1 Introduction

This paper discusses the use of frame analysis in comparative settings. I conceptualize framing as the process of answering the question “What is this a case of?” Empirically, I reflect upon the theoretical and methodological issues through examples from media debates on Euroscepticism in Estonia, Finland and Sweden (2000-2006). Is Estonian Euroscepticism framed as a kind of Ostalgia, an unwillingness to make a break with the Soviet past? Is Finnish Euroscepticism framed as transforming anti-Moscow feelings to anti-Brussels ones? Is Swedish Euroscepticism framed as a national superiority complex? What are the framing devices in newspaper articles that convey these and other frames? How do these articles discursively construct the phenomenon of Euroscepticism and situate it into the readers’ “cognitive schemata”?

Theoretically and methodologically, this paper seeks to answer the question “How do you recognize a frame when you see one?” In other words, it focuses on framing devices and the process of framing, as opposed to frames as an end product. I argue that frame analysis can and should be “close to the text”, thus resembling discourse analysis. The researchers should make their analyses more transparent by showing the reader how frames are constituted in the texts. I argue that the informative value and potential of the
framing approach lies in a qualitative analysis of *how* frames come to be, instead of counting the number of occurrence for specific frames.

## 2 Definition of framing

Ideas cannot be understood without context and framing is the process of placing ideas in a context. According to Sect. 43 of Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations*, "For a *large* class of cases--though not for all--in which we employ the word "meaning" it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language" (Wittgenstein 1953). In other words, if we want to know the “meaning” of a certain concept, we have to look at how it is empirically used. Therefore, instead of seeking to arrive at a normative definition of “Euroscepticism”, I am looking at how it is *used* in media texts.

Goffman’s original definition of “frame” is somewhat ambiguous and it has lent itself to various interpretations:

> “I assume that definitions of a situation are built up in accordance with principles of organization which govern events - at least social ones - and our subjective involvement in them; frame is the word I use to refer to such of these basic elements as I am able to identify. That is my definition of frame” (Goffman 1974: 10-11).

Most current frame analytical works follow some modification of Robert Entman’s conception of framing:

> “To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient, “in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation” (Entman 1993: 52)

This is a refinement of an earlier definition by Todd Gitlin, who introduced frame analysis to political communication studies and saw frames as:

> “principles of selection, emphasis and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters” (Gitlin 1980: 6)
More recently, Charlotte Ryan has offered a definition that addresses both *frames* and *framing*. According to her, “Framing is the process of mapping one’s social reality, whereas a frame is the product of that mapping—the underlying thought organizer through which we relate events and stories (Ryan and Alexander 2006: 567).

I consider frame analysis to be a type of research question, rather than a methodology. The methods have to be borrowed from other schools, such as discourse analysis and content analysis. Frame analysis should be primarily inductive, as its informative value is greatly reduced by pre-deciding the frame repertoire to be looked for. In addition, the methodology for a given frame analytical study should be derived inductively, through a reading resembling grounded theory, originally put forth by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (Glaser and Strauss 1967).

### 3 Relation of frame analysis to agenda setting and priming

Frame analysis appears similar to the related approaches of agenda-setting and priming. However, there are some important differences. While agenda-setting and priming are based on the theoretical assumption of causal logic, frame analysis is essentially constructionist (Scheufele 2000). Agenda-setting concerns the amount of attention an issue receives in the media, while priming analyses look at how people evaluate politicians and other public figures in relation to which aspects of their activities have received more media coverage. For example, if a politician advocates two policies – one extremely popular and one exceptionally unpopular, the audience is likely to focus on the policy that receives more media attention and evaluate the politician in the light of her or his view on that policy. Frame analysis rejects the idea that the popularity of any given policy would be immanent in any way, but instead believes that the popularity of any policy is largely dependent on how it is presented to the public. As Shakespeare would have it, “there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so (Hamlet Act 2, scene 2, 239-251). If Hamlet frames Denmark as a prison, for him and for everyone whom he can convince of this frame, it is a prison.
In an analysis of the framing of Euroscepticism, one may keep these two approaches – agenda-setting and priming – in mind and notice that Euroscepticism is more on the “agenda” in the *Dagens Nyheter* than in the *Helsingin Sanomat* and the least in the *Postimees*. One may also hypothesize that if certain politicians primarily appear in the media in the role of “Eurosceptics”, the audiences are likely to evaluate them against the background image they have developed of Euroscepticism, rather than the national level political activities of those individuals. Current frame analytical research tends to place too strong an emphasis on the agenda-setting function of frames, i.e. the focus is more on frame *counting* than frame *detection*.

### 4 Relation of frame analysis to discourse analysis

Frame analysis also appears very similar to discourse analysis. In fact, there is considerable overlap. As the Finnish media scholar Erkki Karvonen has suggested, the two are as similar as fish are to dolphins (Karvonen 2000). I will proceed to offer an empirical and a normative comparison of the two traditions.

Following Wittgenstein’s definition of “meaning” cited above, both frame and discourse analyses should be understood according to how they are actually used in research. Frame analysis is as frame analysis does. The same applies to discourse analysis. If scholars do certain kinds of research and call it either discourse or frame analysis, all of these are discourse and frame analyses, despite the considerable variations and even possible contradictions in the researchers’ approaches. I call this the *empirical* dimension to determining the content of the two approaches. On the basis of the frame and discourse analytical studies that have come to my attention, the former are primarily quantitative, while the latter are frequently qualitative. Frame analyses often rely on some form of content analysis, reducing the messages in the texts into propositions, while discourse analyses—especially CDA—tend to do more justice to linguistic detail in the texts. As for ontological underpinnings, at some level, most frame and discourse analyses are constructionist, as they assume texts to have an influence of how people perceive the world around them, rather than simply being reflections on how the world *is*. However, at
the level of methodology, frame analysts tend to be more method-driven, while discourse analysts engage in more problem-driven research (Howarth 2005: 318).

From a *normative* or prescriptive angle—i.e. following the theorizations of the two approaches—there are some who see frame and discourse analysis as nearly identical and others who prefer to keep them separate. However, there is nothing in the previously presented definitions of frames and framing that would not allow for problem-driven qualitative research. Nor is it in any way explicitly forbidden to engage in quantitative method- and theory-driven content analyses. It is my own personal opinion, however, that is more consistent to follow a constructionist line in both one’s ontology *and* epistemology or to be rationalist/realist/causal/positivist in both. And as frame analysis prescribes a constructionist ontology, I prefer to stay with a constructionist epistemology as well.

### 5 The potential of comparative frame analysis

While there are several studies on framing the European Union (e.g. de Vreese 2003; Díez Medrano 2003), this paper is the first to my knowledge to address the framing of *Euroscepticism*. It focuses on large daily newspapers from three countries: Estonia (Postimees), Finland (*Helsingin Sanomat*) and Sweden (*Dagens Nyheter*). Euroscepticism makes an intriguing topic for frame analysis, since the media mostly frame it in very subtle and indirect, yet powerful ways. How does the researcher recognize the frame, which is often “between the lines”? The comparative setting provides an opportunity to address an under-researched area in frame analysis, namely the *cultural contingency of frames*. Too often comparative frame analyses make the questionable assumption that frames are “universal”, seeking to compare the incomparable.

Comparative frame analysis has the potential to lead to very interesting results, if the researcher explores frames and framing processes in their social/political/cultural contexts. As Carragee and Roefs have argued, recent frame analytical studies have “neglected power” (Carragee and Roefs 2004), i.e. they have failed to grasp the other
possible frames and framing processes that the writers had at their disposal, but consciously or unconsciously chose not to use. Frames are not readily available in texts for the coder to pick them like ripe fruit. Indeed, framing frequently goes unnoticed both by ordinary readers and researchers. As frames are deeply intertwined with culture, their use appears very natural (Gamson 1992). Ordinary readers usually spend less time reading the text and contemplating the various possible framings. Researchers, however, are – and should be – better equipped to detect framings, but overly formalized quantitative methods do not allow them to fully use that potential. Therefore, while formalized codebooks allow for reliability and validity, they leave a lot of the information untouched. Framing takes place in a myriad of ways and those ways of conveying a frame in themselves constitute an interesting part of research. Since “frames may […] be regarded as a power mechanism in their own right” (Van Gorp 2007: 63), explicating the subtle ways, in which frames are used in texts serves to uncover these power processes.

Politicians and researchers alike expect Euroscepticism to have an important influence on the upcoming European Parliament elections. However, Euroscepticism in those discussions is taken as a given – the only “problem” appears to be how to reduce the levels of Euroscepticism and how to find out its causes. These quantitative-causal analyses do not address the process through which Euroscepticism is constructed in discourse and other social practices. In this paper I discuss the arbitrariness of the concept/phenomenon of Euroscepticism, which becomes particularly evident in a comparative setting. Euroscepticism acquires its content through a variety of ideologies informing an array of possible frames used in different national settings to make sense of European integration, national identities, social relations etc. The meanings of Euroscepticism are constructed against the backdrop of the collective history-based identity narratives in each country.

Comparative frame analysis should do justice to the relational and contextual nature of descriptors attached to the phenomenon being studied. The descriptors of Eurosceptics in a given country only make sense in relation to other culturally and socially possible descriptors. There is a difference between calling Swedish Eurosceptics conservatives
who long for pre-EU accession times and suggesting the same about the Estonians not only because the two countries joined the EU nine years apart, but more importantly because the pre-accession period is conceptualized in radically different ways in the two countries. While for many Swedes the Cold War era was a time of prosperity and great pride of their national achievements, the Soviet occupation until 1991 and the subsequent taxing periods of transition and consolidation conjure very different images in the minds of Estonians.

By way of example, in the following section I will discuss the role of historical contexts that determine the repertoire of possible frames.

5.1 **What does “Russia” mean for Estonians, Finns and Swedes?**

The Estonian *Postimees* offers two scenarios for Estonia’s future: the EU and Russia (e.g. PM 2002-07-05, PM 2003-08-14). By excluding other possible framings, the banner word EU easily defeats the stigma word Russia\(^1\). *Helsingin Sanomat* conspicuously avoids the topic of Finland-Russia relations in the context of EU integration, only once referring to “security political dimensions”, which are “still evident” in the Finnish attitudes toward the EU (HS 2001-03-04, HS 2001-05-27). In the *Dagens Nyheter*, Sweden-Russia relations are not discussed, nor would such a framing make sense in the Swedish political/historical/geographic context. On the other hand, it also makes more sense for the Estonian Eurosceptics to compare the European Union to the Soviet Union and several *Postimees* articles deride the Eurosceptics for doing so (PM 2002-06-01, PM 2001-05-02, PM 2005-04-30, PM 2003-07-04, PM 2001-05-19). The relatively recent Soviet occupation is a much more accessible script for the Estonians than the WW II battles against Russia are for the Finns. It also allows for a framing of Eurosceptics as the “fifth column” that would be unthinkable in the Finnish or Swedish contexts:

\(^{1}\) See Hermanns 1994 for a discussion of banner words and stigma words.
“these Eurosceptics are mainly former Soviet functionaries” who aim to keep Estonia in the Russian sphere of influence (PM 2001-02-21).

Another article juxtaposes pro-EU politicians and Eurosceptic activists:

"The issue is whether one trusts [those who know the content of the accession treaty, i.e. politicians and bureaucrats] or not. Or whether one trusts clowns and instigators working for forces hostile to Estonia. One may only hope that the Estonian people do not let the jumping bunnies fool them and trust their common sense based on knowing the history (emphasis added)” (PM 2003-08-12).

Here, the Russian threat is implied but not stated. Also, it is insinuated that the Estonian Eurosceptics are in the service of Moscow. The first “hostile force” that comes to the Estonians’ minds is Russia and “knowing the history” is quickly interpreted as remembering the Soviet occupation.

In a similar vain, another Postimees article indirectly suggests that all Estonian criticism toward Western Europe and the United States serves to make Russians happy.

“When some (very smart) man or woman criticizes the Europeans with their union (or even more so the Americans with their united states) […], it is clear who get the most joy out of it” (PM 2003-10-02).

A third article is equally circumlocutory in presenting its message that Estonia is located too close to dangerous Russia to be able to afford Euroscepticism. The implied argument is that if one does not vote for joining the EU, one is supporting Russian imperialism.

"It is good to be a "Eurosceptic". But it is especially good to be a "Eurosceptic" in Switzerland, filled with pride regarding one's independence and the seven hundred year history of Swiss "Euroscepticism". The distance between Bern and Moscow is 2688 kilometers. Between the capitals of "Euroscepticism" and "Eurasianism" there are such buffer states as Austria, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Hungary and Poland and the last time the Russian army was seen in Switzerland was in 1799. [...] It
is good to be a "Eurosceptic" somewhere in Switzerland. You are surrounded by beautiful mountains, behind which there are buffer states, which have joined to form a confederation, which protects you from "Neoeurasianists" (PM 2003-08-25).

Neo-eurasianism is here understood as Russian imperialism and "Eastern Europe and the Baltic States form the "Western periphery of "Russian Eurasia"." Estonian Euroscepticism is not mentioned in the article at all, but the message of the article appears to be: "Estonians should not compare themselves to Switzerland, which can afford to be Eurosceptic because it is situated so far from Russia" (PM 2003-08-25). In response to the Eurosceptic argument that EU membership would end Estonian statehood, a Postimees opinion article provocatively asks whether “the end” will arrive quicker “standing alone next to Russia” or as a member of the EU (PM 2001-05-19)?

One Postimees article presents the “Russian threat” from an unexpected perspective: if both Estonia and Latvia stayed outside of the EU, they could only unite with each other, but in that newly formed state the “only problem” would be that its largest population group would be the Russians. “But in the end, what is so bad about the Eastern dimension?” (PM 2003-08-14).

It is also possible in the Swedish context to use the Soviet Union as an object of comparison, but it must be recognized that for the Swedish readers (as well as the writing journalists) the Soviet Union is a historically and geographically distant reality, thus conjuring up much more simplified pictures in the minds of nonaligned Swedes than the occupied Estonians or the Finns who lost their fathers and grandfathers in a war against Russia and spent the entire Cold War era in Finlandization. A Dagens Nyheter editorial calls the Minister of Culture Marita Ulvskog and the Minister of Education Carl Tham quasi-democratic, as they criticize the EU for not being democratic, but themselves did not reach their positions through people's votes. They are subsequently compared to the Soviet nomenklatura, who want to rule undemocratically (DN 2000-03-06).
6 Reflections on the role of the researcher

By adding a comparative (cross-national/cross-linguistic) twist to frame analysis, these different discursive opportunity structures (Ferree et al. 2002: 62) become more visible. Cross-linguistic studies, however, if carried out by several researchers, each of whom is a native speaker of one of the languages used, run the same risk as individual case studies: native speakers easily take the above-mentioned collective history-based identity narratives for granted, as they have grown up with these and are, thus, too familiar with them. Non-native speakers, however, seldom have the necessary fluency to analyze complex texts and may also be unable to detect culture-specific references because they are not familiar enough with the array of possible frames in this culture. For example, although many Europeans speak English as their second language, most of them cannot begin to compare their knowledge of British history and culture to the natives who are the target audience of the texts that are being studied. It is difficult to strike a balance between being adequately familiar with the target language and culture, yet avoid the pitfall of being or going native and taking these for granted.

My own study of the representations of Euroscepticism in Estonia, Finland and Sweden is a case in point. Having grown up in Estonia, I have acquired the linguistic and cultural skills of a native Estonian, but having spent most of my adult life abroad, I do not take these for granted. As for Finland, I have lived in Helsinki for five years and engaged in extensive studies of the local culture, language and history, yet my immigrant background and international experience prevent me from identifying myself completely with these and thus losing an analytical distance. Sweden has been the most difficult case for me to study, since I have never lived there and my language abilities are those of Finnish Swedish (although the differences mainly have to do with pronunciation). It might well be that I have been even more attentive and perceptive in my readings of the Swedish data, since nothing can “slip by” because I would take it for granted. On the other hand, I have probably missed subtle inconspicuous references that “more native” Swedes would have detected.
Thomas König has discussed intercoder reliability in crosslinguistic frame analysis (Koenig 2006: 64-65). In the light of my analysis, which was carried out by a single coder, the reliability should be 1, i.e. it should be expected that I approached each of the three sets of data in the same way. However, as I reflected above, even I as a single person necessarily approach different data in a different manner due to my background. Therefore, even if collaborating coders reach high degrees of intercoder reliability when coding texts in their non-native English, their take on native-language texts will necessarily be different. For this reason, I do not consider intercoder reliability the highest value to strive for in frame analysis.

James Tankard (Tankard 2001: 98) has warned frame analysts of “researcher fiat”, i.e. too strong a “presence” of the researcher’s own views, ideas and background in determining frames in texts. However, he represents a scientific tradition different from my own, as I prefer a more ethnographic approach where the researcher recognizes and appreciates the influence her or his background to the process and results of the research project.

7 Choosing the data

Choosing comparable texts from different countries is the next challenge. As Kopper et al have noted, virtually no comparative research on the role and characteristics of newspapers and other media in different countries exists (Kopper et al. 1999). This problem is often circumvented by choosing e.g. “liberal” or “leftist” newspapers from different countries for comparison. However, as “liberal” and “leftist” are bound to mean different things in different countries, such a criterion tends to rather satisfy the researchers’ desire for “rigor” than making the data inherently more comparable. In the current vacuum of actual comparative studies regarding the role of different national media, the researchers have to resort to simply describing the newspapers, based on the available information. The three newspapers I chose for my study share the common feature of enjoying the broadest distribution in their respective country. The Finnish Helsingin Sanomat has the monopoly in being the only national Finnish-language daily,
while the Estonian Postimees and the Swedish Dagens Nyheter have one competitor each (Eesti Päevaleht and Svenska Dagbladet, respectively).

The next challenge is choosing comparable articles from these newspapers for a qualitative analysis. While a quantitative study would allow for including all relevant articles, a qualitative analysis sets limits to the number of articles that can be read closely. As evident in the chart below (Figure 1), the departments in the Dagens Nyheter (DN), the Helsingin Sanomat (HS) and the Postimees (PM) are not directly comparable. For example, more than half of the DN articles that mentioned Euroscepticism (or any of the various synonyms) belonged to the Politics department, while neither the HS nor the PM have such a department. Unlike the DN, the HS and the PM have a considerable proportion of the articles in the Domestic and Foreign News departments. Extremely few of the articles in all three papers belonged to the Economy department, which indirectly paints the picture of Eurosceptics as not being economically inclined. The function of editorials in each of the three papers appears to be similar and since editorials are about contextualization and framing, these would have made for excellent comparative material, however, there were only 7 editorials during the period of 2000-2006 in the PM, which was not enough for meaningful analysis. Therefore, I chose the editorials from the DN and the HS and added PM opinion articles to its 7 editorials.

While news stories, which are the usual object of frame analyses, are more straightforward in their language, seeking to convey "what has happened" and contextualizing it somewhat, editorials and opinion articles have a different aim. Instead of focusing on the details of "what has happened", their emphasis is on contextualization. They are therefore much more vivid and complex. The main difference between editorials and opinion articles is that the former represent the official position of the newspaper, while the latter may include positions to which the newspaper would not subscribe. As for the letters to the editor department, it resembles the opinion department, but the difference is rather in the authors: those with a more "esteemed opinion" get their letters published in the "opinion" department, whereas "common people" get a shortened version of their opinion published under "letters to the editor".
A further challenge involved choosing a time period for the study. Since the representations of Euroscepticism in the media have not been studied before, there are no “natural” periods to observe. One might expect the newspapers to reflect on EU-wide demonstrations of “Euroscepticism”, such as the French and Dutch no-votes on the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe in 2005, but as my inductive approach proved, this is not necessarily the case. In the chart below (Figure 2-4), it is evident that the Estonian *Postimees* did not consider the negative referendum results significant for the Estonian audience, or at least did not discuss the issue as a sign of Euroscepticism, and the Finnish *Helsingin Sanomat* and the Swedish *Dagens Nyheter* paid only brief attention to the topic.

Instead, Euroscepticism is frequently discussed in association with domestic politics, thus making it difficult to determine a transnationally relevant time period. This is also the reason why the articles are scattered relatively smoothly along the scale, with only occasional peaks. As indicated in the chart below (Figure 2-4), I analyzed the period of 2000-2006, interested in finding out the events that sparked writings on Euroscepticism.
As one could expect, the euro inspired the highest number of articles in the $DN$, while for the $PM$ Estonian EU accession was the most exciting topic. The two referenda both coincidentally happened in October 2003, but the topic addressed was different in the two countries. Euroscepticism in the context of the 2004 European Parliament elections received considerably more attention in the $HS$ and the $DN$ than in the $PM$. 
Figure 2: Monthly distribution (%) of DN editorials and other articles, 2000-2006

Figure 3: Monthly distribution (%) of HS editorials and other articles, 2000-2006

Figure 4: Monthly distribution (%) of PM opinion articles and editorials, and other articles, 2000-2006
8 Framing devices in representations of Euroscepticism

In essence, frame analysis is about categorization. Ian Hacking speaks of indifferent and interactive kinds (Hacking 1999: 103-124). According to him, in the case of interactive kinds, the classifications interact with the individuals and groups so classified. Classifications of people are never “indifferent”, meaning that persons classified in a certain way would not reflect on that classification and the classification thus have impact on the way they perceive themselves and subsequently act. Even physical traits, such as color of the hair, the eyes or the skin, height and weight have certain social connotations and there are stereotypes of redheads, blue-eyed people, fair-skinned and dark-skinned, short and tall, fat and skinny. Classifications and stereotypes are important for the human mind, which is predisposed to seeing patterns even where there are none. In order to avoid mental chaos, it is vital for human beings to be able to see patterns, but problems arise when classification becomes “labeling”.

First and foremost, a phenomenon is placed in some category by giving it a name that people easily associate with similar-sounding phenomena. Secondly, looking at the lists, in which Euroscepticism is presented, is one way of establishing the categories. Thirdly, metaphor analysis is another important tool, as categorization may paradoxically be stronger through being subtler. As frame analysis is immanently about comparison of something to other known events/phenomena, metaphor analysis forms and essential part of it. Fourthly, I will address the role intertextual references. In the following section, I will discuss the results these approaches yielded in my analysis of the framing of Euroscepticism in Dagens Nyheter, Helsingin Sanomat and Postimees.
8.1 Terminology

Studying “Euroscepticism” as a social phenomenon is intriguing partly because of the variety of terms that are used to refer to it. The share number of synonyms indicates the societal relevance of seeking to understand the complexity of attitudes toward European integration. In this study, I am using the term Euroscepticism, since this is the most widely used term for the phenomenon in English. Of the three newspapers analyzed, only the PM makes frequent use of the term “Eurosceptic/Euroscepticism” (*euroskeptik*, *euroskeptitsism*), while the DN and the HS predominantly use other terms. I have argued elsewhere (Vallaste 2004) the term Euroscepticism with its synonyms places the people so described on the “no” side. It is psychologically easier to be on the “yes” side to be for something, not against. Therefore, “Eurosceptics” have tried to reframe their ideas and activities as being for democracy, national sovereignty, reform in the EU etc.

Particularly the writers in Postimees display an awareness of the negative connotations of the term Euroscepticism and seek to distance themselves from it through a discursive device that Jonathan Potter called “stake inoculation […] where descriptions are constructed to head off the imputation of stake or interest” (Potter 1996: 125).

“I voted against joining the EU. I am not a Eurosceptic” (*PM* 2001-04-16).

"I do not belong among Eurosceptics” (*PM* 2002-07-05).

“I am very European, but oppose joining the EU, yet I am not a Eurosceptic” (*PM* 2003-07-17).

Some Estonian Center Party members did not want to run for the European Parliament in the same list with “Eurosceptic” candidates. A high-ranking Center Party member called such an approach “undemocratic” in *PM* opinion article. However, she distanced herself from the “Eurosceptics” by declaring that she had signed “an accession-minded document” earlier (*PM* 2004-04-17).

In a Postimees opinion article (*PM* 2003-10-02), Eurosceptics were called with a newly invented name: “eiard”, roughly translated as “no-er”. Framing happens in the very use of this neologism. First of all, inventing a new word implies that Euroscepticism is
something new that does not even have a proper name yet. Secondly, the author uses a particular suffix, -ard, which has a specific function in the Estonian language. According to the Estonian Language Handbook, -ard derives disdainful labels for persons (isikunimetus) from verbs and declinable words. “No” is of course neither a verb nor a declinable word, so the word eiard is linguistically nonsense. Namely, the newly invented term is derived by taking the word “no” and adding a disdainful suffix to it. As this neologism was used only once, its function of creating a negative image of Eurosceptics was limited to that particular text and one could make the quantitative argument that it was therefore of little significance. My argument is, rather, that such subtle framing devices are so numerous and impossible to gather under formalized coding techniques that a grounded theory inductive analysis is much better suited. The DN and the PM use a linguistically neutral expression —“no-sayer” (nej-sägarna) (DN 2003-06-14, PM 2001-02-06) — but it implies a general mindset, rather than rational and specific criticism. Notably, these two terms contain no reference to the EU, thus giving the impression of an all-encompassing negativism.

EU-negativism (e.g. DN 2003-06-23, DN 2004-06-17, DN 2004-02-03) is a more focused term than “no-ers”, but the term “negativism” implies more than simply having a negative (as opposed to positive) opinion about a matter. Calling people critical toward EU-membership "negativist" does more than simply place them on the "no"-side. It also implies that they are irrational and unconstructive. In addition, using the term "negativism" gives the impression of a general mindset, rather than an opinion about a specific issue. Dictionaries define “negativism” as “a tendency to be unconstructively critical” or “behavior characterized by persistent refusal, without apparent or logical reasons, to act on or carry out suggestions, orders, or instructions of others”. Criticism towards the EU is, thus, presented as “unconstructive” and the “EU-negativists” appear to illogically, yet persistently, refuse to do what the EU-proponents ask them to do.

2 http://www.eki.ee/books/ekk07/
Similarly, EU-pessimists (DN 2004-01-24) should be understood as having “a the tendency to see, anticipate, or emphasize only bad or undesirable outcomes, results, conditions, problems, etc.” or subscribing to “the doctrine that the existing world is the worst of all possible worlds, or that all things naturally tend to evil.”\(^5\) In other words, their attitudes toward the EU should be seen as having little or nothing to do with the EU itself, but rather to be stemming from their own dismal mindset.

Several of the terms used are built using the –ism suffix (Euroscepticism, EU-pessimism, EU-negativism), thus making the phenomenon appear like an ideology. As Euroscepticism is not informed by a single ideology, much less constitutes one itself, such terms are misleading. They also lend themselves to the criticism that Eurosceptics are “split” and not showing a unified front.

### 8.2 Logic of equivalence

Ernesto Laclau has elaborated on the “logic of equivalence” (Laclau and Mouffe 1985). Discourses make certain phenomena with no inherent connection appear similar to one another simply by virtue of discussing them together. For example, the *Dagens Nyheter* makes no explicit statement regarding the nature of Euroscepticism in the following quotation, however, because of the other items on the list it appears in a negative, even disastrous, light:

> “Despite the hurricanes, terrorist attacks and political uproar in many capitals [the negative result of the French referendum on the Constitutional Treaty] is this year’s bomb” (*DN 2005-09-30*).

Being listed together with natural disasters, terrorism and political unrest arguably casts an even darker shadow on Euroscepticism than calling it a “bomb”.

Another example of the “logic of equivalence” at work appears in the Helsingin Sanomat, which declares that the Polish domestic politics is “chaos and nationalist populists succeed through EU-opposition” (HS 2004-05-21). At the simplest propositional level, this sentence suggests that Eurosceptic politicians are successful in Poland. However, the deeper implications of this sentence are manifold. First of all, Polish Eurosceptics are portrayed as nationalist and populist, suggesting that nationalists are likely to be populists and vice versa. Secondly, Eurosceptics appear as both nationalist and populist by association. And thirdly, these nationalist-populist-Eurosceptics appear marginal, as they are presented as being able to succeed only due to the unstable political situation in the country.

8.3 Metaphor analysis

Metaphors abound in the data I collected. Eurosceptics are compared to the “losing team” in sports and to debilitating diseases, while they are presented as aggressive and irrational when they use the EU as a “boxing sack” and a scapegoat.

8.3.1 Sports

All three newspapers compare the relations between the Eurosceptics and EU proponents to athletic competition. Sports metaphors are particularly frequent in the analyses of survey results. For example, borrowing from the vocabulary of running competitions, the “no-side” may be referred to as “catching up with” (DN 2001-06-07), “getting the jump on” (DN 2000-09-27), or “pulling ahead of” (DN 2003-06-28) the “yes-side”. Similarly, the “Euro-optimists” may be spoken of as “losing their advantage over” the Eurosceptics (PM 2000-08-04). Survey results may also be compared to a wrestling match, where one is on top of the other (HS 2005-05-29, HS 2005-05-10) or a ball game (DN 2001-03-25, DN 2003-06-14, PM 2004-06-15) with two opposing teams.

8.3.2 Disease

One way of framing Euroscepticism as a problem is using disease metaphors. An Estonian opinion article considers Eurosceptics to be suffering from mania grandiosa, because they believe that Estonia could stay outside of the European Union and be like
Norway or Switzerland (PM 2003-08-14). A Finnish editorial is a little milder, not presenting the Eurosceptics at a psychiatric but rather a psychological case. It suggests that psychologists would have good explanations of how people invent anecdotes to deal with the fear caused by distant and unknown threats (HS 2003-08-21).

While Euroscepticism is mainly presented as a sickness individuals suffer from, it can also be a debilitating syndrome for a country. For example, when Sweden was presiding over the Council of the European Union, a Finnish article depicted it as being “amputated” because it does not belong to the EMU (HS 2001-01-08).

Diseases, of course, also have medicines to cure them. A PM opinion article offers a “medicine” against Euroscepticism. The suggested medicine is “Eurasianism”, i.e. if people do not want closer integration toward the east (i.e. Russia), they should accept closer integration throughout the West (PM 2003-08-25).

8.3.3 Scapegoat and boxing sack

In the Helsingin Sanomat, Euroscepticism is presented as not so much being directed against the EU, but the latter being a convenient target for other dissatisfactions. According to the HS, the Eurosceptics use the EU as a “scapegoat” (HS 2006-02-28, HS 2003-08-21). Calling the EU a boxing sack (HS 2004-05-21) has several implications. A boxing sack is passive, yet strong enough to bare even the strongest blows. The boxing sack will not only refrain from fighting back, it will remain entirely unchanged despite the abuse. Furthermore, as those clobbering the boxing sack are actually angry with other “enemies”, they use the sack as a substitute for those real “opponents” (immigrants or structural changes). The article continues by praising the metaphor of the boxing sack by saying how fitting it is, since the “most successful and the most notable of EU’s Left populists” is the Polish Andrzej Lepper, the leader of the Samoobrona Party (meaning Self Defense), is a former boxer, who has a boxing sack in his Warsaw office. These extra details serve to add the stereotypes associated to boxers to the portrait of Eurosceptics.
8.4 Intertextual references

An editorial in *Dagens Nyheter* begins by declaring that the “demand for referenda on the EU’s Constitutional Treaty is going through Europe like a specter” (*DN 2004-09-02*). This could be interpreted in a very straightforward manner as a popular call in EU Member States for referenda, but it requires a more complicated interpretative process to draw conclusions as to the ways in which this sentence frames Euroscepticism. Firstly, the analyst has to recognize the Eurosceptics as the agents demanding the referenda (as the parliaments are expected to ratify the treaty unanimously). Secondly, this opening sentence draws a parallel between Communism and Euroscepticism and the analyst has to recognize the intertextual reference to Engels' and Marx's Communist Manifesto, which begins with the words "A specter is haunting Europe—the specter of Communism." Thirdly, the negative connotations of Communism that indirectly come to characterize Euroscepticism through this sentence have to be detected at an even more implicit level, based on a deeper understanding of the Swedish attitudes toward Communism.

Another example of making references to texts that the target audience is expected to be familiar with is evident in two *Dagens Nyheter* editorials that referred to a 19th century poem by Carl Jonas Love Almqvist, which is famous for its last line “Only Sweden has Swedish gooseberries.” The editorials paraphrase Almqvist’s poem by saying that “Only Sweden has a Swedish euro-debate” (*DN 2003-06-14*) and “Only Sweden has a Swedish EU-debate” (*DN 2004-01-27*). The June 2003 article is also entitled “Euro [should get] out of the gooseberry bush.” Almqvist’s poem declares Scandinavia—and especially Sweden—better than Europe, Asia, Africa or America and has come to symbolize a form of crazy old-fashioned nationalism that should have no place in the modern world. On the other hand, Almqvist’s ideas on gender equality were much ahead of their time and are received predominantly positively in contemporary Sweden as well. Almqvist is, thus, not an unequivocally negative character to refer to. In my interpretation, the references to

---

“the gooseberry bush” portray the Eurosceptics as nice and respectable people, who happen to be a little old-fashioned in some respects.

A similar compassionate and sympathetic (though, perhaps ironic) attitude is evident in another historical comparison. A *DN* editorial compares delegating decision making power to Brussels to the period in Swedish history when Sweden began to form in the Middle Ages and King Sverker from Uppsala started to rule over Västgötland and Småland. According to the article, “people from Västgötland and Småland [may have felt] the same aversion” toward the new rulers as modern Swedes feel toward Brussels (*DN 2004-06-18*). Again, in a somewhat patronizing manner, the writer suggests that history has to take its course, but some degree of resistance on behalf of the common people is to be expected and tolerated.

### 9 Conclusion

In this paper, I looked at a selection of framing devices that were used in the largest newspapers of Sweden, Finland and Estonia to frame Euroscepticism during the period of 2000-2006. I reflected upon definitions of frames and framing, which display no inherent disagreement, but offer continuously more comprehensive extrapolations on the content of these terms. Subsequently, I distinguished between agenda setting and priming on one hand, and frame analysis on the other, concluding that current frame analytical research tends to place too strong an emphasis on the agenda-setting function of frames. Frame analysis can take advantage of discourse analytical tools and is, normatively speaking, also compatible with it in ontological and epistemological terms. I discussed the data selection process in a frame analytical study at considerable length, in order to outline an inductive approach to data selection. Finally, I offered some examples of subtle framing processes and how these could be analyzed.
References


