the government does’, and ‘I think I am better informed about politics than most others’.

10 The news outlets were: television: NOS, RTL, SBS. Current affairs weeklies: Elsevier, Vrij Nederland, HP de Tijd. Newspapers: de Volkskrant, NRC Handelsblad, Telegraaf, AD, Trouw, Metro, and Spits

11 The stories were: European Parliament asks Commissioner for rectification (RTL, October 4, 2001); New fake-euro coins found (SBS, October 5, 2001).

12 The stories were: EU makes list of terrorists (Metro, October 2, 2001); Preparation for the euro in supermarket (Telegraaf, October 5, 2001); ESF funds to the Netherlands (NRC, October 6, 2001).

13 Self-reported exposure measures are often criticized. Participants were cued with the day, date, and time of broadcast (in the case of television) to obtain as reliable estimates as possible. Participants were re-interviewed over three consecutive weeknights, depending on which day they took part in the experiments. Participants interviewed on the last day were additionally probed for exposure to the previous evening’s news as this included a EU story.

14 A regression model with political cynicism as the dependent variable and ‘exposure to strategic news’, ‘political knowledge’, ‘political efficacy’ and interaction terms (exposure x knowledge) and (exposure x efficacy) was also tested. Since the interaction terms were not significant the simple but more parsimonious model is used here and presented as an ANCOVA.

15 Ten percent of the participants reported having seen either of the two television news programs containing EU news. A total of 44% of the participants reported reading a newspaper that in that week contained EU news on the front page.
Regression analyses with political cynicism and the number of positive, neutral, and negative comments respectively as the dependent variable and exposure to strategic news, political knowledge, political efficacy, and verbosity as well as the interaction term exposure x knowledge as predictor variables were also conducted. Since the coefficients were similar and none of the interaction terms significant, the reduced and more parsimonious models are presented here as ANCOVAs.

The week's news was heavily dominated by news about the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 events.

It should be noted, however, that Miller and Krosnick (2000) report an interaction effect between exposure and knowledge on their dependent measures whereas this study finds a main effect of knowledge.

Chapter 7

Peter (2002) moreover finds that the difference between positive and negative evaluations of EU actors is larger in countries with anti-EU parties or polarized elite opinion climate.

Agenda-setting addresses the relationship between the media agenda and the public agenda. Cohen (1963, p. 13) succinctly stated the core of the theory in his study of foreign affairs and noted that the press "may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling people what to think about". Following McCombs and Shaw (1972), more than two hundred studies have investigated the basic propositions of the theory (McCombs et al., 1997b; McLeod et al., 1994). Research on agenda-setting has expanded to include the full range of dynamic processes between party, policy, media, and public agendas (Dearing & Rogers, 1996).

For a review of the two approaches, see Cappella and Jamieson (1997, pp. 70-77).

The research for this project was carried out in Austria, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, and The Netherlands. Interviews with newsmakers, directors of key teaching and training institutions and with policy makers as well as members of the unions and the employers' organizations were held in each of these five countries.