

**The Coverage of the European independence movements from a Canadian perspective:
Comparisons of the francophone online press in Quebec with the English Canadian press on the independence movements in Scotland and Catalonia.**

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Abstract: This research paper provides the basis of a future doctoral thesis on the construction of foreign news. We aim to highlight similarities and differences in the online news coverage of the nationalist movements in Scotland and Catalonia in the Canadian Anglophone and Francophone press. Through a qualitative and quantitative content analysis of *The Montreal Gazette*, *The National Post*, *The Globe and Mail*, *Le Devoir* and *La Presse*, we attempt to show the frames used in the coverage of the political developments in both “stateless regions” from January 2011 to September 2014, when a referendum on the constitutional status of Scotland has been agreed on. In parallel to the analysis of daily online newspapers, we will use semi-structured interviews of journalists from each news organization to obtain more in-depth knowledge of the factors influencing the construction of news. Lastly, we want to find out to the extent to which the coverage on the nationalist movements in Scotland and Catalonia serve to revive the debate on the independence question of Québec.

Keywords: minority nationalism, independence, media effects, frame theory, agenda-setting theory, Scotland, Catalonia, Québec, discourse analysis, qualitative content analysis, quantitative content analysis

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INTRODUCTION

Justification of research and Academic Relevance

This research proposal has been elaborated on the basis of the requisites for validating the Master in Advanced Research in Social Communications of the Pompeu Fabra University. We have decided to focus on the recent political events in Europe of growing support for nationalist movements in Scotland and Catalonia. Having lived and studied in Montreal, Québec, Canada for an undergraduate degree in Political Science, I have grown conscious of the historical tradition of independentism in the unique Francophone region of Canada. My recent move to Barcelona has wakened an already present curiosity of the phenomena of minority nations in their quest for self-determination.

The academic purpose of this research proposal is to contribute to the already extensive literature on the construction of news and its effects on public opinion. More specifically, the overall growing presence on the political scene of nationalist movements reflects a growing mass public support in their favour, and a discontentment with the actual governments in power. If anything, the election of these nationalist parties has brought up the question of whether this issue has reached the public debate. In Québec, the Parti Québécois led by Pauline Marois has stated its will to undertake the steps towards self-determination, but without making it a priority. If the issue of sovereignty remains latent in the Francophone province, the debate remains outside the public sphere, which leads one to assume that traditional oppositions between federalists and independentists are shifting (LeMonde, 04/092012). In Catalonia, the governing party Convergència i Unió (CiU), who won the latest elections, also suffered a significant defeat to the leftist and nationalist party Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC), which many blamed on the unclear stance of CiU on the independence issue. Today CiU, with the support of ERC and other nationalist parties, has undergone the developments in the hope of setting up a referendum on the independence question by 2014. Unlike Scotland, which already has signed the agreement, and is today still debating on the exact and clear question to

be asked, Barcelona is still in tensions with Madrid who has been blocking any advancement for the sovereigntist cause.

The latest political developments in the regions of Catalonia, Scotland and Québec have shown to be quite restricted, and solutions are yet to be found. Certainly, the independence of Catalonia and Scotland will not happen tomorrow, as shows the overall public support in these regions that does not exceed 30 % of the population, according to opinion polls. It is a major improvement and it is certainly significant for understanding the current social and political unease in these countries, but it does not guaranty independence in the near future.

According to the classical liberal theory, the media is central in influencing individuals to exercise formal control through elections of governments and informal control through the pressure of public opinion (Curran, J.,1991; 27). The media distributes the information necessary for citizens to make an informed choice at election time, and therefore facilitate the formation of public opinion by providing an independent forum of debate. This is what many have called the “fourth estate of the realm” in reference to the media being the institution of the public sphere. How efficient is the media in fomenting the public debate on the issue of democracy and self-determination? Is there a convergence between the media discourse on the independence issue in both Scotland and Catalonia, and the ongoing negotiations for the setting up of a referendum?

By examining the online news coverage of selected Francophone and Anglophone dailies in Canada, we hope to see whether the media is encouraging the revival of public debate on the independence issue in Québec. Although the solution to the political unease in Catalonia, Scotland and Québec might not be full independence, we will look at the evolution of the news discourse throughout a four years time period and determine how the discussion changes, if it changes. Further, this research will contribute to the extensive literature on the mass media in Canada that has historically promoted cohesion and minimized the pressure towards fragmentation and disintegration. It is widely argued by researchers that Canadian media policy has also focused on making the idea of political independence for Quebec unnecessary or unattractive, by inciting the promotion of national unity (Raboy, M, 1997). The

Canadian policy in culture and communication has been one of the main arenas for playing out the paradoxical issues arising from the national question, reflecting the national inconsistencies of the country rather than its national unity (Rabou, M. 1997; 318). Given these assumptions on the state of the media and the question of the status of Quebec, our research will aim to add recent data on the media coverage of conflictual issues and if there is a convergence between the political developments in Scotland and/or Catalonia with the political developments in Quebec.

We have posed three questions that we will attempt to answer in this research:

- To what extent is the coverage of the independence movements in Scotland and Catalonia different in the Canadian online press coverage between French online news in *Le Devoir* and *La Presse* and English online news in the *Montreal Gazette*, *The National Post* and the *Globe and Mail*, from January 2011 to September 2014?
- How does the discourse of the Canadian media coverage on the nationalist movements in Europe evolve from the beginning of the study, January 2011 to September 2014, the date set for a referendum on the independence in Scotland?
- To which extent does the coverage on the nationalist movements in Europe serve to revive the debate on the independence question of Québec?

CHAPTER ONE

State of the Art

Introduction

The case of Scotland and Catalonia are very different in terms of their continuing fight towards independence. The Scottish National Party is much more advanced than Catalonia when it comes to the political developments necessary for achieving independence. After having obtained a majority in the Parliament, the SNP successfully passed a bill that will allow them to hold a referendum in September 2014. They are currently in the process of negotiating the formation of the faire and clear question that needs to be accepted by the Supreme Court of England. After that, a majority of Scottish citizens must vote in favor of the referendum.

In Catalonia however there is no real history of referendum, and the foreseeable ways to gain independence are under considerable institutional constraints. The demand for a referendum on the constitutional future of Catalonia was jointly proposed and endorsed by the Catalan government led by Convergencia I Unio (CiU) and the main opposition party, Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC), among others. Overall, almost 80% of the members of Parliament support the right of Catalonia to decide its own constitutional future, as the “Declaration of Sovereignty of the Catalan People” clearly shows. This declaration, adopted on January 23 2013, represents the start of the process towards the Catalan people exercising their right to decide their collective political future. It has been rejected by the Spanish government that considers a Catalan referendum to be in violation of the Constitution, according to the Articles 1 and 2 of the Constitution which provides that the “National sovereignty belongs to the Spanish people” and that the Constitution is based on the indissoluble unity of the Spanish Nation. In an attempt to stop the Catalan demand, the Spanish government

has gone to the Constitutional Court which provisionally suspended the demand for at least five months.¹

In parallel to this, the region of Québec has long affirmed a unique identity within the mostly English-speaking Canadian country. The recent political developments in Québec show that the independence debate is still a reality. In September of 2012, the Parti Québécois (PQ) won the provincial election, promising for the third time since its first electoral victory, a referendum to take the province out of Canada. The two previous attempts failed to pass, but the results of the 1995 referendum obtained a significant percentage point, making it to a certain extent, a successful attempt. The current PQ led by Pauline Marois is promoting a new referendum which will be difficult to obtain since she lacks a majority in Québec's National Assembly. Furthermore, the current polls in support for sovereignty near 30% and opposition to a third referendum close to 70% (Gagnon, 2012).

1. Defining Nationalism

The literature on Nationalism is so vast and extensive that it is very difficult to define this phenomenon. The specificity of every single state makes generalized conclusions impossible. This study will not intend to elaborate a comprehensive theory of nationalism or go into details about its origins. However, in order to understand the new forms of minority nationalism emerging from the economic, social and political transformations of the 20th century state, we need to understand the fundamental roots of nation-building. In a context of resurging nationalist movements, how do we explain this continuing power and why are so many people attached to their nations?

1.1. Definition

There have been several attempts at defining "Nationalism" in a vast literature that has grown substantially in the last thirty years. There are different areas of nationalism that have attracted particular attentions, such as whether nations or

¹ <http://www.publico.es/espana/454958/el-constitucional-suspende-la-declaracion-de-soberania-del-parlament>

nationalism came first, sub-nationalism and secession, and debates over different forms of nationalism. The study of nationalism became popular in the 1980s with scholars who introduced what is today accepted as the fundamentals of the study on nationalism; Works such as Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983), Ernest Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism* (1983), Eric Hobsbawm's *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780* (1990), and Anthony Smith's *Ethnic Origins of Nations* (1986) are considered the most well-known works of the era. A thorough review of all works is not possible here but a summary of the most recent books on nationalism can be found at The Nationalism Project (www.nationalismproject.org).

We will highlight the basic assumptions about what is nationalism and how it came about. There are several components that should be part of an ideal definition on nationalism, including the shared history, the language, the culture, the shared territory, and the nation-state. According to Smith, nationalism can be associated with several meanings; (1) a process of formation, or growth, of nations; (2) a sentiment or consciousness of belonging to the nation; (3) a language and symbolism of the nation; (4) a social and political movement on behalf of the nation and (5) a doctrine and/or ideology of the nation, both general and particular (2001; 5). Mill resumes very well the source of the nationalist culture and the feeling of nationality. He states:

Sometimes it is the effect of identity of race or descent. Community of language, and community of religion greatly contribute to it. Geographical limits are one of its causes. But strongest of all is identity of political antecedents; the possession of a national history, and consequent community of recollections; collective pride and humiliation, pleasure and regret, connected with the same incidents in the past (Mill, 1972; 391).

History explains a common experience, symbols and values, which do not have to be accurate according to Hobsbawm, since civic mobilization can be accomplished with invented history and tradition (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983). The collective memory maintains historical continuity by recalling specific elements from the archive of 'historical memory', and through which the community makes its own history (De Cillia, Reisigl & Wodak 1999). The concept of a common history has always been a central theme in the establishment of national identities.

Nationalism is widely understood as a response to modernization (Keating, M.1996; Gellner, E. 1998; Anderson B. 1990; Hobsbawm, E.J.1990). The theorists following this current argue that nationalist movements define and create nationalism, and that nationalism grew out of a state, with a common culture, customs and an official language (Gellner, 1998). Ernest Gellner, frequently cited for his modernist approach to nationalism, defends that the advent of industrialization and the development of the printed press enabled the spread of nationalist ideas within a state (Gellner, 1998). E.J. Hobsbawm agrees with Gellner that often the mass support in favour of the nationalist program occurs after the creation of a national state and as a consequence of that creation (1990: 12). Gellner understands nationalism as a political principle which holds that the “political and national unit should be congruent” or will arouse a national sentiment of anger by the violation or fulfillment of this principle, leading to nationalist movements (Gellner, 1998). These nationalist movements, according to Hobsbawm, were able to spread because of the expansion of the middle class and literacy (Hobsbawm, 1990; 61).

However some authors disagree about the surfacing of nationalism as a mere product of modernity, and claim that “ethnies” are precursors to today’s nations, and should be studied before the era of modernity up to collective identities and communities in pre-modern age (Smith, 2001). Others who called into question the theories of classical modernism on nationalism revealed the nation as an invented, imagined and hybrid community (Smith, 2001; 3). Benedict Anderson, in his work on *Imagined Communities*, reflects on the origin and spread of nationalism and argued that the nations are imagined as “sovereign, as limited and as a community” (Anderson, 1991; 7).

Culture is another important factor shaping nationalist movements. Just like Anderson, Hobsbawm understands culture as a way for individuals to share an imagined community, by providing symbols of identity for that community and a feeling of belonging (Anderson, 1983). Stuart Hall also emphasized the role that culture plays in the construction of nations and national identities. He described nations not only as political constructs, but also as ‘systems of cultural representations’ that organize both our actions and the perceptions of ourselves (Hall,

1994: 200). Nationalism entails a feeling of belonging to a community- the nation- of which the members identify themselves to a shared culture, history and territory (Guibernau, M. 2011). The importance placed on language is central to their notion of nation-building, since it is what consolidates a nation and fosters a civic community, political equality and mass participation (Keating, 10).

Finally, the ‘core doctrine’ of nationalism according to Smith is that “nations can only be fulfilled in their own states” (Smith, 1971; 21). Hobsbawn also agreed that a nation is a social entity only insofar as it is related to a certain kind of modern territorial state, or the “nation-state” (Hobsbawn, 1990; 10). Today, the classic notion of the nation-state is changing, in the context of increasing globalization resulting in the erosion of state territorial boundaries. Although these boundaries still exist, the free flow of people, goods and transactions within the European Union are changing the dynamics of the traditional nation-state.

1.2 Nationalism in contemporary era

The violent conflicts in the name of nationalism have tended to monopolize the studies on nationalist movements. However, several cases of nationalist movements have been undergone democratically. Montserrat Guibernau uses the term “democratic nationalism” when she refers to cases of nationalism which surfaced peacefully in what she refers to as ‘nations without states’ such as Catalonia, Québec and Scotland (2011; 99). This can be associated with the shift from a more ethnic nationalism to civic nationalism, whereby people support the same civic ethos instead of a narrow delineation based on blood (Duerr, 2012; 20). If nationalist claims are matters of absolute principle unamenable to negotiation and compromise, then there may be no resolution short of violence, especially where they are based on ethnic criteria (Keating, 1996; 19).

Civic nationalism includes all people who abide by the political creed of the nation regardless of their race, color, creed, language, gender or ethnicity (Ignatieff, 1993; xiii). On the other hand, ethnic nationalism asserts that nationhood is inherited not chosen (Ignatieff, 1993; xv). In other words, whereas civic nationalism is a collective enterprise of its members rooted in individual assent, ethnic nationalism is rooted in

ascriptive identity based on ethnicity. The clearest case of civic nationalism is that of the United States, based upon a founding doctrine contained in the constitution and in principle at least capable of assimilating immigrants from anywhere (Keating, 1996; 6). Most nationalist movements make both civic and ethnic claims depending on the circumstances and the audience. For example, it has been argued that the basis of national identity in Québec shifted from that of French-Canadian, an ethnic designation, to Québécois, an identity based on the territory of Québec and its institutions (Keating, 1996; 71).

Several arguments of the modern era point to the fact that nationalism results as an underpinning for market capitalism (Keating, 1996). Market capitalism has been accused of being socially disruptive and disintegrative because of the economic inequalities that arise and result in social and political inequality (Keating, 1996;12). This can be seen today through the large demonstrations of the population in Greece, Chypre, and Spain to name but a few. Some countries today feel marginalized by the economic transformations taking place in the context of the European debt crisis and mobilize to demand greater social justice. In this context, the “nations without states” tend to demand greater democracy for its people from the central governing authority. This partly explains why the nationalist parties receive increasing support under the promise of a better social justice if independence is achieved.

Nationalism is a political ideology (Guibernau, 2011) in which the objective is to guarantee the right of a nation to decide on its own of its political destiny. It is not uncommon to find varying perspectives on the future of a nation and its political status, within a same nation. Today the nationalist claims go further than the preservation of a shared culture and language, but aim towards political autonomy that can lead or not to independence (Guibernau, 2011; 97).

Not all nationalists are separatists and aim towards secession. In order to decide freely of the development of their institutions, ‘nations without states’ aim at the right to self-determination. According to Michel Seymour, self-determination represents the right of a nation to maintain, develop and create a certain part of its institutional identity (Seymour, 2011; 54). Seymour considers the different collective rights, such as the right of representation, the right to equal development, the right to autonomous

government, the right to a particular legal status, the right to asymmetrical federalism and the right of secession are all variations of the right to self-determination (Seymour, 2011; 54). This idea of self-determination is what led to the decolonization movements in the 1960s, and more recently the breaking up of the Soviet Union into independent states. The rights to self-determination for a people is also specified in international law, although it is not directly associated with the right to secession.

1.3 Is there a right to secession?

This modality of the right to self-determination means the right to possess a sovereign state. According to Michel Seymour, there are two theoretical currents; the theories which see the right to secede as a fundamental right, and the theories which accept secession on the basis of a right to reparation (2007; 59).

Allen Buchanan defends the right to secession as a reparation right, and refuses to recognize the right to self-determination as a primary right that a group or community deserves regardless of a past injustice. Buchanan focuses on the moral issue that stems from the unilateral secession, exercised without the consent of the state, and therefore, without any negotiation (Buchanan, 2004). He states that only when there exists a right to reparation because of a systematic violation of basic rights, can a nation unilaterally secede, such as the Kurds in northern Irak (Buchanan, 2004).

On the other hand, Michel Seymour offers a different perspective on the right to secede. Although he agrees with Buchanan on the idea that nations without states should not possess a unilateral right to secession, he holds that nations have a fundamental right to “internal self-determination”². If that right was to be violated, it would represent an injustice big enough to justify a right to secession (Seymour, 2011; 61). Regardless of whether one feels that the act of secession is legitimate or not, secessions has happened in the past and will continue to happen. For example, in 2006 Montenegro seceded from Serbia, in 2002, East Timor seceded from Indonesia

² Michel Seymour defines ‘internal self-determination’ as the capacity of a nation within a state to maintain its institutions and develop economically, socially and culturally within the surrounding state. It is also the capacity to determine its political status within the state (2011, 56).

and in 2011, South Sudan seceded from Sudan to become to 193rd member of the United Nation (Duerr, 2012; 25).

According to the Supreme Court of Canada, Québec could not proceed with a unilateral secession. The Court states that it would only be legitimate if it were supported by the people through a 'clear' referendum: "the referendum result, if it is to be taken as an expression of the democratic will, must be free of ambiguity both in terms of the question asked and in terms of the support it achieved" (Supreme Court of Canada 1998). However, the Court did recognize the obligation of the rest of Canada to negotiate with Québec in the context of a clear expression from the majority of Quebeckers to no longer be part of Canada (Guibernau, 2006;59). This obligation to negotiate is based on four fundamental principles; federalism, democracy, constitutionalism and the rule of law and the protection of minorities.

In her work in Canadian nationalism, Montserrat Guibernau aims to consider whether devolution, encompassing federalism, symmetrical and asymmetrical devolution, foster separatism. She argues that up to the present time neither Scotland, Catalonia nor Québec has witnessed the rise of a separatist movement sufficiently robust to force the independence of the region it claims to represent (2006; 69). In spite of substantial support in favour of nationalism, Guibernau sees a convenient accommodation through the device of particular devolution structures which have prevented secession and weakened pro-independence claims (2006; 69). She argues that most of the nationalist parties do not have a clear objective of independence, but rather they advocate for greater devolution. Today there are many difficulties in establishing a new independent state which involve the creation of a national project, mobilization around it and an ability to engage in policy making in a complex and interdependent world (Keating, 2001; 64). These are difficulties that Catalonia, Scotland and Québec need to face if they are to become independence. Québec would remain very dependent on the rest of North America and would have to renegotiate its place within NAFTA, just like the European regions would have to negotiate on their position within the Euro zone. Furthermore, Québec would probably be a rule-taker and have to accept rules made elsewhere, just like Catalonia and Scotland would be under the lead of the great European powers like Germany and France (Keating, 2001: 134).

Guibernau concludes her work by arguing that devolution is a sort of remedial strategy for states to placate the nationalist demands of some of their national minorities (2006; 69). She argues that the reluctance of Western nation-states to contemplate the possibility of new states emerging out of the break-up of their own territories due to the scare of the “domino effect” would result in a lack of international recognition on the status of newly independence minority regions such as Catalonia and Scotland. The Pro-independence nationalist movement in Catalonia is in favour of maintaining a partnership with Spain and its membership in the European Union. In Scotland, the political parties standing for greater autonomy obtain larger support than those advocating outright independence. The current debates show that devolution do not fully satisfy the self-determination demands but tends to weaken them due to the substantial powers enjoyed by national minorities. It will be interesting to see how this notion of devolution is discussed in the Canadian media discourse on the nationalist movements in Catalonia and Scotland, in relation to the more extreme solution of secession.

2. Nationalism in Canada: The case of Québec

The principal motive behind the nationalist fervor in Europe is the right to self-determination. Both the regions of Scotland and Catalonia have strong nationalist parties with mass support in favour of their independence program. The key variables involved in the evolution of nationalism in these regions include the existence of a preexistent ideology, the occurrence of a central state constitutional moment, an impulse from the sphere of sociological nationalism and the consolidation of a new leadership (Lluch J., 2010). Overtime, nationalist orientations move from the field of “sociological nationalism” to “institutionalized nationalism”, meaning it reaches the institutionalized sphere of parliamentary political and electoral competition (Lluch, 2010; 338). This is the case for both Catalonia and Scotland.

In this section we will first take a look at the political evolution of the nationalist ideology in Québec before examining the state of the media in relations to nationalism

in Canada. Furthermore, we will synthesize the main political developments in the case studies of Scotland and Catalonia in terms of the nationalist movements and parties in power in both regions.

2.1. History of Nationalism in Québec

Traditional Québec nationalism was not necessarily separatist, but very conservative and based on Catholic values (Guibernau, 2006; 52). The collective identity, based on a strong ethnic orientation, was first and foremost carried out through the French language, Catholic religion, common history and the territory (Keating 2001; 78). Firstly, the Québécois are a territorially concentrated linguistic minority in the dominant English-speaking North America. Secondly, the Catholic religion fostered a vision of French-Canadian identity originated in traditional values and opposed to modernization and industrialization. Thirdly, the cultural division of labour during the inevitable industrialization of Québec was marked by an expanding Anglophone bourgeoisie who gained control over the industries, and a rural conservative society who occupied the lower status positions (Keating, M. 1996; 66). This division led to a liberal francophone middle class who often dreamed of independence in order to preserve the French-Canadian nation within the federation. At this time, the nationalism in Quebec was ethnic in orientation since its main components were language, religion, common history and territory.

After WW2, Quebec faced pressure for economic, social and political modernization, under the governor of Quebec Maurice Duplessis. He was a reactionary nationalist devoted to preserving the balance of power in Québec at the expense of modernization (Keating, M.1996; 67). After Duplessis' death, the Québec culture, language and model of society were increasingly threatened because of the incorporation of Quebec into the North American system of market capitalism, which increased pressures to change (Coleman, 1984). This paved the way for the “*Révolution Tranquille*” (Quiet Revolution) in the 1960s, after the election of the liberal government led by Jean Lesage.

The Quiet Revolution was the period of modernization and catching up to other more advanced industrial societies, under a particularly Québécois form, and which re-defined nationalism (Guibernau 2006; 52). During this period, Quebec identity was reinforced through its principal carrier; language. The religious and class identity factors ceased to be and were replaced by a renewed national assertion carried by new institutions in civil society (Keating, M.1996; 67). In reaction to a strong discrimination felt by French Canadians in terms of education, employment and language, the nationalist movement was revived to denounce this unequal treatment (Guibernau, 2006.;52).

The efforts to integrate Québec as part of a pan-Canadian identity launched by Prime Minister, Pierre Elliot Trudeau (1968-79 and 1980-84) in an attempt to erase nationalist sentiments and incorporate francophone into the rest of Canada did not prove a success (Guibernau, 2006; 53). Trudeau was devoted to his nation-building project that included bilingualism, multiculturalism and a new federalism involving the patriation of the Constitution and a new Charter of Rights which aimed to promote national unity. This politic of multiculturalism had a double impact on national unity; it widened the gulf between Anglophone and Francophone Canadians, it has undermined the status of the French language as an official language and it has robbed Canadian identity of any official culture (Guibernau 2006; 55). It has been argued that Trudeau's plan involved the eradication of Québec nationalism and the end of asymmetrical devolution (Gagnon 2004; 127-49).

2.2. The Nationalist Party today

The failure of the multiculturalist policies under the Trudeau government resulted in the election of the nationalist party in Québec which endorsed sovereignty. The Parti Québécois (PQ), formed in 1968 under René Lévesque, was not before 1976 when it won the provincial elections and came to power under two principal currents; independentism and federalism. The political stance of the PQ aimed towards the independence (*souveraineté*) of Québec and has many times in the past evoked the right for the people of Québec to choose their own political destiny, as an inherent right to self-determination (Lecours, 2011). All other political parties in Québec defend the same idea of self-determination, even though they do not look towards

independence. Action Démocratique du Québec defends autonomy and the Parti libéral du Québec also fights for increased autonomy of Québec within the Canadian federation (Lecours, 2011; 122).

The status of Québec has traditionally been a recurrent source of tension between the federal government and the Francophone region. Several agreements have been attempted and failed because of the refusal of Québec to be treated like any other province of Canada. It was first described as a ‘distinct society’ within the Canadian federation in the Charlottetown Agreement (1992). However, the Agreement, which failed to pass, also specified the “equality of the province” which re-awakened a still vivid resentment, which would reemerge whenever Québec was treated as a province like the others.

The Government of Canada recognizes in principle the right of the people of Québec to choose the independence option. This is highlighted by its participation in two referendums organized by the PQ in 1980 and 1995, aiming at obtaining support in order to start the steps towards becoming independent. Although both referendums failed to pass, the results in 1995 showed a remarkable increase in the sovereigntist vote, sometimes associated with the resentment from the failures of the Meech Lake and Charlottetown Accords. The government led by René Lévesque at the time coined the expression ‘sovereignty and partnership’ which was understood by the redefinition of the relationship between Québec and Canada as equal, and did not aim for outright independence (Guibernau, 2006; 58).

The case of Québec has been looked up to by other nationalist movements in Europe aiming towards a referendum and a possible independence, such as Catalonia and Scotland (Lecours, 2011). The Supreme Court of Canada holds that in the case of a clear majority to a clear question during a referendum on independence, the government of Canada would be obliged to negotiate with the government of Québec in respect of democracy, constitutionalism, the right of minorities and federalism (Lecours, 2011; 123). This led to a law on the notion of clarity, which read that only in the event of a clear majority over a clear question will the government of Canada be obliged to negotiate on the process of independence. It is not surprising that this

law was widely criticized by the Québec nationalists who saw it as imposing limits on the right to the self-determination of the Québécois.

2.3 The Media and Politics in Québec

It is not a surprise that Anglophone journalists in the rest of Canada, as well as the federal government, have accused Francophone journalists in Québec of adopting a separatist bias. The author Kathryn-Jane Hazel looks back on the social, cultural and political forces that have shaped Québec nationalism and its media coverage, in order to understand the trend of historical engagement in the Francophone press.

According to Kathryn-Jane Hazel, the Québécois journalists have been more inclined to the tradition of engagement, not only as government watchdogs and critics but also as political analysts and even participants in the political process (2001; 94). While examining the role of journalists in the Québec nationalist movement, Hazel agrees with the lack of proof on the media's influence on political outcome, however she accepts that journalists play an important role in the promulgation of the national identity since they are part of the "middle class intelligentsia" that forms the basis of nationalist movements (2001; 95). The journalists have, according to Hazel, led as much as followed in the process of social change towards national identity in Quebec. She states two reasons for the bias in favour of separatism; The longstanding tradition of journalists as intellectual leaders in Quebec, and the social changes of the Quiet Revolution³. Indeed this tradition of opinion-based, analytical reportage was influenced in the earliest stage of the francophone press, by the media stars which were not "crusading investigative reporters", but editorialists and commentators such as René Lévesque, who were politically engaged.

Today, journalists are more cautious on issues around sovereignty. Francophone journalists consider both sovereignty and federalism as valid options that deserve fair treatment. On the other hand, the Anglophone press tends to treat federalism as good

³ The « Quiet Revolution » in the 1960s, marks an important turning point in the history of Québec. It is the beginnings of a new national Québécois identity, and a widespread popular revival of nationalism which climaxes in the coming to power of the Parti Québécois in 1976. Hazel explains that during this period, the Québécois journalists were sympathetic to the separatist party, which aroused anger from federal cabinet ministers who reminded journalists they were meant to promote national unity.

and sovereignty as disruptive and “evil” (Hazel, 2001; 99). A number of studies on the difference in approaches to coverage of political issues in Quebec than in the rest of Canada have arrived at the conclusion that francophone coverage was significantly different in content and emphasis from the Anglophone coverage (Siegel, 1996; 219-227). “Anglophone and francophone dailies covering the same event stressed different subjects, used different styles, reflected different interests in both editorial and news coverage and had different orientations on federalism” according to Siegel. He deduced interesting conclusions on the distinct ways the English and French press covered an especially important national issue in October of 1970; the Quebec Liberation Front crisis.⁴ According to Siegel, the francophone press was more politically involved, gave more analysis coverage than straight reportage, and emphasized constitutional rather than economic issues (Hazel, 2001;102). Furthermore, the newspaper *Le Devoir* provided a clear editorial leadership, whereas coverage in the Anglophone press was more fragmented without one editorial point of view (Hazel, 2001;102). Hazel also points out other important crisis of national unity that raised questions about journalism bias and francophone journalists; the election of the Parti Québécois in 1976 and the referendum of 1995.

The Boyle Committee was initiated in 1977, after the election of the Parti Québécois, which the federal government believed had been helped by what they thought was the pro-separatist bias of Radio-Canada, the independent, state-controlled broadcasting entity of Canada (Hazel, 2001; 103). Not surprisingly, the Committee found that the French Radio-Canada (SRC) was more interested in European and international news, while the English version CBC had twice as more news from the United States. However the Committee rejected the assumption of a pro-separatist orientation in the French language network of Radio Canada.

Apart from the Boyle Committee, the Erin Research study in 1995 did not show any bias or misrepresentation, either with regard to the time that the SRC and CBC allotted to political parties and sides in the referendum, nor with regards to the

⁴ The October crisis in Québec is remembered as a time of radicalisation of the nationalist movement during which the federal government and the radical separatist Quebec Liberation Front (QLF) confronted one another after violent methods of action of the QLF. During the October Crisis, the British Trade Commissioner James Cross was kidnapped and Quebec Labour Minister Pierre Laporte was murdered by the QLF.

directions and points of views that journalists imparted in their commentaries (Hazel, 2001; 105).

In conclusion, although there are unique historical social and cultural factors that have influenced the French press in the past, the bias leveled against Québec journalism by politicians and Anglophone journalists cannot be sustained. Hazel concludes by stating that if Quebecers have supported the sovereignty option in the past it is not because they had been manipulated by the media, because the issue of Quebec nationalism and how it is reported by francophone journalists is much more subtle and complex (2001:107).

3. Nationalism in Europe: The case of Scotland and Catalonia

The European nation has undergone a long process of integrating all its member states since its creation after the Second World War, in order to achieve a European Community. In this Community, defined by a single economic market and the free flow of goods, people, capital and services, poorer states have seen their economy grow while richer states found new markets for their economy. Despite the numerous advantages and benefits that the European Union brought to nation states, there is an increasingly widespread political dissent coming from people of nations who have been marginalized in the economic crisis. Today, the constancy of nationalist conflicts in many regions of Europe poses problems to the political unity that the European Union is trying to achieve.

This particular European context makes nationalism in Québec and in Europe quite different. More specifically, the significant number of democratic nation-states with a “national pluralism” within their borders, represent the biggest challenge to social and political cohesion. Most European states, like the United Kingdom, France, Spain, and Germany to name but a few, possess a cultural variety reaffirmed by the different languages still being practiced in certain regions. These last years, new political voices have emerged in the liberal democracies, denouncing the absence of recognition and accommodations in terms of equality, freedom and pluralism. Part of these new voices come from national and cultural minority groups who feel that their

identity or culture does not coincide with the identities of the dominant or hegemonic group in their democracy (Requejo, F. & Gagnon A.G., 2011;17).

As a consequence, these liberal democracies are trying to deal with this issue of recognition and political and constitutional accommodations for their national and cultural plurality. This has revived the question of self-determination in what Ferran Requejo calls “plurinational democracies” (Caminal, M. & Requejo, F., 2011; 13). However this appears to be a great challenge since historically states have promoted the assimilation of minorities in the name of political integration, which has increasingly marginalized national and cultural minorities in the name of “egalitarianism”, “universalism”, “popular sovereignty” and “non-discrimination” (Requejo, F. & Gagnon A.G., 2011;19).

Most nationalist movements within the European Union have placed less emphasis on outright independence, and have focused more on other formulations, emphasizing self-determination, insertion into Europe and asymmetrical federalism as discussed before (Keating, 2004; 369). These same nationalist claims have also varied since the aftermath of the Second World War, and have emphasized “territorial and inclusive nationalism and democracy, and not ethnic exclusiveness or racism” (Keating, 2004; 370). These civic forms of nationalism have proved to be more successful than extreme-right or ethnically exclusive movements such as the Italian Lega Nord or the Vlaams Blok in Flanders, which mainly fall back on an anti-European rhetoric (Keating, 2004; 371). The claims of self-determination in the European context are therefore less about establishing a separate state than about “constituting the nation as a free subject of political claims, with certain inherent rights, which then need to be negotiated in a wider order” (Keating, 2004; 373).

3.1. Nationalism in Spain: The region of Catalonia

The unification of Spain goes back to centuries ago, and yet is still felt to influence the current political debates between the autonomous regions of Spain and the central government. The Spanish state was born out of different entities (feudal states, principalities and kingdoms) united by the dynasties of the old regime through

successive wars, marriage alliances and accidents of fate (Moreno & Garzon, 2002). It was only in 1812, with the Cadiz Constitution that Spain was defined for the first time as a sociopolitical concept, as a community called the "Spanish nation". After the independence of most of its colonies abroad, the Spanish nation revisited its Constitution in 1837 to adapt it to the Peninsula only. Today the idea that Spain will remain a stable nation with unchanging territory persists, as is stated in the Constitution still in force since 1978 and that the autonomous regions contest. The Article 2 of the Constitution, establishes the "indissoluble unity of the Spanish Nation, the common, indivisible land of all the Spanish people" but does not define the specific borders, which changed a lot from 1812 to 1978.

The region of Catalonia has been marked for centuries by cultural and linguistic separation with the rest of Spain. The latest events for greater independence are only the continuation to a longstanding push against centralized authority. As early as in 1479, when King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella took control of the Catalonian region and its capital Barcelona, the Catalans were already contesting the Spanish intrusion (Guibernau, 2000). Repression reached its climax under Franco's dictatorship (1936 to 1975), during which Spain's minority languages were outlawed and especially Catalan. However the language persisted and since the 1983 Language Planning Act, Catalan has made a revival and reversed the damage inflicted by the past repression (Huguet et al., 2000). Out of the seven million Catalans today, nearly all can understand Catalan and about three-fourth can speak it, making Catalonia the Spanish region with the highest concentration of bilingual speakers (Lewis, S.C. p.413). This is also due to the program launched by the government to encourage the public adoption of the language.

Since this study does not aim to make a detailed explanation of the evolution of nationalism in Spain, we will only focus on the most recent events starting from the beginning of the transition to democracy after the death of Franco in Catalonia. For a complete summary, we will look at the article by Montserrat Guibernau entitled *Images of Catalonia* (2004) in which she details the political scenario set up by the 1978 Constitution in a first part. In 1978, the new Spanish Constitution decentralized Spain and gave wide latitude to the 17 regions known as autonomous communities. Four of these regions – Catalonia, the Basque Country, Galicia and Andalusia- have

historical distinctions which they argue gives them additional rights of self-government. Further, Guibernau discusses the Statute of Autonomy given to Catalonia in 1979 and then focuses in a third part on the Catalan nationalist parties emphasizing their different political ideology. This section will provide us with a more detailed examination of CiU's nationalist discourse based on the defence of non-violent nationalism and aiming at the development of the Catalan identity, without stating clear independence objectives from Spain (Guibernau, 2004).

Just like the Catalans, the Basques have a long history of nationalism and more specifically separatism. This indigenous ethnic group is the only pre-Aryan race- and has the only pre-Indo-European language- still surviving in Western Europe, and it has claim to self-rule which date back to centuries (Guibernau, 2000). This reality is illustrated in the distinct Basque language, Euskera in Spanish, which does not resemble Romance languages like Spanish, Catalan or Galician. The regional government's efforts aim towards pushing the Basque language in education and on television in order to increase the number of people able to speak it, which represents only half of the Basque population today. In the Basque country, language has come to symbolize the radical's struggle against the central government. The Basques nationalist movement is the most radical in the region, and remains very potent in politics since the 1880s. It's ethnic component, compared to the civic nationalism of Catalonia, has added the factor of violence in their quest for self-government. Sabino Arana, the founder and leader of the Basque Nationalist Party believed that nationhood was based neither on language nor on territory, but on race. In the 1950s, Euskadi ta askatasuna (The Basque Country and Freedom) was created. This movement gradually evolved into a terrorist organization with separatist, irredentist and revolutionary social ends (Smith, 2010). The nationalist paramilitary group launched a series of terrorist attacks against the central government.

In 2007, negotiations between Prime Minister Zapatero's government and the center-left government of Catalonia led to the recognition of the 'national character' of Catalonia, although it did not go as far as to define it clearly as a 'nation'. The Basque country also wishes to reform their relationship with the Spanish state, which has encouraged the radical nationalists (Herri Batasuna's ETA) to take up arms for the establishment of an independent Basque state. On the other hand, the Partido

Nacionalista Vasco wants to redefine the relationship with Spain through peaceful means. This was put into place through a system of ‘sovereignty-association’ which Québec nationalists had also attempted in Canada (Loughlin, 2011; 48). John Loughlin states that the root cause lies in the conflicting interpretations of democratic legitimacy and nationhood; for Catalans and Basques it derives from their own nation, whereas for Spanish nationalists of the entire political spectrum, it is derived from the Spanish nation (2011; 48).

Today the Catalans (as well as the Basques countries) reject the description of themselves as ‘nationalities’ and claim full ‘nationhood’. The Catalan nationalist movement has historically had two dominant currents: federalist and autonomist (Lluch, 2010; 338). However these movements have evolved into new institutionalized political currents of independentism, espoused by nationalist political parties like Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (Lluch, 2010; 338). Formed in 1931 by Francesc Macia, ERC was a radical-left party, anticlerical and republican, that called for constitutional change and led the government of the Generalitat during the Second Republic (1932-1939) (Keating, 1996; 124). Inside ERC, there are still internal differences between those that think in federal or confederal terms – meaning limited sovereignty – and the more radical and straightforward independentists.

The governing party in power today, CiU, came about with the unification of two nationalist parties in 1978; *Convergència Democràtica de Catalunya* with a liberal ideology of center right on the political spectrum and *Unió Democràtica de Catalunya* with a christian democratic ideology. The party governed Catalonia uninterruptedly under Jordi Pujol from 1980 up to 2003, when the *Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya* (PSC) obtained a majority of votes. In the elections of November 2012, CIU came out victorious again and recuperated the leadership of Catalonia. It currently enjoys a majority of seats in the autonomous parliament, with the support of ERC. In a context of economic crisis and rejected fiscal pact with the central government, Arthur Mas called the last elections after a massive public demonstration on September 11th in favour of independence. Although he expected to gain a full majority after having enunciated his desire to resolve the issue of the status of Catalonia, he lost support from a part of the population who shifted to a more independentist stance by voting for ERC.

The Catalan sense of national identity, which has grown stronger over the last twenty years, represents a dual identity as a distinct nation within Spain and with a strong commitment to Europe. The bearers of nationality are the language, the institutions and the history of Catalonia rather than any myth of common ancestry, which gives it a strong civic dimension (Keating, M. 1996; 161). The separatist sentiment is weak, unlike in the Basque country, but this does not mean that the strong feeling of self-determination is eroding, on the contrary, according to a recent article from *La Vanguardia* in which Arthur Mas is quoted stating that there is no deviation from the main compromise of bringing about a consultation on the constitutional future of Catalonia (Barbeta, J. 11/06/2013).

There is a key difference between Catalonia and Québec on the legal process, since the Spanish state refuses categorically the idea of self-determination and argues in favour of “territorial integrity”, another central idea of international law. In Spain, many Basques, Catalans and some Galicians question the legitimacy of the Spanish Constitution which defines Spain as ‘one and indivisible nation’ and which adds ‘regions and nationalities’ normally taken to refer to Basque Country, Galicia and Catalonia (Loughlin, 2011;48).

Catalan nationalism is rooted in history, and according to Klau-Jürgen Nagel, the Spanish membership in the European Communities has provided a new opportunity structure for Catalan nationalists (2004; 4). Mainstream nationalism rooted in a historical opposition to a centralist dictatorship saw European integration as a modernization process and an ally for Catalonia (Nagel 2004; 4). Catalans have always seen “Europe as a source of economic opportunities; as a source of support for their cultural and linguistic promotion policies in the background of a hostile Spanish state; and as a source of support for their self-government aspirations, with its commitment to the concept of the Europe of Regions and the possible alliances with other minority nations and regions” (Keating, 2004).

We can resume the Catalan issue of independence as originating from two main issues; the economic issue and the cultural issue. The cultural issue holds the Catalan language at its core, and the economic issue refers to the fiscal deficit of Catalonia

with the central state. The main obstacle to Catalonia is constitutional, in other words legality. Several political solutions have been proposed for Catalonia other than straightforward independence such a federalist solution used by Canada and Belgium in their nationalist question with Québec and Flanders. Is independence the only solution for Catalans?

3.2. Nationalism in the United Kingdom: The region of Scotland

The independence movement in Scotland is quite different to the rest of the European nationalist movements, and more specifically Catalonia, rooted in a historical quest to regain justice after years of oppression during the dictatorship. The Anglo-Saxon tradition tolerates a wide variation as in the United Kingdom, across its national territory, as opposed to the Napoleonic tradition, expressed most fully by France but also the Spanish state, which allows little variation (Loughlin, 2011:54).

Scotland represents a 'Union state' formed through a series of Acts of Union, different from both federal states such as the United States and unitary states such as France, and making it the least disputed example of a 'stateless nation' (Keating, 1996;163). In 1707, the parliaments of Scotland and England united to create a single state, and on the basis of economic benefits for Scotland who had become part of a the expanding empire. The outcome was a new parliament for Great Britain while preserving Scottish civil society and administration, including the Scots law, the local government system, and the educational system (Keating, 1996; 164). British policy was never that of forced assimilation, but more of a complex mixture of integration and distinctiveness characterized by territorial management and a series of devices to accommodate Scotland within the new state (Keating, 1996; 165).

According to Rokkan and Urwin (1982), there is still a great ambiguity between the notion of 'state' and 'nation', since the UK includes three nations – England, Scotland and Wales – and part of a nation (Northern Ireland is part of the Irish nation), but there is confusion as to whether or not there is a *British* nation. According to the 'Moreno question' on national identities, most English people define themselves as British and second as English, however most Scots and Welsh define themselves as Scottish or Welsh first and then British (Moreno, 1995).

In Scotland, the 'national question' is generally seen as settled in the sense that most of the people living in Scotland regard their society as constituting a 'nation' distinct from other nations and regions of the UK (Loughlin, 2011; 55). The political cleavage will therefore more likely focus on the relationship of the Scottish nation to the rest of the UK: The current status-quo, independence within Europe or a federal United Kingdom (Loughlin, 2011; 55).

According to Jonathan S.Hearn, Scottish nationalism has been mostly explained through two aspects: the role of uneven economic development between Scotland and England and the unique and well developed institutional infrastructure of Scottish civil society (Hearn, 1998;2). He believes that the deeply entrenched nature of Scottish civil society, especially with the development of the welfare state, is a key factor in the current strength of autonomist politics.

The Scottish National Party (SNP), founded between 1928 and 1934, recorded an increasing support from the late 1960s, parallel to a revival of home rule sentiment (Keating, 1996; 171). In the 1980s and early 1990s the nationalist sentiment strengthened and reflects changes in Scottish attitudes and a diminished effectiveness of territorial management as the British state was no longer able to deliver the goods like in the past (Keating, 1996;171). The SNP polled between 11 and 30 per cent of vote in the 1970s and 1980s, and in 1992 polled 22 per cent (Keating, 1996;171). The value of the North Sea oil became one of the reasons why Scots did not see the Union as an economic advantage.

5. Literature on the Media Coverage of Nationalist Movements

The relationship between news and nationhood has long been fertile ground for communication research. There has been numerous studies done on national media and nationalism, within particular countries, and more specifically in Scotland, Catalonia and Québec.

A large body of work has gathered around establishing how the media in particular contributes to this broad acceptance of national belonging (Billig, 1995; Brookes 1999). M. Billig came up with the concept of “*banal nationalism*” as a common form of shared national belonging found in the background of everyday practice. The news is one manifestation of this form of nationalism, due to its “routine deixis”, or the means by which a text expresses its spatial and temporal coordinates, such as the ‘we’ over the ‘them’, ‘here’, as opposed to ‘there’ etc...(Billig 1995:11). News maintains a silent assumption of commonality that relies on “our national consciousness to fill the gap” (Crystal & Davy, 1969:185). National narratives do not surface from nowhere and do not operate in a vacuum, but are rather produced and reproduced and spread by actors in concrete institutionalized contexts (de Cillia, Reisigl & Wodak,, 155).

There is also a wide array of literature on how the media constructs national identities. The most significant theories are based on Anderson’s conception of “imagined communities” which posits that nations – large communities- are social constructs existing in the minds of their members, and that newspapers play a central role in creating and sustaining an ‘imagined community’ among a specific assemblage of fellow-readers” (1983; 62).

Following Anderson’s conception of national identities, several authors have examined the influence of the media on creating national identities. National identities are “discursively, by means of language and other semiotic systems, produced, reproduced, transformed and destructed” according to Rudolf de Cillia, Martin Reisigl and Ruth Wodak (1999). In their work on the discursive construction of national identities, they take the case of Austria as an example of a case study to illustrate some of the prominent linguistic strategies employed to construct nations and national identities (de Cillia, Reisigl & Wodak, 1999; 151) under the theoretical framework of critical discourse analysis. They had two objectives; (1) to uncover the discursive strategies of dissimulation (aiming at the construction of national differences), and (2) the discursive strategies of assimilation (aiming at the construction of intranational sameness). In their research method, they included data from different social contexts in order to complement the elite discourse with ethnographic research, and concluded that the concept of nation is very broad and encompasses on the one hand a notion derived from the definition of citizenship and other legal and democratic institutions,

and on the other hand the traditionally culturally and ethnically connotated understanding of nation (1999; 169).

The work of Michael Higgins on the Scottish press is interesting for our particular study. He argues that the references to nation in Scottish newspapers on the elections come in a variety of forms and are driven by the constitutional disputes around the position of Scotland relative to the UK (2004). In particular, the article finds that newspapers engage in different rhetorical strategies that emphasize the Scottish dimension of the election, its British dimension or a negotiated position between the two.

Studies on the ways the media interpret and construct events and more specifically conflicts have showed that several factors influence the framing of these events in a particular way. Particularly relevant for our research is the work by Lindita Camaj on the media framing of Kosovo's status negotiations (2010). She bases her study on the most common generic frames in the current literature that major international news agencies apply when reporting on the same international issue over time. She proceeds to a content analysis of Associated Press, Reuters, Agence France Press and ITAR-TASS of the political discourse on Kosovo's final status over a two year time period, in an attempt to analyze the differences and similarities in the frames used by these news institutions and if they changed as the political discourse on Kosovo's final status evolved over time (Camaj, 2010:636).

Camaj's research is particularly interesting for the studies of media framing effects on cross-national comparative studies, because it draws attention to macro-societal structures and help us understand processes of transnational diffusion and globalization (Camaj, 2010:636). Her analysis of the content of international news agencies highlights important factors in the coverage of the press, since these news agencies are responsible for conveying a big part of the world's news. According to Boyd-Barrett, the broad reach and high level of professionalism of international news agencies have exercised many agenda-setting roles in the media sphere around the world influencing the very concept of news (1980). Camaj's work on international news agencies enables a deeper understanding of the factors that impact the choice of news frames.

Two frames that are commonly used are the ‘episodic’ frame and the ‘thematic’ frames, as identified by Iyengar (1991). An ‘episodic’ frame is event-oriented and ‘thematic’ frames present issues in general terms and are conceptualized as an abstraction. Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) have resumed these frames into five generic frames commonly used: (a) *conflict*, (b) *responsibility*, (c) *human interest*, (d) *economic consequences* and (e) *morality*. Camaj sees journalistic professional norms and routines theoretically as ‘event-oriented’ factors influencing international news frames, and journalists’ ideology and social norms as a ‘context-oriented’ factor (2010:638). She divides the generic frames conceptualized by Semetko and Valkenburg into this dichotomous perspective, and places the conflict and human interest frames as event-oriented characteristics emphasized by journalistic news values. On the other hand, the frames of attribution of responsibility, economic consequences and morality are seen as more interpretative in nature, since they emphasize the moral or religious aspects of the event, which is why she relates them with journalists’ cultures, ideologies and social norms embedded in contextual factors (2010:638).

Camaj’s analysis of frames determined that the event-oriented factors were the most common when framing international news. The results of her study showed that the conflict frame was most commonly employed by western news agencies (Reuters, AFP and AP), although there was a significant difference in the frequency with which this frame appeared. The AFP was most likely to use the conflict frame, followed by AP (Camaj, 2010:645). The second frame most commonly used was the responsibility frame, and the remaining three frames (human interest, economic consequences and morality) were not frequently used. The results also showed that the conflict frame was the most commonly used over the whole period of negotiation for the status of Kosovo under study, and specifically under the last two phases of negotiations. Furthermore, Camaj concluded that the ‘solution frame’ became more frequent during the last phase of negotiations, as opposed to the first phase when the Kosovo status issue was off the negotiation table. The consequence frame was also frequently used by the news agencies during the last two phases, which coincides with the possible consequences of a plan and other solutions that were proposed towards the end of negotiations (Camaj, 2010; 648).

Camaj was also able to show that the global homogenization of international news is a reality, according to the results of her study (2010). Media systems are more alike in their products, professional practices and cultures as well as their relationships with other institutions, according to Hallin and Mancini (2004: 25). One of the trends and consequences of globalization on communication systems is argued to be the increasing media commercialization, resulting in western news agency relating events in the same way, leaving aside deeper interpretations of events and conflicts. The data collected by Camaj suggested that the majority of articles were framed in an 'episodic' way by focusing on specific events without providing context or interpretation of the events of the issue in Kosovo in general (Camaj, 2010: 649).

The framing of European political issues is not heterogeneous between countries. Several studies have shown similarities and differences between the European countries in the reportings of elite press (De Vreese et al., 2001; De Sola Pool, 1952, Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000). It has been argued that framing is influenced by the national context in which journalists operate, and that the press tends to closely follow their national priorities when covering international events (Bennett, 1990). Further, international news must have an appealing format that emphasizes conflicts, disasters and events that contain familiar persons or situations (Camaj, 2010:648). The impact of framing in political conflict has been described as one of the most valuable research concerns in framing studies. According to Hertog & McLeod, during conflict, opposing groups will try to influence the social agenda and assign their frames to topics of social concern (such as the frames of independence vs. the need for unification) and to oppose the assignation of other groups' frames (such as the perspective of political parties more on the extremes of the political spectrum – ex: ERC's clearer stance on its desire to lead the nation of Catalonia to Independence (2001; 151). As Hertog and McLeod explain in their article on the different approaches to framing, there is usually a dominant frame that is culturally privileged (2001; 151). Wolsfeld & Gamson also agreed to this, and affirmed that one realm of media discourse is uncontested. In their article on Social Movements and the Media as interacting, they explained that social constructions rarely appear as such to the reader and may be largely unconscious to the writer, because they appear as transparent descriptions of reality, and are apparently devoid of political content.

Hertog & McLeod establish an interesting point about linking frames to groups in order to analyze social processes. This will enable us to see how the conflict is framed between nationalist regions and state governments.

Reframing of an issue or topic can have important consequences for the success of varied perspectives, and can render salient perspectives that are not usually given much attention. In their framing analysis on social protest and the media, Hertog & McLeod identified the dominant frame for a social controversy, and variations within that frame, as well as alternative frames promoted by challenge groups (2001; 155). Their second objective was to determine the array of strategies and tactics groups employ to influence social framing of a topic, and finally their third aim was to determine the popular reading of newspaper stories in terms of the ultimate framing of the controversy by the wider public. They identified that the two most salient frames were the riot and confrontation frames, through the analysis of the structures of meaning that include the core concepts of the narrative, the nature of the conflict portrayal, the emphasis or lack thereof concerning the social critique forwarded by opposition, the portrayal of the opposition themselves, metaphors, and the role assigned to bystanders (2001; 156). They conclude that frames establish the context, the major tenets prescribed, the individuals, groups and organizations are assigned the roles of protagonists, antagonists or spectators, and the legitimacy of varied strategies for action is defined (Hertog & McLeod, 2001; 147). This enables the interpretation of unfamiliar ideas and issues to be driven by the frame.

According to Wolsfeld & Gamson, leadership, or the role of the media in influencing who has standing in the movement, is a possible effect of the media on movements. The media influence internal movement leadership by certifying some people or groups and ignoring others (1993; 124). We will examine who is the media-designated leaders, which he states usually obtain ‘celebrity status’.

The frame of spectacle is one which attracts much attention, and has been the focus of numerous studies. Indeed visual spectacle is high in entertainment value. Movements that want to keep the spotlight of media organizations will adopt action strategies that

provide strong visual material, such as the September 11th protests in Barcelona for making Catalonia the next state of the European Union.

Following the notion of framing as meaning construction, Benford & Snow described this process as implying agency and contention; agency because what is evolving is the work of social movement activists, and contentious because it involves the generation of interpretive frames that not only differ from existing ones but may also challenge them. They referred to the result of this framing activity as “collective action frames” (614).

In light of these previous research on framing international news events, we will attempt to resolve the following several questions. First, we will determine the frame that the Canadian online press uses most frequently when reporting on the nationalist movements in Scotland, as well as in Catalonia. Secondly, we will establish whether these frames vary between the news coverage devoted to Scotland and to Catalonia. Finally we want to see if the frames vary between English-language and French-language news agencies under study.

The evolution of frames over time is also important to our study, however less research has focused on long-term analysis of frames. It has been proved that the media often emphasize different aspects of the event over time during the event’s life span (Chyi & McCombs, 2004). Frames that are embedded in culture have a persistent character and change very little over time until a major event happens that can eventually alter social attitudes (Camaj, 2010:639). According to this literature on framing over time, we will also attempt to see if the frames used by the online press organizations under study change over time, from two distinct time period defined in advance around major “turning point events” that occurred between January 2011 and September 2014. We will look at the evolution of the framing of the nationalist movements by the media in an attempt to see if the press portrays the central governments as reluctant to change the status quo, or on the other hand as increasingly inclined to new political solutions other than independence for Scotland and Catalonia.

We will attempt to answer these questions and establish conclusions on the state of the Canadian media in relations to international news, and particularly the political issues around nationalism in Spain and the UK. We will complement the results of our framing analysis with the perceptions from our semi-structured journalists interviews, and a content analysis of the commentaries and reactions to news articles selected. This last part is significant in order to understand the reactions of the Canadians and Quebecers on the issue of independence of minority nations abroad.

5. The Canadian Media Environment

The media has several responsibilities in the western democratic countries, one of which is the implantation of the values of good citizenship and the other the dissemination of the news, opinion and debate necessary for the proper functioning of a democratic government. It has been argued that in Canada, these two responsibilities are not always congruent, and that governments have looked to the media to foster a sense of unity and identity to unite together a vast and disparate nation (Vipond M., 2011; 133).

Canada follows the liberal journalist tradition, often called the Anglo-American model of mass media, which represents a politically neutral stance of newspapers and the broadcasting industry (Hallin, D.C & Mancini, P., 2004a). Hallin & Mancini argue that although the term ‘neutral’ is used to describe the Canadian media, it does not necessarily mean it is ‘value-free’ or without a point of view, but mostly reflects their ‘catchall’ position, cutting across the principle lines of division between the established political forces in society to attract readers from the whole political spectrum (2004; 210).

Today the mass media in Canada is mostly owned by private-ownership resulting in high levels of concentration in the hands of a few big corporations. Indeed the state of the media in Canada is very different from the partisan activity of the beginning of the 19th century in Quebec, and the direct links between political parties and media outlets

have basically eroded (Vipond, M. 2011; 133). However this does not mean that the media is not important to politics.

The Canadian media remain divided into two linguistic sections. The print media is divided between French and English, just like the television and broadcasting media. According to Rowland Lorimer, the country is divided into two distinct markets in publishing with little flow of material in between. Arthur Siegel has pointed out the major differences between the two linguistic sections of the country in terms of styles, coverage and interest, in his comparative study of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the Société Radio-Canada (SRC) in 1977. Fletcher argues that the political events are interpreted in a radically different manner in the Francophone and Anglophone press, in his report of the Royal Commission on Newspapers (1981). Finally, the special Committee of the Sénat on the means of communication at the beginning of the 1970s in Canada concluded that “the traditions, the audience preferences, the mythologies, the economics of publishing and broadcasting, all were shaped by the French fact” (Choquette, 2011; 135).

According to Eléna Choquette, the French Canadian journalism culture is influenced by its colonial and contemporary French heritage and the current imperial sociopolitical situation of Québec, resulting in a greater political engagement (2011; 136). This vision contrasts with the North American professionalization of journalism closely associated to political neutrality and the dominant form “objectivity” as the central notion of journalism (Hallin, D.C & Mancini, P., 2004; 219). Objectivity is the idea that news should not be opinionated, both from journalists or media owners. It is believed that have been widely accepted in Liberal countries for economic reasons based on the need for a wider readership with the increasing dependency on advertising revenues. This, in theory, should guarantee a factual press free of any political opinion. However the relation between the state and the media is not only a matter of regulation, subsidy or state ownership, and also involves the flow of information including symbols and interpretive frames which tends to stress an adversary relation between the media and the state (Hallin, D.C & Mancini, P., 2004; 233). In other words, the professionalism of journalism in liberal countries does not necessarily mean that the state has less influence on the news-making process.

CHAPTER TWO

Theoretical framework

We base this research on theories that have shown the influence of the media on public opinion and politics. The news discourse is an integral part of the process of framing public policy issues and plays an important role in shaping public debate concerning these issues (Gamson, 1989). We will elaborate on the agenda-setting theory of the media by discussing the widely cited work of Maxwell McCombs and his work on public opinion. We will then consider the theory of framing, or second level of agenda setting, considered within the larger context of public discourse. Finally we will highlight the main concepts of the critical discourse analysis. The framing analysis places the analysis of news text in a theoretical framework built on the point of convergence between the sociological and cognitive formulations of the frame concept: this involves cognitive activities of the players in the process as well as the social and cultural contexts in which these players operate (Pan and Kosicki, 1993; 69).

2.The theories on the influence of the media on public opinion and politics

2.1 The agenda-setting theory

There has been a lot of research devoted to the construction of news and the factors influencing it. Two theories that are relevant to this study focus on the ways in which the media render certain topics more prominent in the news, and therefore making

these specific issues part of the public opinion debate; agenda setting theory and framing theory.

The agenda-setting theory establishes that the transfer of salience by the news media on key political issues to the public is a key step in the formation of public opinion (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Weaver et al, 2004). The agenda-setting approach to the media explains why certain information on specific themes are made available to the public, and others left out to the public. Since political parties are aware of this, they attempt to influence the media coverage to gain a substantial influence over the media's agenda (Walgrave & van Aelst, 2006; Brandenburg, 2002). Many studies have found correlations between the agendas of political parties and the media during election campaigns, confirming the assumption that political parties are successful in shaping the media agenda. Research has also determined that incumbent parties are more likely to gain media attention, and are more newsworthy than opposition parties (Díez-Nicolás and Semetko, 1999)⁵. In this research we will not focus in a particular election time, but rather in a four years period during which important election moments took place, and will be analysed. In times of election, we will focus on which themes are given prominence in the Canadian francophone and anglophone press, and which ones are left out.

This is particularly interesting for our research question on whether the foreign nationalist movements in Europe can revive the nationalist debate in Québec. It will be interesting to see why certain political parties gain more prominence in the international coverage and which themes stand out over others, in order to compare them to the political parties and programs of the nationalist parties in Québec.

The agenda-setting theory was predicted to evolve with the increasingly widespread medium of the Internet as a primary source of news for a growing part of the population. As McCombs demonstrated in a revision on the past, present and future of his original research on agenda-setting, "attention on the web is even more

⁵ Díez-Nicolás, Juan and Holli Semetko (1999) 'Los programas de noticias de televisión y las campañas electorales de 1993 y 1996: Propiedad, contenido e influencia', in Alejandro Muñoz Alonso and Juan Ignacio Rospi (eds) *Democracia mediática y campañas electorales*. Barcelona: Ariel Comunicación: 151-201

concentrated than in the print world” (McCombs, M., 2005), as opposed to his original hypothesis that the internet audience would scatter widely across all the diverse websites, a situation that would announce the demise of the agenda-setting theory as we know it (2004; 545). He explains this by the fact that many popular news site on the Internet belong to traditional media and represent online versions of newspapers. They are mere synergies through which the same content is distributed through numerous channels (2004; 545).

2.2 The theory of framing

“To frame 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 for the item described” (Entman, R. 1993; 52)

Which “aspects of reality” of the nationalist movements in Scotland and Catalonia does the Québec online press choose to make salient? And which ones are prevalent in the Canadian national press?

“The agenda is successful in telling us what to think about, but also in telling us how to think about it” (McCombs, 2005; 546). The theory of framing, also referred to as second-level agenda setting or attribute agenda setting (McCombs), refers to the way events and issues are organized and made sense of by the media, media professionals and their audience (Reese, S.D., 2003). Similarly, it is understood that news frames are “conceptual tools which media and individuals rely on to convey, interpret and evaluate information” (Neuman et al., 1992; 60). Whereas agenda setting refers to the transmission of object salience, framing refers to the transmission of attribute salience (Iyengar & Simon, 1993). Erving Goffman is often credited with introducing the sociological conception of framing that precisely looks at how issues are constructed, discourse structured and meaning developed.

The framing theory, just like the agenda-setting theory, has also been very useful in understanding the media’s role in political life. They both share a focus on the relationship between public policy issues in the news and the public perceptions of these issues (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; 93). As Walter Lippmann observed at the

beginning of the last century (1922), the public opinion responds to mental images of events, an imagined pseudoenvironment that is treated as if it were the real environment (McCombs & Ghanem, 2003). According to McCombs & Ghanem, the agenda-setting theory and frame theory converge to give us a more complete understanding of how the media's pictures of the outside world are constructed and in turn how the public responds to those pictures. Whereas agenda-setting focuses on the impact of mass media content on the public agenda, less attention is devoted to the influences shaping the media agenda. In framing approach, much research has been devoted to the media frames and their origins, and less attention on the impact of those frames on the public, which is harder to measure (McCombs & Ghanem, 2003;68).

There are a number of studies that have identified the importance of certain frames in the news by highlighting their consequences for the public's interpretation of events and issues. Previous studies have also identified several factors explaining the origins of frames relevant to news production, including factors to do with individual journalists, such as social norms, values, ideological and political orientation (Tuchman G. 1976; van Dijk, 1985). The journalists' professional routines are influenced by news values and audience consideration that also has an effect on the production of news. The organizational influences, including the pressure and constraints from organizational economic and political goals, as well as outside influences such as pressures from policy-makers, interest groups and advertisers, are several of the factors that have an influence of the construction of news (Camaj, 2010:637).

One of the factors that influences framing comes from the professional routines of journalists (Tunstall, 1971; Boyd-Barret, 1980; Tuchman). According to Gary Tuchman in his essay *Telling Stories*, the newsmen learn forms of stories that they use as professional equipment to transform events into their occupational product – accounts of events or news stories (Tuchman, 1976; 93). Indeed in his ethnomethodological perspective of the news production, he argues that reporters do more than make an event public; they define what an event is and which happenings are part of the event, and in this way they offer a definition of social reality (Tuchman, 1976; 94). The reporter's professional routine leads him to see the

everyday world and its supporting documents in terms of the product they are meant to manufacture; a news story.

Frames are “principles of organization”, according to Goffman, whereby certain pieces of the stories are selected to construct a reality. This is directly linked to the production of news discourse that sees frames as enabling journalists to process large amounts of information quickly and routinely in order to relay it to the audience efficiently (Gitlin, 1980;7). However arguing that news reports are stories that are framed for identifying and defining events may appear to imply that news stories are not factual and that they are not objective. This argument has found to be particularly compelling, especially when looking at political issues in the news. As we have discussed in the section on the press in the francophone region of Québec, Kathryn-Jane Hazel evoked the historical tradition of engaged Québec press on political matters of national identity, in parts due to the political engagement of journalists themselves.

The idea that news stories are the results of a sequence of text processing stages, has been argued by van Dijk, who assumes that most stories are not based upon the personal observations and experiences of journalists, but rather on the series of textual transformations of various forms of antecedent discourses from reports, interviews, press conferences, documents, etc...Van Dijk states the necessity to use cognitive models of discourse comprehension in order to account for the strategies used by journalists in these processing steps (van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983). This “web of facticity” spun by newsmakers creates an illusion of credibility, but ultimately legitimizes the status-quo (Tuchman, 1988).

An interesting assumption elaborated by Tuchman states that media messages have a complex linguistic and ideological construct (Tuchman, 8) which comes from the accredited sources of journalists such as government leaders. The consequence of this practice is a lack of neutrality in the media, and a vehicle for reproducing preformulated ideologies. According to this assumption, news production is not simply the result of the news values and the journalistic routines and practices underlying the productions of news, but it is also a result of the social and cultural forces that shape news production. Some authors that have worked on the economic

and ideological controls of news production and newspapers are James Curran and Gurevitch.

There are also significant factors in the reception process of news that affect the influence the media has in shaping realities. The theories of media effects that attempt to explain the effects of the media on the process of knowledge, beliefs and attitudes, remain assumptions, and are harder to measure than we think. Van Dijk proposes the use of a socio-cognitive model of discourse production in order to account for the role of the “topic structures” – principles of organizations- in the production of new texts and in the participation in talk about media-induced topics and their degree of social relevance (van Dijk, 1985:7).

When looking at the news reporting of international events, several scholars have written about the event-oriented and context-oriented perspectives that are at the roots of influences on international news reporting (Chang and Lee, 2010). The event-oriented approach suggests that news coverage of international events is determined by the degree of deviance and the negative nature of events, and the context-oriented perspective considers the relationship between foreign news and contextual factors, which include economic relations, cultural similarity, political affiliation, social distance and geographical proximity (Chang and Lee, 2010 in Camaj, 2010; 637).

However, less attention has been devoted to a systematic investigation of the factors that affect news framing. Scheufele, D. (1999) proposes a theory of frame building that highlights three sources of influence on news frame selection: journalistic-centered influences, organizational routines and external sources of influences (Camaj, 2010:637). On the journalistic-centered influences, Scheufele states that this frame is moderated by variables such as ‘ideology, attitudes and professional norms’, which we have discussed earlier (1999:115). In the case of our present research, we will examine the journalistic influences on frame selection through the interviews of professionals.

Most research on framing focuses on international armed conflicts or wars, even though political discourse is a common topic present in international news. Less empirical research has been devoted to identifying framing evolutions of international

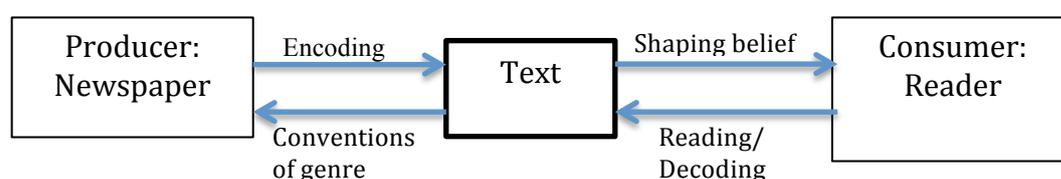
political discourses over time (Camaj, 2010:641). The recent political events in Catalonia and Scotland represent a good comparative case study given the international dimension of these political issues. The increasing instability in Europe has become a popular topic of news in North America, and more specifically, the independence movements in Europe have attracted attention from Canada, usually described as a precursor and example to be followed in engaging the political steps towards the establishment of an sovereign state. Catalonia, Scotland but also Flanders and the Basque countries are experiencing a mass support in favour of independence of their region, or a renegotiation of their status with the central state and within the European Union. After the election of the Parti Québécois in Québec, the sovereign debate has been revived in Canada, and we want to see if the European nationalist movements can influence the debate on sovereignty in the French region of Canada, through the use of common frames in the coverage of the issue.

2.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a type of qualitative content analysis that approached textual analysis from a distance. In other words, there are several dimensions to CDA that authors like Teun A. Van Dijk and Wodak agree upon which leads them to define CDA as “not interested in investigating a linguistic unit per se but in studying social phenomena which as necessarily complex and this require a multidisciplinary and multi-methodological approach” (Wodak, R, Meyer, M. 2009; 2). Out of the several dimensions of CDA, the ones relevant to our content analysis include the focus on larger units as opposed to isolated words and sentences in text, the study of the functions of contexts of language use (social, cultural, situative and cognitive) and finally the analysis of a vast number of phenomena of text grammar and language use such as coherence, topics, macrostructures, argumentation, rhetoric and many other aspects of text and discourse (Wodak, R., Meyer, M. 2009).

Richardson, in his work on *Analysing Newspapers*, provides a thorough examination of the discourse analysis of news, and more specifically, on the critical discourse analysis (2007). He acknowledges the many different approaches to discourse analysis, but describes Fairclough’s method of CDA as the most concrete (2007; 37). In Fairclough’s view, CDA explains discourse as a circular process in which social

practices influence texts, through the shaping of the context and mode in which it is produced, and in turn texts help influence society through the shaping of viewpoints of the readers (Fairclough N. & Wodak, R., 1997). The researcher can come to understand and perceive the discourse in a text by focusing his analysis on the textual elements, and determining how they are embedded within and relate to social conditions of productions and consumption. The following graph illustrates well the elements of discourse analysis (Richardson, 2007; 39):



The graph shows the dialectical relationship between the consumption of journalist texts and social practices: readers decode meaning of texts using knowledge and beliefs of the world and these texts go on to shape these same reader's knowledge and beliefs. On the other hand, the meaning encoded/decoded in texts are the result not only of producer intentions but also of the outcome of specific professional practices and techniques. CDA attempts to include these external factors that influence the communicative event and are based on social relations, and particularly relations of power (Richardson, 2007; 40). This type of "critique" aims at revealing structures of power and unmasking ideologies, the more hidden and latent type of everyday beliefs, usually disguised as conceptual metaphors and analogies (Wodak, R., Meyer, M. 2009; 8). In terms of the relations of power, CDA researchers often analyse the language use of those in power, who are responsible for the existence of inequalities, and how they reproduce the social domination over certain groups (Wodak, R., Meyer, M. 2009; 9).

There is a textual dimension and a crucial contextual dimension to discourse analysis, according to Van Dijk, Wodak, Meyer and Fairclough. In fact the aim of a discourse analysis is to establish the semantic relationship between text and context. The textual

dimension refers to the structures of discourse at various levels of the description, whereas the contextual dimension relates these structural descriptions to properties of the context, such as cognitive processes and representations of the sociocultural factors (van Dijk, 1985). In other words, a discourse analysis looks to establish how cognitive processes specifically affect the production and understanding of discourse structures and how discourse structures influence and are influenced by the social situation. In relation to the concept of power within discourse analysis, the construction of a text is usually the result of discursive differences, and not made by one person, which are in part encoded in. Obtaining insights from journalists and their contextual working environment becomes a crucial component of understanding the more in depth factors that shape news discourse.

The principles described for the strategic production of news discourse also influence its strategic reading, comprehension and memorization. In other words the structure of the news story into hierarchical organisations of categories affects the description of reality that the reader will have from this story. Van Dijk, in his work on the *Structure of News in the Press*, explains that the ‘news schema’ consists of a list of categories in a decreasing order of importance in order to bring the most relevant and important news first to the reader. In this way, the headline and the lead are written first and then the series of contextual information and events, with the historical issues at the end when they are indirectly related to the present situation (van Dijk, 87). According to van Dijk, a news discourse can be analysed on two fronts; The semantic macrostructure, and the local relationships of coherence.

1) Semantic macrostructure: Thematic structure of a news story

Particularly relevant to this study, and in any other analysis of the news media and discourse, is the thematic structure elaborated by van Dijk, at the macro-level of global discourse. He proposes an analytical framework for the structure of news discourse. In order to establish the themes that make up a news story, one must distinguish the “propositions”, or small independent meaning constructs of language and thought. The propositions represent the smallest semantic units that can be true or false, and are expressed in a single sentence. Reducing a text to its only relevant information will enable the elaboration of themes and a hierarchy of propositions that

gives global coherence to the text (van Dijk; 1988). These organizational ways enable one to establish a “macroproposition” that denotes the act of events as a whole. By following the assumption held by van Dijk that an article can be summarized to (1) the major actors involved, (2) the macroactions and events and (3) the specific subject of issue involved, we will be able to deduce the dominant themes and actors involved in the articles under study, as well as the subjects receiving the action. This will help us in formulating the main themes and therefore frames of the media text.

2) Local relationships of coherence

A study of the topics expressed in a news article will enable us to determine the presences as well as the absences in relation to the framework and structure of the story. This “macro-level” study of a content analysis is best complemented with a “micro-level” study (van Dijk, 1988). For instance, a large part of the news appears to be pre-formulated by already influential news sources like state institutions. Looking at the sources of news articles and the actors quoted can give us an information on the dominating point of view described by the journalist. With these approaches we can tie the macro-context of news with the actual meanings and forms of news discourse (van Dijk, 1985;72).

For a grammatical approach to discourse analysis, we need to look at the work of Fowler et al. (1979) on the media construction of realities. In their research, they showed that news bias can be expressed in syntactic structures of sentences, such as the use of passive or active constructions, which allow the journalist to express or suppress the agent of news acts from subject positions (van Dijk, 1985:73). This approach reflects that with the limited instruments of a grammatical analysis we can find linguistic correlations of ideological positions of newspapers and journalists.

Finally another author who established terms of analysis for an evaluation of discourse in media text is Gerbner G. He established that several components of a news text could reflect cultural indicators (1985). Components to look out for in a discourse analysis of a text include: The *attention* (or the absence) to selected elements available to the public and their frequency of appearance, such as important themes, subject classification etc, the *emphasis* or the importance given to a unit of

attention, the *tendency* which measures the evaluative or other qualitative characteristics attributed to a unit, and the *structure* which relates to the context of a message and its relationship among other dimensions of the text (Gerbner, G, 1985; 21).

CHAPTER THREE

Issue of Investigation, Objectives and Research Questions

3.1. Objectives

After having established the principal concepts and main literature that has been written on the media, framing, nationalism and national identities, we will clarify the objectives and research questions of this study before getting to the methodology.

O1: Determine to what extent the coverage of the independence movements in Scotland and Catalonia differ in the Canadian online press coverage between French online news in *Le Devoir* and *La Presse* and the English online news in *The Montreal Gazette*, *The National Post* and *The Globe and Mail*, from January 2011 to 2014.

The aim of this research is to determine if the theory of frames, elaborated on by researchers such as Maxwell, E. McCombs and Donald Shaw L. (1972), Erving Goffman (1974), David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford (1988), William A. Gamson, (1989), Robert Entman (1993), Pan and Kosicki (1993), Dietram A. Scheufele (1999), Stephen D. Reese (2003) and many more, still serves as a good analytical tool to compare the Canadian Anglophone and Francophone online press coverage on a specific international issue of relevance to Québec. In order to establish how the nationalist movements in Europe are perceived from the outside, we will analyze the different perspectives of the regional and national Canadian online press on the nationalist movements in Scotland and Catalonia from January 2011 to December 2014. We have chosen to focus our analysis on five news organizations that we deem representative of the political and cultural differences in Canada. We will be

explaining in further details the sampling chosen for this analysis in the following sections.

O2: Determine how the discourse of the Canadian coverage on the nationalist movements in Europe evolves from January 2011 to the date set for a referendum on independence in Scotland by September of 2014.

We will analyze how the issue is covered in the Canadian press by using discourse analytical methods elaborated on by authors such as van Dijk (1985), Tuchman (1988), Wodak (2009) and Richardson (2007). For this objective, we will analyze the coverage on Catalonia and Scotland separately, since both regions are at different development stages of their independence movement. We will establish two separate time frames for the sampling units on Catalonia and Scotland.

The time frame from January 2011 to the end of November 2012 will represent the first phase of analysis, marking the increasing public support in favour of independence in Catalonia, up until de parliamentary elections at the end of November, which saw a clear support for nationalist parties with a sharp political agenda focused on the independence of Catalonia. The second phase, from December 2012 to September 2014, represents a large period of negotiations between CiU President, Artur Mas, and Spain's Prime Minister, Mariano Rajoy, on whether or not to allow Catalonia to hold a referendum in 2014 and therefore reform the Spanish Constitution.

In the case of Scotland, we will examine a first time frame from January 2011 to October 2012 included, at the end of which the signing of the "Edinburg agreement" secured a date for a referendum on the independence of Scotland in September of 2014. The second phase from November 2012 to the referendum includes all the ongoing political developments after the Edinburg agreement.

The following phases are hypothetical and may change during the investigation.

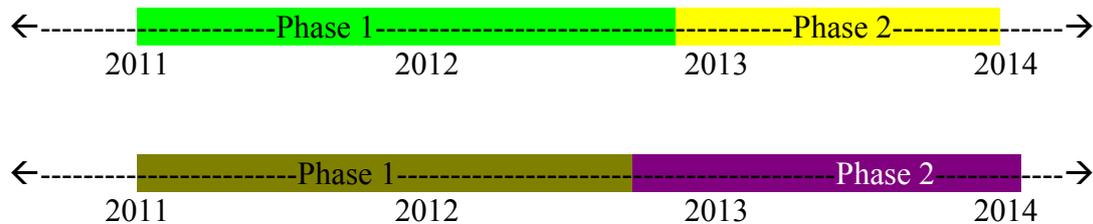
Division of analysis according to different phases of the nationalist movement:

Catalonia

Phase 1: January 2011 to November 2012 (included)
Phase 2: December 2012 to December 2014 (included)

Scotland

Phase 1: January 2011 to October 2012 (included)
Phase 2: November 2012 to December 2014 (included)



After having established the framing patterns of the Canadian media on the issue of Scotland and Catalonia, our second objective is to determine whether the discourse on independence of these regions have evolved from Phase 1 to Phase 2. Does the main theme shift its focus? What subjects are most present towards the final phase of our analysis? Is the debate more polarized? We have chosen an extensive time period in order to deduce whether the independence of Scotland and Catalonia is described as a possible solution for these regions, or on the other hand an impossible goal.

O3: Determine to which extent the coverage on the nationalist movements in Europe serves to revive the debate on the independence question of Québec.

Starting off with the widely accepted assumption that the media and the public opinion are interrelated, we will examine how the media frame the movements in both Scotland and Catalonia, and determine the degree of influence this could have on reviving the nationalist debate in the Québec region of Canada. We will attempt to make a connection between the salience of this media issue in the Canadian press and its assumed effects on the political agenda. We will base our deductions on the work of researchers who believe that the media has a significant influence on the political agenda and how politics are played out in the 21st century (Entman R., 1989; Hallin, D.C. & Mancini, P., 2004).

In order to examine whether the media coverage on the nationalist movements in Catalonia and Scotland from 2011 to 2014 has revived the debate on the independence question of Québec, we need to analyze the mainstream online newspaper articles from both the Francophone and Anglophone press that deal with the issue of independence in Scotland and Catalonia, and determine how they are described. To be more concrete, we have decided to analyze the online press coverage of two Francophone regional newspapers distributed in Québec and three Anglophone online newspapers distributed nation-wide. We have also chosen to include an English online newspaper from Québec in order to get equal perspectives from both Francophone and Anglophone news in the bilingual region of Québec. A table below will summarize the criteria for the selection of the newspaper organizations under study.

Furthermore, we will complement our research with an analysis of semi-structured interviews given to both Francophone and Anglophone journalists from the news organizations under investigation, in an attempt to get in depth observations on their professional routines, and the covering of this specific international issue. This will enable us to understand the factors of the media that could influence and shape the political agenda in Québec. We have decided to interview the foreign editors of the news organizations in charge of the final content that is published. Our questions will be derived from the results of the primary content analysis of the news articles selected that discuss the independence movement of Scotland and Catalonia between January 2011 and September 2014.

In order to establish if the coverage on the independence movements in Catalonia and Scotland affects the debate on the independence of Québec, we need to include an analysis of the reactions to the articles. We will therefore examine, through a discourse analysis, the commentaries of the articles, in order to determine the citizen perspectives and reactions to these European nationalist movements in their proper political context. The analysis of commentaries is all the more significant in a study on the online press, since this represents one of the important factors distinguishing online news from traditional print news.

Is independence described as a solution to the social problems? Is independence depicted as a destabilizing factor that could worsen the social situation in these countries? What other solutions presented as alternatives to independence? And can Quebec be inspired by the nationalist fervor in Europe?

3.2. Research Questions

This research aims to answer the following research questions:

O1: Determine to what extent the coverage of the independence movements in Scotland and Catalonia differ in the Canadian online press coverage between French online news in *Le Devoir* and *La Presse* and the English online news in *The Montreal Gazette*, *The National Post* and *The Globe and Mail*, from January 2011 to 2014.

RQ1(a): What frame does the Canadian online press use most frequently when reporting on the nationalist movements in Scotland?

RQ1(b): What frame does the Canadian online press use most frequently when reporting on the nationalist movements in Catalonia?

RQ2: Do the frames vary between the news devoted to Scotland and Catalonia?

RQ3: Do the frames vary between the English-language and French-language news?

O2: Determine how the discourse of the Canadian coverage on the nationalist movements in Europe evolves from January 2011 to September of 2014, the date set for a referendum on independence in Scotland.

RQ4: Do the frames used in the coverage by the online press organizations under study change from the first phase of the analysis to the second phase?

RQ5: Does the press portray the central government as reluctant to change the status quo, or on the other hand does the media coverage evoke different solutions other than independence for Scotland and Catalonia?

O3: Determine to which extent the coverage on the nationalist movements in Europe serves to revive the debate on the independence question of Québec.

RQ6: Does the discourse in the news coverage evoke references to the Québec nationalist cause?

RQ7: Do the citizen-generated commentaries evoke references to the Québec nationalist cause?

We will first determine the main frames used on a corpus of articles from 5 online newspapers of reference in Canada; 2 anglophone national newspapers and 3 regional ones, from which 2 are in French and 1 in English. In a second part we will establish their evolution through the time period under study and third we will analyze the influence of the media coverage on the nationalist movements in Scotland and Catalonia on the revival of the national question in Québec, through (i) the analysis of the commentaries to these articles (if there is any) and (ii) a series of interviews of the main producers of news from the agencies under study.

CHAPTER FOUR

Methodology of Research

4.1 Object of study

The present research proposal takes as its object of study the online newspaper coverage of the nationalist movements in Scotland and Catalonia, during a concrete period of time, between January 2011 and September 2014.

Delimitation of the Object of Study

Space:

There are several regions in Europe experiencing growing support in favor of a greater autonomy from their central government, but we have decided to focus our attention on Scotland and Catalonia since we believe they hold similarities with the region of Québec that are pertinent for our analytical comparison, as described by Montserrat Guibernau in her work on *National Identity, Devolution and Secession*:

- a) Canada, Spain and Britain all opted for various devolution models encompassing federalism, symmetrical and asymmetrical devolution.
- b) These devolution models have not remained static through time and have evolved according to the demands of the regions.
- c) Canada, Spain and Britain contain one, or more, strong national minorities endowed with their own sense of common ethnicity and ethnohistory, cultures and identities which have developed powerful nationalist movements demanding self-determination, whether it be in the form of greater autonomy or secession.

To these factors we will also add the following statements:

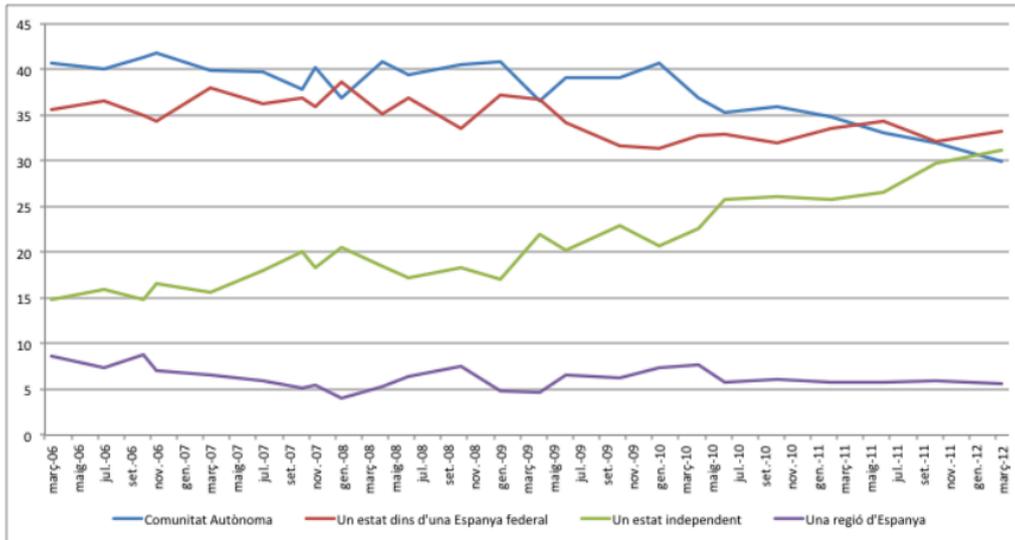
- d) Catalonia and Scotland have renounced to the use of violence to promote their goals of independence and emphasize the importance of the democratic process.
- e) Scotland and Catalonia are subjects that have gained growing attention in Canada, and more specifically Québec, due to the similar political struggles that make the issue of nationalist movements in Europe relevant in this country.
- f) Both Catalonia and Scotland have strong economic incentives driving their call for independence. They both include the possible revision of their fiscal pact with the central government in their propositions, in case full independence cannot be granted.

Timeframe:

I have decided to focus this analysis across a 4 years time frame, from 2011 to 2014. From the year 2011, the support for independence in the regions of Catalonia and Scotland has been on the rise. The end of the year 2011 proved to be a turning point on the evolution of the constitutional preferences of Catalonia in favor of independence. As showed in the graph below from the *Centre d'Estudis d'Opinió*, the population in favor of independence rose significantly and the objective of forming a separate state within the EU also increased. On the other hand the population in support of maintaining the status of autonomous community has been decreasing since the beginning of the year 2010.

The year 2011 is significant in Scotland, because it represents the year when the Scottish National Party (SNP) came out victorious in the elections, and won an overall majority in the Scottish Parliament. A referendum was announced and set up shortly after for September 2014.

I will include all the articles in the Canadian press up until September 2014, when a referendum is planned since the Edinburg agreement, on the independence of Scotland. Although negotiations are on their way between the Catalan nationalist parties and the Spanish central government, no agreement has been reached for the right of Catalonia to hold a referendum on its independence yet. A demand for self-determination was delivered by the governing Catalan party, but was contested and rejected by the Supreme Court of Catalonia. The year 2014 is announced like a promising year and a turning point for the nationalist movements in Europe, although the negotiations are still very uncertain to this date for the Catalan region.



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4.2 Universe and sampling

This study is based on a content analysis of the online news coverage of the on-going negotiations for a referendum and a possible independence of Catalonia from Spain, and Scotland from the United Kingdom. The online news will be collected from 5 news organizations; two national newspapers – *The Globe and Mail* and the *National Post* – and three local newspapers – the *Montreal Gazette*, *Le Devoir* and *La Presse*. The two national newspapers are written in English, as well as the *Montreal Gazette*, and *Le Devoir* and *La Presse* in French. It was important to select both English and French news organizations in order to analyze all the perspectives of the coverage.

The newspapers were chosen according to the following criteria:

- Territorial distribution
- Language
- Political distinction (in terms of the constitutional arrangements between Québec and the Canadian federal government.)
- Ideological diversity
- Historical tradition

The chart below summarizes the dailies chosen for our research, the language they are written in, their distribution, the numbers of articles that will be analyzed in each daily and the ideology of the newspapers based on their historical political stance.

NEWSPAPERS	LANGUAGE	DISTRIBUTION	NUMBER OF ARTICLES (SCOTLAND & CATALONIA)	HISTORICAL POLITICAL STANCE
	ENGLISH	NATIONAL	51	- Liberal/Conservative -Proponent of Meech Lake Accord ⁶ and Charlottetown Accord ⁷
	ENGLISH	NATIONAL	49	-Conservative -Established in 1998
 Libre de penser	FRENCH	REGIONAL (Montreal. Distributed in QC. and rest of CA.)	74	-Independent newspaper -Oriented towards Qc nationalism -In favour of QC sovereignty and social democracy
 montrealgazette.com	ENGLISH (Only one in QC)	REGIONAL (Montreal)	48	-Conservative (same media group as National Post)
	FRENCH	REGIONAL (Montreal)	98	-Federalists (endorsed federalist option in 1980 and 1995 QC referendum on the « national question »)

Figure : The ideological slant of the dailies used in our content analysis

In order to investigate the first objective (determine the differences and similarities in the Francophone and Anglophone coverage of the online press), the universe under investigation will include all the news articles, from the 5 daily newspapers chosen, that evoke the issue of independence. We will include all types of articles including opinion, news, interviews, and editorials.

The following images show the number of results found with the database

ProQuest, using the keywords “independence” and “Scotland”. We then refined our search to a date range of 2011 to 2014, and selected only the English newspapers

⁶ The Meech Lake Accords was a package of proposed amendments to the Constitution of Canada negotiated in 1987 by 11 provincial premiers. It’s intention was to persuade the government of Quebec to endorse the 1982 constitutional amendment and increase support in Quebec for remaining in Canada. The Accords were rejected and as a consequence galvanized support for Quebec sovereignty.

⁷ The Charlottetown Accords was a package of proposed amendments to the Constitution of Canada proposed by the federal and provincial governments in 1992. It was submitted to a referendum on October 26th 1992, and was defeated.

important to this study (*Montreal Gazette, The Globe and Mail, The National Post*). This gave a total result of 132 articles, keeping in mind that these include only the articles written up until the present date.

The screenshot shows a ProQuest search interface for 'Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies'. The search query is 'independence AND Scotland'. The search is filtered for 'Full text' and 'Date: From 2011 to 2014'. The results page shows 132 results. The search is narrowed by 'Publication title' to include 'National Post', 'The Gazette', and 'The Globe and Mail'. The results are sorted by 'Relevance'. The first three results are:

- 1** [Marois to visit Scotland, where citizens await independence referendum; Like support for Quebec sovereignty, parting ways with England has backing of only a minority](#)
Dougherty, Kevin. **The Gazette** [Montreal, Que] 11 Jan 2013: A.6.
...he is not bothered that **Scotland's independence** option has minority support
...Elections Canada, which will run **Scotland's independence** referendum.
...would be allowed to vote in **Scotland's independence** referendum.
Citation/Abstract Full text
- 2** [Quebecers see independence ahead...for Scotland; Sovereignty Poll](#)
Barrs, Rory. **National Post** [Don Mills, Ont] 01 Oct 2012: A.1.
...residents see **Scotland** as being better suited for **independence** than their own
... **Scotland's independence** from the United
...situation, and [**independence**] is being debated in **Scotland** right now," Dr
Citation/Abstract Full text
- 3** [Agreement clears way for Scotland to hold independence referendum](#)
GOLOVNIINA, MARIA. **The Gazette** [Montreal, Que] 16 Oct 2012: A.2.
... **Scotland** set up a historic **independence** referendum after its
...for nuclear arms on **Scotland's** soil after **independence**.

The image below illustrates the results yielded by our search on the topic of Catalan independence. 15 results were found using the keywords “independence” and “Catalonia”, from the year 2011 to 2014 in the 3 English newspapers.

ProQuest **Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies**
Basic Search | Advanced | Obituaries | Publications

independence AND Catalonia

Full text
 Additional limits - Date: From 2011 to 2014

15 Results * Search within

0 Selected Items [Clear]

Narrowed by
Publication title: [Clear Publication title] The Globe and Mail OR The Gazette OR National Post

Select 1-15 Brief view | Detailed view

1 **Quebec has little in common with Catalonia**
The Gazette [Montreal, Que] 28 Nov 2012: A.20.
...is also freer than Catalonia to pursue its destiny
...is empowered to hold independence referendums, within
...even those restraints. Catalonia, under a Spanish constitution
Citation/Abstract Full text

2 **Separatism not worth the cost**
Briançon, Pierre. The Globe and Mail [Toronto, Ont] 26 Nov 2012: B.12.
...are arguing for Catalonia's independence from Madrid can
...breakup would leave Catalonia stranded, and
...obstacles to independence, and the consequences
Citation/Abstract Full text

3 **Separatist dreams are just that**
Simpson, Jeffrey. The Globe and Mail [Toronto, Ont] 12 Oct 2012: A.15.
...latest poll showed the independence option with just 28 per

Sort results by: Relevance

Narrow results by

Full text

Source type
Newspapers (15)

Publication title Clear
The Globe and Mail (9)
The Gazette (5)
National Post (1)

Document type

Subject

EUREKA.CC Bienvenue dans Eureka.cc pour bibliothèque

RECHERCHE DOCUMENTAIRE | RECHERCHE DE JOURNAUX PDF | RE

Recherche Nouvelle recherche

Catalogne

Liste des opérateurs et des clés

Autres critères de recherche

et ou sans indépendance dans tout le texte

et ou sans dans tout le texte

Date Sources

Depuis 2 ans Canada (FR)

Résultat 222 documents Verser la page au dossier

p. 6 7 8 9 10 de 23

Tri par source Liste abrégée

Mais qui est Jane Jacobs?
La Presse (site web) - 2012-11-24 - 755 mots
Alexandra Perron - sur Wikipédia a retenu mon attention. En 1980, elle offre une perspective «urbanistique» sur l'indépendance du Québec dans son livre The Question of Separatism: Quebec and the Struggle Over Sovereignty

L'indépendance en toile de fond des élections régionales en Catalogne
La Presse Canadienne - 2012-11-23 - 18:20:09 UTC -0500 - 518 mots
GÉRONNE, Espagne - Des élections régionales anticipées auront lieu dimanche en Catalogne, dans le nord-est de l'Espagne, sur fond de débat concernant un référendum sur l'indépendance de

Élections en Catalogne: le leader qui a appelé au référendum perd des sièges
La Presse Canadienne - 2012-11-25 - 20:24:06 UTC -0500 - 535 mots

The francophone articles were taken from the database *Eureka*. We collected all the articles with the same keywords, translated into French; “Catalogne” and “indépendance”. The research yielded a total amount of 222 articles found in the Francophone Canadian press from which 34 were selected from *La Presse* and 26

from *Le Devoir*, making a total of 60 articles from the francophone online press since 2011 on the subject of Catalonia.

RECHERCHE BIOGRAPHIQUE Nouvelle session

Mon dossier 34 documents Vider le dossier

Tri par date d'insertion

- Mais qui est Jane Jacobs?**
La Presse (site web) - 2012-11-24 - 755 mots
sur Wikipédia a retenu mon attention. En 1980, elle offre une perspective «urbanistique» sur l'**indépendance** du Québec dans son livre The Question of Separatism: Quebec and the Struggle Over Sovereignty
- Montée de fièvre indépendantiste en Europe**
La Presse (site web) - 2012-10-17 - 507 mots

Par où commencer ?

Pour sauvegarder ou imprimer un document :

- Cliquez sur le titre du document pour l'ouvrir ;

Eureka – 34 documents from the French online news organization La Presse

RECHERCHE BIOGRAPHIQUE Nouvelle session

Mon dossier 26 documents Vider le dossier

Tri par date d'insertion

- Qui gardera les gardiens?**
Le Devoir - 2012-11-05 - 792 mots
- Colloque "Républicanisme, multiculturalisme et laïcité" à l'Université Lav. Des traditions cachées à redécouvrir au Québec**
Le Devoir - 2012-10-06 - 665 mots

Par où commencer ?

Eureka- 26 documents from the French online news organization Le Devoir

The same keywords were used for “Ecosse” and “indépendance” yielding a total of 112 articles from both *Le Devoir* and *La Presse*. 48 articles were collected from *Le Devoir* and 64 articles from *La Presse*.

The screenshot shows the Eureka.cc search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Eureka.cc logo and the text "Bienvenue dans Eureka.cc pour bibliothèque". Below this, there are links for "RECHERCHE DOCUMENTAIRE" and "RECHERCHE DE JOURNAUX PDF". The main search area is titled "Recherche" and contains a search box with the text "Ecosse". To the right of the search box is a "Nouvelle recherche" button. Below the search box, there are options for "Autres critères de recherche" and "Liste des opérateurs et des clés". The search criteria include "et ou sans" and "dans tout le texte". The search results section is titled "Résultat 112 documents" and shows a list of results. The first result is "Référendum en Écosse: en route vers l'indépendance?" from "La Presse (site web)" dated 2012-08-05, with 953 words. The result is displayed in a list view, and there is a "Verser la page au dossier" button.

We have chosen to study the online press since studies have shown that it is becoming the primary source of news for society. Also, the Internet has become a place of interaction between individuals who express themselves through the space made for them to react to articles. We assume that the most influential media in stimulating public debate is the Internet. In order to really measure if the national debate on nationalism is revived in Québec through the coverage of the nationalist movements in Scotland and Catalonia under the time frame studied, we need to examine online news in order to include the commentaries and reactions from the citizens.

4.3 Codifying and Analysis

In order to start our analysis, we will need to codify the articles in ways that will enable us to deduce answers for our research questions. The codification of the text refers to the transformation of the text through decomposition, enumeration and aggregation of the content susceptible to show certain clues to the researcher (Bardin, 1977; 78). As O. R. Holsti defines it, the codification is the process through which raw data are systematically transformed and grouped into units that enable the precise description of the characteristics that belong to the text (1969).

We have elaborated a table that will serve for the identification of each article. The first unit of analysis, also referred to as the coding unit, is the individual news story. Each story will in the first place be coded according to the following identification categories: News organization, news type, country of reference, title, date of publication. We provide an example below:

Date of Publication	News organization	Country of reference	Title	News type
Feb. 4 th 2013	The Gazette	Catalonia, Spain	“Scotland brings independent thinking to Quebec”	News
Dec. 2 nd 2012	The Globe and Mail	Catalonia Spain	“Catalonia should stay part of Spain”	Editorial

Figure 1: Identification table example

As part of our quantitative analysis, we will use the codifying chart elaborated on the bases of the:

- The news agency
- The type of article
- Main actor and the references to them
- Main opposition
- Sources cited
- The country involved
- The main theme
- The presence of keywords

This codification will enable us to determine the frequency of certain indicators (or their absence), as well as partly help us determine the type of frames that we will be encountering. We have established a separate codification sheet for Anglophone and Francophone articles in order to take into account the different meanings of the words in both languages.

Secondly, the article will be coded according to Entman’s definition of the nature of a frame for a qualitative analysis (1993):

“To frame 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 for the item described”

-Entman, Robert. 1993, p.52

We resume his definition in the following table:

FRAME NATURE	DEFINITION
Descriptive	Problem definition, informing readers about event that happened and the issue at hand.
Interpretative	Discussing possible causes of problem and making a moral judgment of the issue
Affective	News that explains economic, political or social consequence of the problem or proposed solutions.
Solution	Treatment recommendation and prognoses about possible outcomes.

Figure 2: The nature of frames according to Entman, R. (1993)

In order to determine the nature of the frames in each article, we will need to determine the specific variables that are present or absent within the text and that promote the issue of the text, its causes, evaluation and treatment recommendation. The following chart represents an indicators sheet, inspired by the work of J. Matthes and M. Kohring (2008). Altogether, a frame consists of **elements** that in turn consist of **content analytical variables** that will determine the main indicators that signify the frame elements. We will apply this chart to all the news articles selected in order to establish the frequency of appearance of each variable and determine the main frame elements in each article.

Frame Element	Variables	Codes	Description
Problem Definition	a)Topic: mobilization b)Topic: elections c)Topic: negotiations d)Topic: referendum e)Topic: political meeting f) Topic: European debt crisis g)Actor: opposition parties h)Actor: citizens i)Actor: professionals/ intellectuals j)Actor: government officials	a)ToM b)ToEl c)ToNeg d)ToRef e)ToPol f)ToEu g)ActOp h)ActCit i)ActPro j)ActGov	a)Social protests, mass mobilizations b)Campaigns, results c)With central gvnt d)Date, question e)international & national f)The regions in a context of an EU in debt crisis g) To the main topic h) from the region i) professors, analysts... j) Prime minister...
Causal attribution	a)Benefit attribution: Political benefits b)Benefits attribution: Social benefits c)Benefits attribution: Economic benefits d)Benefits attribution: Territorial	a)BApol b)BASoc c)BAeco d)BAter	a)Democratic exercise, self-determination b)Redistribution of wealth c)Enrichment of country, growth d)Immigration e)Language, education, art

	benefits e)Benefits attribution: Cultural benefits f)Risk attribution: Political risk g)Risk attribution: Social risk h)Risk attribution: Economic risk i)Risk attribution: Territorial risk j)Risk attribution: Cultural risk	e)BAcul f)RApol g)RASoc h)RAeco i)RAter j)RAcul	 f)Unilateral decision g)Deepen social unrest h)Harder to get out of crisis i)Out of the EU j)Loss of central state culture
Solutions to problem	a) referendum b) renegotiation of the status quo c) unilateral secession d) plurinational state e) status quo	a)SOLref b)SOLneg c)SOLsec d)SOLplu e)SOLsta	a)democratic decision b)new policy with central state c)separation from central state without negotiation d)new status for minority e) no solution
Moral evaluation	Positive evaluation Negative evaluation	EV+ EV-	Positive overall evaluation of the journalist on the issue Negative overall evaluation of the journalist on the issue. (5 pts scale from <i>slightly critical</i> to <i>critical</i> for both evaluation types.)

Figure 3: The frame categories and codification

In the table above, we have organized our analysis into 4 frame elements and the variables that relate to them. This deductive approach enables us to predefine certain frames as content analytic variables to verify the extent to which these frames occur in the news (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; 94). Our method of coding is based on “*a priori* coding” whereby the categories are established prior to the analysis, based on the theory of framing explained by Robert Entman (Weber, 1990). Following this approach, we will be able to determine what kinds of frames are likely to appear in the news stories, and later detect differences in framing between media.

4.4 Methods and techniques of investigation

After having identified our objectives and stated clear research questions, as well as the universe and the samples used for the analysis, we will clarify the methods and techniques followed for resolving the research questions. We have touched on the

contextual situation of this research in the State of the Art, in order to set the boundaries and perspective in which we inscribe this research. This context provides correlations that are believed to connect the available texts to possible answers to our research questions, as well as contributing conditions that affect these factors of correlations (Krippendorff, 2004; 34).

We have chosen to triangulate our research in order to yield more exact results, and strengthen the validity of our findings since multiple viewpoints allow for greater accuracy. (Jick, T.D.,1979). In order for this analysis to work, we will triangulate quantitative and qualitative techniques of analysis with semi-structured interviews. These different methods are complementary The main technique of research will be the content analysis. We will use content analysis on the individual texts of news stories as well as on the semi-structured interviews to reinforce the results deduced from the content analysis. The questions will be elaborated according to our results in order to obtain more in depth observations on the findings of this research. The triangulation of the research methods enables the weaknesses in one method to be counterbalanced by the other methods (Jick, T.D. 1979). The interviews have the weakness of being biased, because subjective. To counterbalance these human limitations, I will rely on data collected from online press archives, and a strict coding sheet.

We are interested in studying the words of the text and what they mean to readers, and for this we will apply a content analysis. According to Krippendorff, a content analysis is a “research technique for making replicable and valid *inferences* from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use” (2004; 18). He continues by stating that the use of analytical constructs as rules of inferences, enable elements of the texts to answer specific research questions. For this particular research, the analytical constructs will be derived from the existing theory of framing, the experience and knowledge of professionals and previous research on studying content (Krippendorff, 2004; 173).

A content analysis can come in many different varieties, but we have chosen to examine the relationship between language, thought and behavior, which is best known as the semantics of a text. Following the sociolinguistics, we are interested in

how communication procedures affect perceptions of what is being communicated (Carney, 1972; 83). In fact, the choice of words and what they are associated with will say a lot about which perspective is given in a certain text. This assumption can be applied both to news or interviews. The lexical choices of words is one of the concepts we will explore throughout this research.

We will be using both types of content analysis; Quantitative and qualitative. A quantitative content analysis represents the classic type of text analysis that focuses on the words and their frequency of salience (Carney, 1972; 47). Berelson's definition of a content analysis highlights the main elements of a quantitative analysis with the aim of emphasizing the "objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (1952). This technique has been characterized as more objective than a theme-oriented analysis, because it relies on the neutral recuperation of data (Carney, 1972; Krippendorff, 2004). However frequency-counts of straightforward surface meaning do not usually go deep enough to answer more in-depth questions. In this research, we will need to combine the frequency counting of words with a theme-oriented analysis in order to first, depict what is not in the text, and make inferences between the text and the context (Krippendorff, 2004).

Following on the concept of inferences, Laurence Bardin, in her numerous cited work on content analysis, referred to the quantitative content analysis as a mean to determine what messages are sent to the public (1986). Similarly, Berelson (1952) offered a definition that also placed the quantitative research technique at the center of the analysis of communication messages. This method of analysis strictly relates to "what" is being said, and not the *latent intentions*, nor the latent responses, which the content may express (Berelson, 1952; 262). However, Berelson joins Bardin and Krippendorff on the notion of inferences, by stating that relationships between the intention of the writer and the content, as well as its effect on readers, can be established "in order to reveal the purposes or motives of the communicators as they are reflected in the content" (Berelson, 1952; 264).

Bardin argues that the frequency of appearance of certain elements of the message is a good indication of what kind of messages are sent to the public, and the sole presence or absence can also be useful (if not more) than the frequency of appearance (1986;

87). However it is also meaningful to take into consideration the frequency of occurrence of various characteristics of content according to Berelson (1952; 265). The qualitative content analysis will be used to make inferences based on the sole presence of the indicator (theme, word, person...) and not on the frequency of its appearance (Bardin, 1986: 88).

The “categorization” of the text can be done according to semantics, syntactical elements or lexical elements, according to Laurence Bardin (1986:90). By assigning content to certain categories, we will be able to determine the intended meaning by the communicator, as well as understood by the audience (Berelson, 1952; Carney, 1972). In order to minimize the risk of varying interpretations, we will keep the coded categories focused on evident features of the text, like illustrated further down. Since we are examining both French and English text, we will need to do the analysis separately in order to reflect the different context of both languages and therefore their varying preoccupations and definitions of reality (Carney, 2972; 96).

The coding and quantification of categories will also be necessary to label, separate, compile and organize the data collected from the media texts (Gerbner, 1958). Gerbner offers a more ‘critical’ media research method which understands meaning as “the property of a specific event or system of events which surround the production of media communication” (Gerbner, 1958; 487). In this study we will use elements from the critical discourse analysis in order to determine whether elements from the communicator’s (the journalist) perspective on world events are facilitated or implied. This will be done through the content analysis of the semi-structured interviews, in order to obtain more in-depth knowledge to the answers of our research questions on the framing of news stories.

In this research, just like in many past studies on news discourse, we are as interested in the patterns across the texts, as the meanings within texts and their relationship with the wider process of news production and consumption (Richardson, 2007). Not only will we examine the text thoroughly through the content analysis to determine *what* the Canadian media reflects of the nationalist movements in Scotland and Catalonia, but we also want to determine *how* online newspapers write about them. We will follow the methodological writings on critical discourse analysis for an

examination of the news discourse in the coverage of the nationalist movements in Scotland and Catalonia from January 2011 to September 2014.

Let us now relate each of these methodological concepts to our research:

O1: Determine to what extent the coverage of the independence movements in Scotland and Catalonia differ in the Canadian online press coverage between French online news in *Le Devoir* and *La Presse* and the English online news in *The Montreal Gazette*, *The National Post* and *The Globe and Mail*, from January 2011 to 2014.

RQ1(a): What frame does the Canadian online press use most frequently when reporting on the nationalist movements in Scotland?

RQ1(b): What frame does the Canadian online press use most frequently when reporting on the nationalist movements in Catalonia?

RQ2: Do the frames vary between the news devoted to Scotland and Catalonia?

RQ3: Do the frames vary between the English-language and French-language news?

The Quantitative Analysis

We will develop a quantitative content analysis for establishing the frames of the coverage on the independence movements in Scotland and Catalonia from January 2011 to September 2014. The quantitative analysis will give us information on the volume of information, from which will be able to draw systematic inferences with the units of analysis according to specific variables. In this case we are only interested in the articles relating to the nationalist movements of Catalonia and Scotland. The quantitative analysis will enable us to determine the place this subject takes within all the news written about Spain and the UK. According to the agenda-setting theory, we

will conclude which themes are most salient and deduce which ones are less discussed (or absent).

Figure 6 illustrates the methodology of this research through the universe used for this particular objective and the investigative method applied. In order to answer our research questions through a content analysis, we need to draw inferences from the text (Krippendorff, 2004; 32). For example, in order to investigate our first objective on the differences and similarities in coverage between the Francophone and Anglophone press, the universe will be the five daily newspapers, to which will be applied a qualitative and quantitative content analysis. The quantitative analysis will consider the semantic elements of the text and more particularly the word frequencies throughout the text through the codification sheet we have established in the previous section.

The counting and unitizing of the content analysis will be done according to the coding sheet we have elaborated (See *Codification Sheet* annexed). We will count the presence of several variables deemed significant for determining the main themes, sources, and actors present in each text. For this part of the analysis, we could use a computerized technique to make sure the counts are correct and repeatable (Krippendorff, 2004). After having counted the frequency of each variable in the text, we will be able to infer meaning from their presence. A hypothetical example would be the frequent salience of the word “independence” in several articles could reveal a preference for this political solution in opposition to others that are also part of the independence debate. It could signify that the debate is about independence of the regions, and not around other political solutions. The quantitative analysis will enable us to determine which words are used most frequently to describe the issue, and therefore which perspective is most salient.

This micro-analysis of the text will focus on the actors, their social position and how they are described. Laurence Bardin proposes a method for a more objective and reliable analysis of the text with the *Stanford Political Dictionary* made to analyze political documents automatically. This computer method of analysis is based on Osgood’s semantic differential that rates the connotative meaning of words, particularly adjectives and their referent concepts (Bardin, 1986; 100). Referential

units are useful when trying to make inferences about values, attitudes or preferences in the text (Krippendorff, 2004). Based on the bipolar adjective pairs, this method enables the analysis of key concepts such as “favourable” and “against” or “weak” and “strong” through word association. We will be able to see which terms are most associated with certain concepts and therefore see the most frequent descriptions of the actors and events ongoing in both Catalonia and Scotland.

The Qualitative analysis

The qualitative analysis will focus on the syntactical structure of the text, and more specifically at the narrative structure and the thematic organization. The syntactical structure of the text will be elaborated for all the articles selected, according to the method elaborated on by van Dijk. An example of this syntactical analysis has been elaborated in the chart entitled “Structural Elements of the Story” and takes apart the simplest forms of sentences in the article in order to analyse the narrative of the discourse.

After we have established the narrative structure of the text, we will continue with the method of evaluation given by Laurence Bardin and useful for the analysis of what the content says, more than the frequency of appearance of textual elements. According to Laurence Bardin, a good analysis includes the “direction” of the theme expressed (what side does the argument expose) and the “intensity” (the strength of conviction) expressed (Bardin, 1977: 119). Once we have established the main themes expressed, we will attempt to determine the evolution of theme patterns over time, and their variations in intensity.

In order to determine the direction and intensity of the messages, we will use Laurence Bardin’s method for evaluating the attitudes of the subjects. The direction of a theme relates to the opinion orientation; whether it is in favour/against, positive/negative, friendly/hostile, approving/not approving, optimistic/ pessimistic ...Etc. The intensity represents the strength of conviction expressed. This can be expressed from a scale of -3 to +3, the lowest being a low conviction, 0 being neutral and +5 representing a strong convictions.

THEMES	DIRECTION	INTENSITY
Scottish referendum		
Independence as the political solution		
Public Opinion		
Consequences of independence		

Once we have established our thematic groups, we will highlight three elements present in each theme: (1) Attitude objects, (2) evaluative common meaning terms, and (3) verbal connectors. These three elements are included in Bardin’s methodology for analyzing a text according to its intensity and direction. Once the attitude object is defined, we need to simplify the text into its simplest syntactical form, composed of only the essential elements – subject, verb, and complement (Bardin, 1986: 122). It is only once we have simplified each segment of the text that the verbal connectors can be analyzed as positive or negative in relation to the qualifier. Bardin proposes an intensity scale of –3 to +3 to evaluate the intensity of the verbal connectors.

We will qualify the verbal connectors as positive when they are associative and the verb unifies with the attitude object and its qualifier. On the other hand, the verbal connector will have a negative value when the verb separates the object and its qualification (Bardin, 1986:123).

The intensity is related to the use of certain words that reinforce the action of the verb. The present tense, and adjectives like “definitely”, “absolutely”, and “firmly” for example, reflect a strong intensity. On the other hand, a lower intensity will be characterized by hypothetical relations or the presence of adverbs like “lightly” or “occasionally” (Bardin, 1986:123).

The past literature on the nature of news in the US and Europe has extensively agreed on the prevalence of certain frames usually found in the news (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; Pan & Kosicki, 1993; van Dijk, 1988). According to past research, five news frames have been identified as prevalent in the news; (1) *the conflict frame*; (2) *the human interest frame*; (3) *the economic consequence frame*; (4) *the morality*

frame and (5) the *responsibility frame* (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; 95-96). Following the research on frame, we will use a deductive approach to assess the prevalence of frames in the news. More specifically, we are interested in the *conflict frame* and the *economic consequences frame*, which, according to Semetko and Valkenburg, are the most frequently seen in the news.

Just like any public issue, the question of independence in Scotland and Catalonia is one that opposes the parts of the population against each other. Such a dividing issue eventually includes a conflictual depiction of the story between those in favour of independence and those against it. The *conflict frame* has been observed to be the most common frame identified in the news (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; Camaj, L. 2010). One observation argues that the discussion in the news between political elites often reduces a complex political debate to overly simplistic conflict. This assumption was confirmed by Camaj in her analysis on the framing of the Kosovo political status negotiations. It was argued that the reporting of the negotiations were dealt with in a superficial manner that emphasized conflict and downplayed other aspects of issues that deal with deeper interpretations, such as responsibility for causing or solving the problems and their impact on society or the economy (Camaj, 2010; 649). In the research of Camaj on the uses of news frames by four influential international news agencies, the findings suggest that the event-oriented factors mostly influence international news (Camaj, 2012). More specifically, the author concluded that the western news agencies emphasized the ‘conflict’ frame when reporting on the Kosovo status issue, and the ‘human interest’ and ‘economic consequences’ frame were rarely present. Furthermore, Camaj emphasized the evolution of the conflict frame by deducing that the conflict frame was employed more intensively toward the end of the negotiations, when the polarization of the international community over Kosovo’s final political status was at a heated point. It was observed that the news agencies placed emphasis on the ‘solution’ nature of the frame as the political negotiations advanced, and a serious solution was proposed for Kosovo (Camaj, 2010; 648).

In this research we are interested in examining how the conflictual political issue of independence in Scotland and Catalonia is described, and how it evolves, as we get closer to the referendum date. One indicator of the central conflict is the choice of actors presenting information, ideas, and positions within the article (Hertog &

McLeod, 2001; 148). We will therefore look at the sources chosen since they structure de discussion. Who is privileged to speak and who is not given a role to play?

The *economic consequence frame* reports an issue in terms of the consequences it will have economically on an individual or a country (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; 96). As we discussed earlier, one of the driving factor behind the independence claims in Scotland and Catalonia is economic. It therefore makes sense to see how this frame plays out in relation to others in the news story. Furthermore, the extensive time period under study could reveal evolutions on how the economic consequence frame is characterized.

We have decided to include two other major topics prevalent in the discussions on the independence of Catalonia and Scotland that will be used as frames. In order to understand how the issue is covered by the Canadian press we will include the *political solutions frame* which includes variables on the different solutions, including full independence, that are also part of the debate. We will code all the political solutions discussed between the two parties (devolution, reform of the fiscal pact, “devo-max”, “devo-min”, revision of status etc...) in order to deduce which solution is more salient in the news, and if it evolves from the 2 phases under study in the political negotiations in Catalonia and Scotland.

Another significant and prevalent topic in any conflictual political issue in a democracy includes the opinion of the public. We have decided to include a *public opinion frame* that will encompass the reaction of the populations and the extent to which they support the political solutions exposed by the political parties. This frame will include indicators such as opinion polls, citizen reactions, and election results discussed in the news stories. It will be particularly interesting to note the evolution of the public opinion frame between the two separate phases over the 4 year period under study for both Catalonia and Scotland.

The frames explained above are resumed in the following table which will serve as the basis for establishing the frames used in the articles collected.

FRAMES	DEFINITION
Event-oriented	
conflict	Underlines conflicting nature of issue by emphasizing polarization of groups involved, institutions or ideologies.
human interest	Bring the 'human face' to stories by focusing on people who are, or will be, affected.
Context-oriented	
responsibility	Emphasized attribution of problem to a person, institution or government.
economic consequences	Reports events/issues in terms of the consequences they will have on people or institutions
Public opinion	The support in favour, or against the different political solutions.
Political solutions	The political solutions presented as alternatives to the renegotiations of the political status of the regions.

Figure 4: Different categories of a framing analysis (based on the study of Semetko & Valkenburg, 2010)

O2: Determine how the discourse of the Canadian coverage on the nationalist movements in Europe evolves from January 2011 to September of 2014, the date set for a referendum on independence in Scotland.

RQ4: Do the frames used in the coverage by the online press organizations under study change from the first phase of the analysis to the second phase?

RQ5: Does the press portray the central government as reluctant to change the status quo, or on the other hand does the media coverage evoke different solutions other than independence for Scotland and Catalonia?

The type of analysis used for this objective will be a qualitative content analysis of the discourse in the news. In this way, we will be able to look at the organization of news texts and its signifying elements which indicate the advocacy of ideas and provide devices to encourage certain kinds of audience processing of the texts (Pan & Kosicki, 1993:56). In order to establish the narratives of texts and their possible evolution, we will proceed to a thematic analysis of the news story. This macro-

analysis takes a closer look at the ‘news schemata’ of the text organized into a hierarchy of themes that represent what the text is about (van Dijk; 1984).

By applying a critical discourse analysis to the news story, we will attempt to highlight the questions of ideology and the problems of message encoding that serve to maintain and mediate social relationship (Davis, H. 1985; 45). If we want to understand why the framing of the news coverage is distinct between the different news organizations under study, we need to analyze the same data used for our quantitative content analysis but with a change of perspective more towards the power of language and the varieties and context of language use. We will interpret the news discourse according to who is doing the speaking and what are they saying. (Davis, H., 1985, 52). After a micro-analysis of the words in the text to answer our first objective, the second objective will be achieved through a macro-level analysis of the topics presented in the news articles during the time period under study.

The critical discourse analysis is quite different from a traditional content analysis in the sense that the text is viewed in its context, as the product of institutional processes of selection and codification which render apparently obvious meanings problematic and constrain the flow of information (Davis, 1985; 52). In order to get an insight from the communicators that are part of these institutions, we have decided to further explore the results from our content analysis with a series of semi-structured interviews to the foreign editors from the different news organizations.

This is important because the framing of news stories may also be understood as a strategy of constructing and processing news discourse, related to journalistic professional routines and conventions (Pan & Kosicki, 1993:57). From an ethnomethodological perspective the professional routine of journalists provide a device to produce news as a form of ‘reality construction’ according to how they see and understand the world and hence news events, and how they reproduce these events in the press (Tuchman, 1978, van Dijk; 1985). Although large parts of the news already appear to be pre-formulated by influential news sources such as government officials, the accounts of journalists enable us to link the macro-context of news with the actual meanings and forms of news discourse (van Dijk, 1985).

The analysis of the discourse will be divided into two phases for both Scotland and Catalonia, as discussed earlier.

Catalonia

Phase 1: January 2011 to November 2012 (included)

Phase 2: December 2012 to December 2014 (included)

Scotland

Phase 1: January 2011 to October 2012 (included)

Phase 2: November 2012 to December 2014 (included)

Through the analysis of the structural elements that make up the units of analysis (the news story), we will analyze the lexical choices, the sentence construction, the presuppositions, the rhetorical tropes and the narrative (Richardson, 2007; 45-70). These key concepts will be discussed below for further detail on the significant elements of the text for our critical discourse analysis.

O3: Determine to which extent the coverage on the nationalist movements in Europe serves to revive the debate on the independence question of Québec.

Our third objective attempts to link the discussion on the independence of Scotland and Catalonia to the historical tradition of Québec independence. We want to determine whether a convergence can be established between the news discourse on the European nationalist movements and the Canadian issue with the Francophone region of Québec.

In order to establish these connections, we will use the content analysis of the semi-structured interviews to the editors of the foreign sections of each news organizations in order to obtain a better explanation of the political context in Québec and Canada. Through the interviews, we are hoping to deduce relations between the political context in Québec and the journalists's daily profession of reporting on political issues. What types of constraints or difficulties do journalists encounter when writing about a foreign issue? Where do they get most of their sources? Do their articles

trigger many reactions and commentaries? How do the news organization exploit this potential?

The semi-structured interviews are recommended to obtain specific information, detail and context. A qualitative interview will be focused on understanding knowledge, and insights of the interviewees, and not in categorizing people or events in terms of academic theories (Rubin, H.J., & Rubin, I.S., 1995). At this point of the research we have not elaborated the exact questions to be asked since they will depend on the results of our content analysis.

In order to detect any convergence between the region of Quebec and Catalonia as well as Quebec and Scotland, we will focus on the Quebecker and Canadian political actors and institutional subjects that evoke Scotland and/or Catalonia. We will analyze the sources from the news text and their perspective on the issue. Of particular relevance for this part of the research are the sources from Québec, such as politicians cited on their perspective or comments of the nationalist movements in Europe, and more particularly Scotland and Catalonia.

Is the new interactivity of online news articles encouraging public debate on the independence issue of Quebec? We will proceed to the discourse analysis of the commentaries and responses to the articles under study. That will enable us to obtain the reactions of people living in Canada on the issue of European nationalist movements in relation to the situation in Québec. We will explore the concept of interactivity between reader-generated content and the news organizations. With the theoretical background of a democratic tradition that emphasizes processes of deliberation and the importance of expanded and vivid public sphere, we will try and establish whether such public deliberation is really free and unconstrained on all common issues, and especially on such conflictual concerns as nationalism. We will look at the works of Bohman, J. & Rehg, W. (1997) and Fishkin, J. (1991) and determine whether the Internet can really be a new medium that could extend the traditional interactive methods such as Letters to the Editors. Following the method used by Tanjev Schultz in his story of newspaper interactivity in U.S., we will pay attention to the news organization that enable discussion polls and commentaries, as well as which articles generate more reactions (2006).

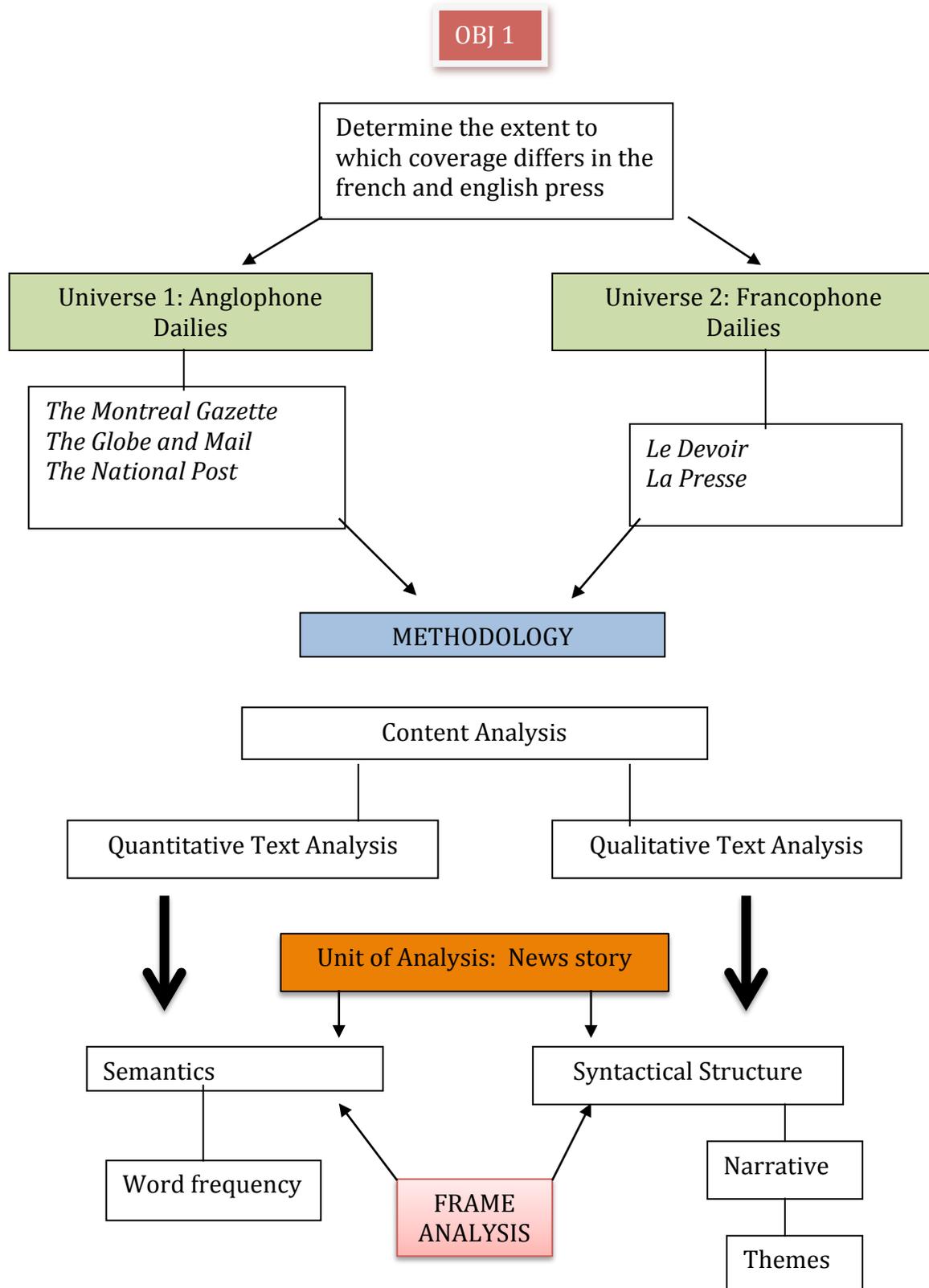


Figure 6: The methodology and techniques of analysis for objective 1

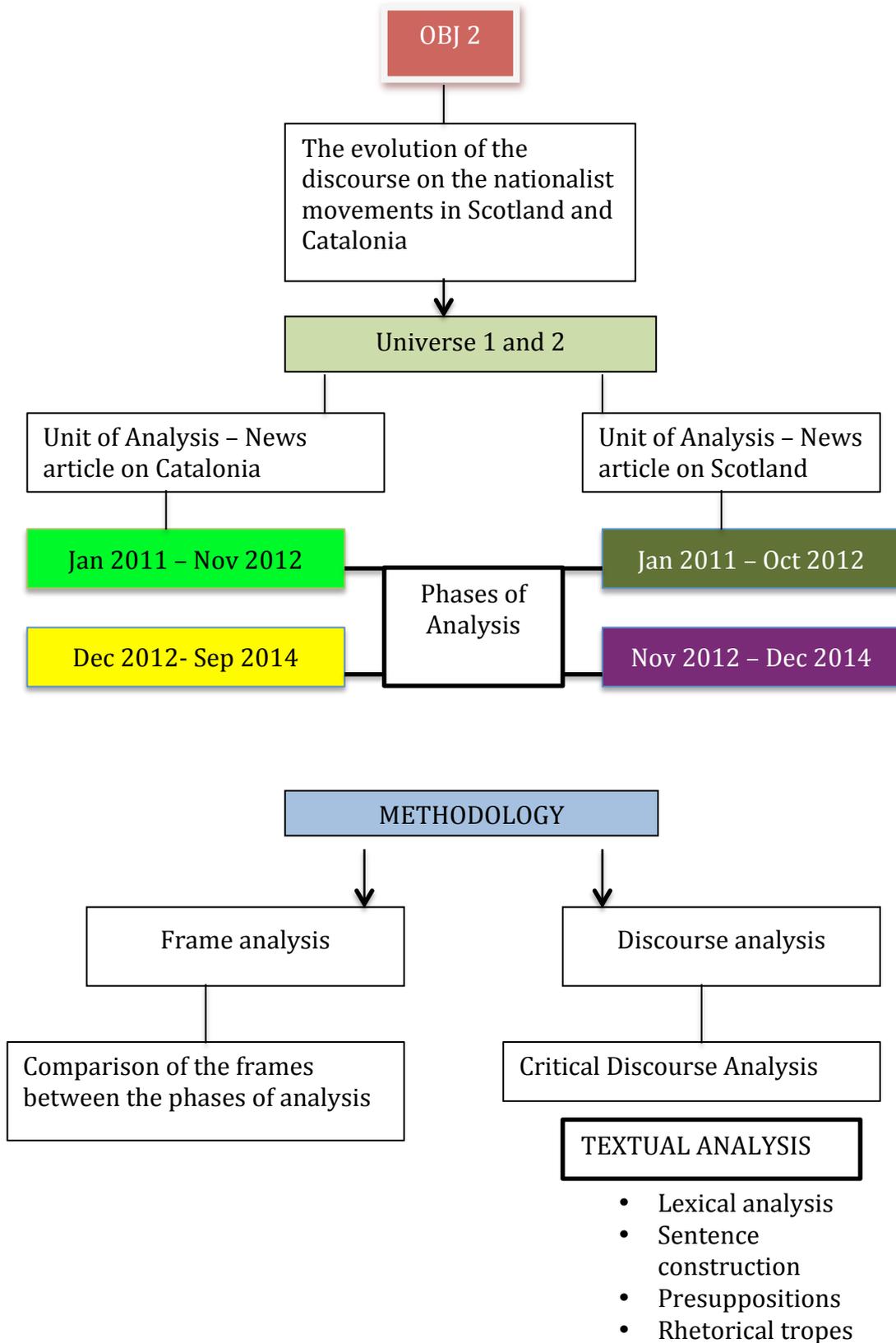


Figure 6: The methodology and techniques of analysis for objective

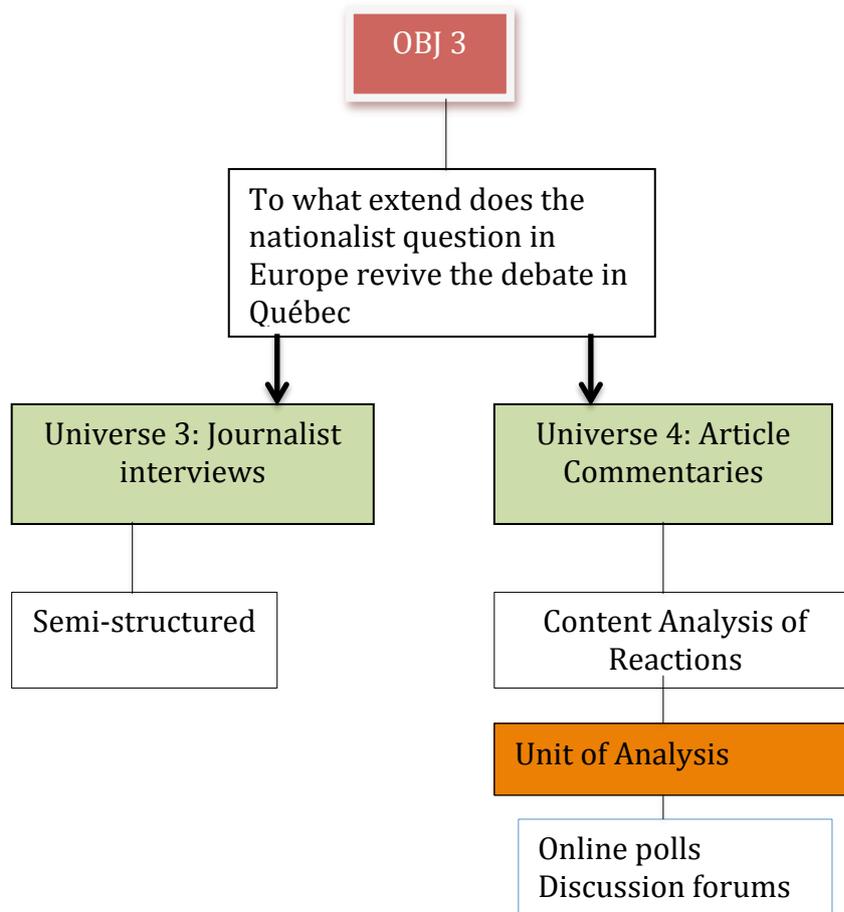


Figure 7: The methodology and techniques of analysis for objective 3

4.5 Key Concepts of the Research

There are several key concepts that we propose and to which we will relate our research questions and objectives in order to clarify how we will concretely analyze the texts. We will clarify the main concepts attributed to a critical discourse analysis of a news text, based on the work of John E. Richardson on “Analysing Newspapers.” He establishes five key concepts and levels of textual analysis that start at the small-scale (micro) analysis of news text to large-scale analysis (macro) of the organization of meaning across the text (Richardson, 2007). He first elaborates on the **(a) lexical analysis**, followed by the **(b) sentence construction**, **(c) the presupposition**, the **(d) rhetorical tropes** and finally **(e) the narratives**.

(a) Lexical analysis: choice of words

In order to determine which themes are most salient in the articles on the independence of Scotland and Catalonia, we need to look at the lexical choice of words by the communicator. As part of our quantitative content analysis, we will mark the presence and sum up the number of times several key words have been used in each article. This exercise will be coded in our coding sheet, and used to establish which frames are used in the text. According to Richardson, the words used to communicate messages about an event frame the story in a direct and unavoidable way (Richardson, 2007; 48). (See Annex)

By taking into account the specific choices of words, we will be able to determine the degree of formality, the institutional embedding of discourse and the attitudes and hence ideologies of the speaker (van Dijk, 1988; 77). We will look for stereotypical words that are used routinely to denote certain characteristics of person or groups considered negatively or positively by journalists or other referent groups in order to establish the point of view in the coverage.

According to Pan and Kosicki one makes sense of a story through the “structurally located lexical choices of codes” (1993; 59). These elements of discourse are arranged into themes, which communicate a certain intended meaning by directing attention as well as restricting the perspectives available to the audiences (Tuchman, 1988). The lexical choices will inevitably be different in the coverage of English and French news organizations. The choices of words imply negative or positive implications, and therefore are useful to establish the evaluations based on the point of view and ideology of the reporter (1988;70).

For every unit of analysis (articles) we will code the way people are named in order to detect the “referential strategies” that result in associating an actor to a specific group or category (Richardson, 2007;50). These referential strategies can serve many different social or political purposes and will shed light on the way certain actors or individuals are viewed (Wodak et al, 1999). Indeed they project meaning and social values onto the referent and establish coherence relations with the way the other social actors are referred to in the text (Richardson, 2007; 50).

This leads us to the dichotomous depictions of reality constructed by the media and suggested by several communication researchers (van Dijk 1985, Richardson, 2007). The referential strategies create what van Dijk refers to as an “ideological square” which is a way of perceiving the world that is resumed through a positive self-presentation versus a negative presentation of the other (1985, 51). We will code the referential names of the actors implicated in the news story in the objective of highlighting how each party is described. Since referential strategies bear the imprint of value judgments, they are represented in the text through attributes (adjectives, appositions, prepositional phrases, relative clauses, conjunctive clauses, infinitive clauses and participial clauses or groups) by predicative nouns/adjectives/pronouns, by comparisons, similes, metaphors and other rhetorical figures (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001; 54).

(b) Sentence construction; Syntax, transitivity and modality

The way the sentence is constructed depends on the syntactical structure and transitivity, which according to Richardson represents “*who does what to whom?*” (2007; 54). Transitivity refers to how actions are represented, and describes therefore the relationships between participants and the role they play in the processes described in the reporting. There are three components of a sentence that can be changed; the participants, the process itself and the circumstances associated with the process (Richardson, 2007; 55). The participants, typically realized by noun phrases in the clause, can be changed by using different referential strategies; as discussed in the paragraph above. The process, usually expressed by a verb, can either be verbal, mental, relational or material, and can be further divided into transitive and intransitive actions (Richardson, 2007; 55). The *transitive* actions involve two or more participants, and represent the agent and the object of the action. An *intransitive* action only concerns one participant. The process itself can be passively or actively constructed, depending of where the subject stands in relation to the action. For example, when the actor is deleted (which happens a lot in newspaper coverage), this can be very significant in terms of naming a responsible actor for the action. By deleting the subject, the author may wish to place more attention on the event, rather than on who was doing the action. These elements allow the writer to describe the same event in many different ways, that carry significant connoted meanings. Finally,

the circumstances can be changed by adding additional contextualization (adverbial or prepositional phrases) or through the structuring or framing of a process' meaning relations (Richardson, 2007; 55).

Modality refers to judgments, comment and attitude in text, and more specifically the degree to which to writer is committed to the claim he is making. We need to look at adverbs like *certainly* or modal verbs such as *may*, *could*, *should*, *will* and *must* as well as their negations in order to analyze a more opinionated genre of journalism. There are two forms of modality; truth modality and obligation, which are both relevant to our discourse analysis. By looking at the truth modality, we will determine the scale of belief, whether categorical, or uncertain. To use an example, verbes such as *will*, *must*, and *certainly* are more authoritative, whereas verbs with a lower degree of commitment can connote less fact and more supposition. The obligation modality refers to future events and the degree to which the writer believes that a certain decision ought to be taken (Richardson, 2007;60).

(c) Presuppositions: Looking at what is not there

The hidden or presupposed meaning in a text are also an important factor of the discourse analysis. A presupposition is defined as an implicit claim embedded within the explicit meaning of a text (Richardson, 2007;63). They include change of state verbs (stop, begin, continue) or implicative verbs (manage, forget), as well as definite articles (the) and possessive articles (his/her), and finally nominal presupposition which are the nouns and adjectives used to qualify or modify a noun phrase (Richardson, 2007; 63-64).

(d) Rhetorical tropes

Tropes signify deviations from the ordinary and principal signification of a word, and are employed strategically as a way of describing things to make them present in our mind (Richardson, 2007; 65). Since they are additional structures in texts that draw attention, they may therefore indirectly emphasize meanings (van Dijk, 1988). Richardson explores five tropes which he deemes most important for the analysis of

newspaper discourse: the hyperbole, the metaphor, metonym, neologism and puns (2007; 66-70).

(e) Narrative

The narrative content refers to the sequence of events as they occurred in the actual news story. The plot, or the structure of actions, usually follows a simple three-parts structure; *setting*, *event* and *outcome*. This order of sequence has been characterized as an order of meaning towards which the readers need specific knowledge to establish a coherent link between the situation and the action and how an outcome is achieved (Richardson, 2007; 71). The form of narratives is the inverted pyramid whereby the climax is introduced first, in order of importance, as opposed to following a chronological development. We will establish the order to events and the structure of the news story for each article under study in order to analyze how the events are described and their order of importance.

Van Dijk points out in his work on discourse analysis that reports are constructed in the news according to a hierarchical order of importance (1985; 41). We will look at the syntactical structures, and more specifically headlines and leads of articles, and determine whether they express the main theme or topic of the article. Since the organization of the news text is in the shape of an inverted pyramid, with the most relevant information first, we will place particular analyzing importance to the title and lead. Van Dijk notes that when a headline or lead is not an adequate summarization of the full overall meaning of a text, we can deduce that the text is biased (1985:77).

Myths are closely related to narratives and common within a culture. They may be tied to any significant societal entities and are widely shared and understood within the culture and therefore are prone to adding beliefs, feelings, expectations and values to a text (Hertog & McLeod, 2001; 148). They are important components of a framing analysis.

One of the persuasive strategies of news is to organize facts into well-known specific structures, such as narratives, in order to build a strong relational structure for facts

(van Dijk, 1985; 84-85). According to Hertog & McLeod, narratives are powerful organizing devices and most frames will have ideal narratives that organize large amount of ideas and information (2001; 148).

Every news story has a theme that functions as the central organizing idea, according to Gamson & Modigliani (1989). In order to determine the main theme, or semantic macrostructures that make up a news text⁸, we need to follow certain linguistic and cognitive rules and strategies. We need to establish the semantic structures of a text that relate to the topics and themes with meaning and reference (as opposed to the syntactic forms and rhetorical devices) in order to establish the order of importance of the topics. In other words we need to establish the global structures of discourse that make up a text, by establishing the meaning of larger fragments of texts (van Dijk, 1985:75).

We are aware that there can be several interpretations to what is assumed relevant in a text, and therefore the topics we assign to a text or the summary we make of it can be subjective. We will use the *macrorules* elaborated by Teun A. van Dijk (1985; 87) in order to summarize the articles under study. These include three principles to reduce the complex, detailed structure of a text, into an overall macrostructure, or theme. This will enable us to detect the thematic organization of the text and the global coherence through:

- 1) Deletion: the reduction of unnecessary local details
- 2) Generalization: of the sequence of propositions
- 3) (Re)construction: of the overall event by one single *macroproposition* that denotes the act of event as a whole.

These *macrorules* can be applied throughout the text to produce a hierarchical macrostructure, consisting of several levels, and each level consisting of a sequence of themes and topic (van Dijk, 1985:76). In order to establish the topics in a news text, we will follow the *macrostrategies* established in the work of van Dijk, and

⁸ According to Pan & Kosicki (1993) in their article on *Framing Analysis*, a theme is “ an idea that connects different semantic elements of a story (e.g. descriptions of an actor or action, quotes of sources, and background information) into a coherent whole.”

based on important textual devices such as headlines and leads to help build the thematic structure. After having codified the article according to the Figure 3, we will summarize each article according to the hierarchy of themes, through the structural elements of the text.

(3) Structural elements of discourse

Pan and Kosicki conceived the structural elements of discourse in an attempt to stipulate a conceptual model of news text that could be operational in a systematic empirical way (1993; 69). The structural elements of discourse include syntactical, script, thematic and rhetorical structures which once applied to the text enable the researcher to distinguish the organization of discourse in a text. We have set up an example of how we will pick up the structural elements of a story in Table 2, after the sentences were simplified to their simplest form – propositions with a verb unit and an actor unit. (See Annex)

The syntactical elements form part of the structural elements of discourse, and represent a reliable way to look at the intensity and direction of the content, by focusing on verbs and adverbs, as opposed to only words (Bardin, 1986). In our table on the structural elements of discourse, we will codify the words (adjectives and adverbs) that relate to the intensity of the action and the direction.

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