

Framing Analysis of Kosovo Independence in Global Media

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Thesis submitted to the faculty of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

in partial

fulfillment of requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Communication

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May 6, 2009

Blacksburg, Virginia

Keywords: Framing, Generic Frames, Macro-Frames, Kosovo Independence,

International Media

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Abstract

On February 17, 2008 Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia and the event spurred significant media attention. Countries like Spain, Romania, and Russia feared that the event would engender separatism on their own territories, while the U.S., Germany, France, Italy, and UK regarded it as a democratic step. This thesis uses the framing theory to content analyze newspaper articles in seven languages ($N=191$) that appeared between November 17, 2007 and May 17, 2008, three months before and three months after Kosovo became an independent state. The thesis uses the five generic frames (responsibility, human interest, consequences, morality, and conflict) developed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) as well as the three “macro-frames” (cynicism, speculation, and metacommunication) established by Constantinescu and Tedesco (2007). Results revealed that media from the countries that supported the Kosovo independence framed the event from the perspective of democracy and were almost twice more likely to discuss the position of the U.S., a key decision- maker in the Kosovo issue, than media from the countries that opposed it. Furthermore, newspaper articles from countries that did not support the event were nearly three times more inclined to present the Kosovo independence from the perspective of a precedent for separatism in Europe and the world.

By applying the framing theory in an international study, this thesis sheds light on the discrepancies in media coverage from these different democratic systems.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. John C. Tedesco and Dr. James D. Ivory who brought precious contributions to this thesis. I am also thankful to Dr. Andrew P. Williams who helped me develop the first draft of this thesis during his course.

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Statement of Purpose

Official recognition of the Kosovo independence on February 17, 2008, by countries such as United Kingdom (UK), France, Germany, Italy, and the United States (U.S.), engendered fear of a precedent for international practice. If the Kosovo independence does indeed set a precedent in Europe, conflicts might arise in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia, South Ossetia, the Moldovan region of Tran-Dniester, and region of Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan, where Russia exerts paramount influence, in the Spanish regions of Basque and Catalan, as well as in the Romanian region of Transylvania. All the regions mentioned above have been known for sensitive religious and ethnic issues as well as for the aim of the minorities to gain independence from the rest of the country.

Considered a threat to peace in Europe by countries like Russia, Spain, and Romania, the newly created state could be an example for other ethnic and religious groups to fight for their independence and engender hatred, intolerance, or ethnic cleansing. Furthermore, the Kosovo issue became a matter of dispute between long time political rivals Russia and the U.S.

While George Bush asserted that "in its declaration of independence, Kosovo committed itself to the highest standards of democracy, including freedom, tolerance and justice for citizens of all ethnic backgrounds," and that "these are the principles that honor human dignity and values America looks for in a friend," ("Bush Hails Kosovo," 2008, para. 2), the Russian President Vladimir Putin addressed the countries that supported the Kosovo independence by pointing out that "Kosovo independence is immoral and illegal" ("Putin accuses West," 2008, para. 2). Putin added: " For 40 years northern Cyprus has practically had independence. Why aren't you

recognizing that? Aren't you ashamed for having these double standards?" ("Putin accuses West," 2008, para. 7)

Countries in Europe that presently deal with sensitive issues of religion and ethnic minority groups fear that the case of Kosovo will provoke a global storm of separatism and explode the international order. With a rate of 50 percent unemployment, no significant economy of its own, and dependence on Russia and Serbia for gas and fuel, Kosovo's transition to democracy appears a difficult process. Bearing this considerations in mind, this thesis is among the first studies that explore the controversial independence of Kosovo.

Historical Background

The struggle for Kosovo independence has been the result of the tense relationship between the Albanian and the Serbian population in the region. According to Carter and Norris (1996) the majority of the Albanians living in the province of Kosovo are Muslims and only around 50,000 share the Christian religion of either Roman Catholicism or Greek Orthodoxy. Carter and Norris (1996) provided a brief history of the tense relationship between the Albanian and the Serbian population of Kosovo and considered that the voice of the Albanians failed to be heard at an international level because their commentaries were expressed in languages of low circulation such as Arabic, Persian, Turkish, or Urdu.

The authors cited the work of Allain Ducellier (1987) who provided an insight into the history of Kosovo and showed that the region was first populated by the Illyro- Albanians until the Slavs, the Bulgars, and the Serbs occupied the area in the 7th century. By the 13th century, the Serbs transformed Kosovo into a strong economic and political center and the two populations coexisted in harmony. Though further research would still be needed in this regard, according to Ducellier (1987), the Albanian population became a majority after the Ottoman

conquest in 1389 and as a result of the immigration of the Christian Albanians from the north. Gradually, the Serbian population of Kosovo was compelled to adopt the religion of Islam as well as to adhere to the Albanian customs and rites, a process that was eased by entering inter-marital relationships.

According to Carter and Norris (1996), missionaries of Catholicism also contributed to the weakening of the Orthodox Serbs by encouraging the attacks of the Albanians on the Serbian population. Furthermore, in 1776, the Patriarch of Pec, the Seat of the Greek Orthodox Church, was closed down which led the Serbs to believe that they would be forced to convert to Islam.

In 1934 Yugoslavia, Turkey, Romania, and Greece signed the Balkan Alliance, according to which Yugoslavia would move out the Albanian population to Turkey and would provide financial compensation. Yet, the convention was not carried out because of lack of funds and the fear of public riots.

When discussing the Kosovar identity from an Albanian and Serbian perspective, John Halliday (1986) described the Kosovo issue as follows:

Kosovo represents two different things for the two states. For Belgrade, it is a backward region, populated mainly by an unwelcome national minority, bordering on a state (Albania) with which relations are frosty and difficult. For Tirana, Kosovo is not only the historical center of Albanian nationalism and resistance to the Turks, but also where some 1.7 million ethnic Albanians live- one third of all the Albanians in the world (p.34).

In the 1970s the relationship between the Serbs and the Albanians living in Kosovo appeared to be a peaceful one and nationalism and separatism seemed to have decreased. Marmullaku (1975) attributed it to the political and cultural emancipation that took place at that time:

“In the multinational federal Yugoslavia of today, in which they enjoy equal rights, cultural, political, and economic emancipation, they feel at home and are committed to maintain the security and the integrity of their homeland.”

The decrease in tension between the Islamic Albanians and the Orthodox Serbs could be attributed to the fact that the former were allowed to develop their own identity through art, literature, and preservation of religion. For example Carter and Norris (1996) mention that Islam was recognized as a faith in Serbia in 1868 and that, the Muslim population in Kosovo continued throughout time to develop their own architecture and Islamic culture.

Yet, according to the “*Kosovo-History of a Balkan Hotspot*,” an intelligence report provided by the Office of DCI Interagency Balkan Task Force, Kosovo entails several historic sites that are of relevant importance to Serbia and which are the reason why Serbians regard Kosovo as their cultural and spiritual cradle. Some of the sites the report mentions are: (1) The Patriarch of Pec, which serves as the seat of the Serbian Orthodox church and is made up of three churches that were built in the 13th century, (2) the Gračanica Monastery, located in the south of Pristina and considered one of the finest examples of the 14th religious architecture, and (3) the largest Serbian church, called Visoki Decani Monastery, built in the 14th century and covered with around 1,000 frescoes.

Furthermore, the formation of the Republic of Kosovo is the result of turmoil caused by the break-up from Yugoslavia and by the three-year Kosovo war that started in 1996.

In 1990, following a tremendous economic breakdown, the newly elected government of Yugoslavia turned its efforts toward the break-up of the country. Additionally, there were several structural flaws that led to the split of Yugoslavia, such as: the decentralized marketing socialism, and the 1974 Constitution that increased the power of the republics while dampening

the influence of the federal government. Moreover, the death of the communist leader, Tito, in 1980, threw the Communist Party into crisis. At this time, Slovenia and Croatia were demanding looser ties within the Federation, whilst Kosovo craved for the republic status. The Serbian communist leader, Slobodan Milosevic, sought to restore the Serbian sovereignty and succeeded in reducing the autonomy of the provinces Vojvodina, Kosovo, and Metohjia. In the meantime, the conflict between Albanians and Serbs increased in Kosovo, with Croatia supporting the former.

The Yugoslavian Wars broke out in 1990 as a consequence of the attempt of the new regime to replace the Yugoslav civilian and military forces by secessionist ones. As a consequence, Slovenia, Croatia, and Macedonia separated from Yugoslavia in 1991 and Bosnia and Herzegovina followed suit. However, Kosovo became part of Serbia under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) administration until February 2008 when it declared its independence. The Parliament of Kosovo approved a new Constitution in June 2008 and up to that date 47 states recognized the independence of the province. Germany, France, Italy, Great Britain, and the U.S.A were the first to support the Kosovo independence in the name of democracy, whereas Russia, Spain, Bulgaria, and Romania expressed fear of creating a separatist precedent in Europe.

Literature Review

The ensuing overview of existing literature aims to provide justification for this study and to create a bridge between the rich area of communication research, framing theory, and international studies.

Framing Theory

Defining the Concept of Framing

Studies and analyses of frames revealed that the communication of a piece of information exerts influence upon the human consciousness from one location such as a speech, utterance, news, report- to that of consciousness (Entman, 1993).

For the purpose of the study, framing will be defined according to Entman (1993), who asserted that “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 definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.” According to Gamson (1992) frames diagnose, evaluate, and prescribe. In sum, frames define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and suggest solutions. Entman (1993, p.55) considered that frames have four locations in the communication process: the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture. Guided by frames or schemata that organize their system of beliefs, communicators make framing judgments either consciously or unconsciously. The text they communicate consists of frames that could be manifested by certain key words, phrases, or stereotyped images that may reinforce clusters of facts into the reader’s mind, influencing their perspective upon a certain issue, fact, or event.

An important element taken into consideration for this study is *culture*. The term was defined by Entman (1993, 52) as “the stock of commonly invoked frames” and as the “empirically demonstrable set of common frames exhibited in the discourse and thinking of most people in a social grouping.”

Framing, as manifest in the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture is characterized by the selection and presentation of certain aspects over others. The purpose of framing is to describe and evaluate an issue, as well as to propose a solution. Culturally familiar images or symbols, as well as the way in which the information is placed or repeated lead to the salience of certain aspects that could exert strong influence upon audience. Several scholars present organizing schemes or classification systems for framing research.

DeVresse (2003) distinguishes between two types of media frames: *issue-specific* (the frames of an event) and *generic frames* (identifiable across several events or issues.) This study will focus upon the issue-specific frames, but it will also take into account the distinction of frames made by Williams and Kaid (2003), according to which frames can be classified as *substantive* (frames that provide detailed information) and *ambiguous* (frames that offer a general perspective upon an issue).

Iyengar and Simon (1993) distinguish between *episodic* and *thematic* frames. The episodic frames refer to the coverage of an event or issue which is reported as specific or particular, whereas the thematic coverage places the event in a somewhat general context.

Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) present an analysis of international news coverage and identify five generic frames. The five frames are described and labeled as follows: *conflict* frame (describes the conflict between individuals and institutions so as to attract the attention of the audience), *human interest* frame (inserts emotion in covering an event), *economic consequences*

frame (an event is covered from an economic perspective presenting the consequences that this will have on the audience), *morality* frame (discusses the moral tenets of an event), *responsibility* frame (presents the event in such a way that responsibility for its occurrence is bestowed upon and individual or institution). Constantinescu and Tedesco (2007) expanded on the five generic frames presented by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) by asserting that three macro frames exist: metacommunication, speculation, and cynicism. Additionally, scholars have evaluated frames for their valence e.g., positive, negative, and neutral.

Research Questions and Framing

According to Entman (1993) frames exert different functions, such as defining issues and problems, diagnosing causes, suggesting remedies, and making moral judgments. This thesis will make allowances for the *prognostic* and *diagnostic* frames in the news articles.

Based on the above literature, the following research questions were proposed:

RQ1: In regard to Kosovo independence, what issues were dominant in the overall news stories?

RQ2: In regard to Kosovo independence, what frames were dominant in the global media?

RQ3: Is there any evidence of frame shifts during the six-month analysis pre- and post-Kosovo declaration?

RQ4: What, if any, differences emerge between media from pro- and anti- Kosovo countries?

The analysis of the controversial independence of Kosovo may advance knowledge about the theory of framing since it will provide a thorough study of newspapers throughout Europe and the U.S. This thesis will compare the relationship between frames as they appear at an

international level. Studying an event that has international consequences will lead to a better understanding of the framing theory in connection with culture, background, and history, three elements that strongly influence media coverage.

Past international research focused upon the way in which media in various countries chose to frame an event of international importance, thus demonstrating that the difference among cultures and political systems can lead to various perspectives upon a single event.

However, international studies did not pervade the communication and political scholarship to the same extent to which research upon the national media did, consequently scholarship is still deficient of explanations of paramount political events that occurred in the world and that could have been better understood had more studies been conducted in this respect.

Framing and International Studies

Previous research focused mostly on the Gulf War, the EU Elections, the War on Terror, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, studying the discrepancies in the traditional media such as newspapers and television on one hand and new media such as the internet on the other hand.

Esser and D'Angelo (2006) completed a compared study of the broadcast coverage of the 2000 U.S. presidential election, the 2001 British general election, and the 2002 German general election. In their comparison, the researchers used the term *metacoverage* in order to define the news about the press and publicity processes and the ways in which media broadcast these events. The goal of their study was to extend Esser and D'Angelo's previous framing analysis of *metacoverage* in the 2000 U.S. presidential campaign by using their frame as a basis to compare campaign news of elections in Germany, Great Britain, and the USA. The researchers hypothesized that *metacoverage* topics would be more voluminous in the U.S. election news

since the U.S. political system offers far more incentives for strategies of media-driven forms of campaigning than the parliamentary systems of Germany and Great Britain. More press and publicity topics were expected on the U.S. campaign news since U.S. candidates, unlike their European counterparts, made use of paid and free media. The data that resulted from the content analysis supported the hypotheses in the sense that the coverage of the general elections in UK and Germany was still national-specific and responsive to system-level characteristics, but the data were supplemented by elements and practices of transnational culture. For example, in Germany, the high number of stories about Voters/Public Opinion could be explained by the adaptation of the U.S. practice of TV networks to cover their self-initiated “exclusive” polls extensively.

Additionally, the study revealed that political communication in party-oriented cultures of UK and Germany are undergoing gradual change toward a more media-oriented style as the one to found in the U.S. candidate. The importance of the study performed by Esser and D’Angelo (2006) lies in the compared analysis of *metacoverage* that contributes to a better assessment of the change and stability in a country’s media political environment and can enable reevaluations of the discrepancies in the political communication cultures of the countries under study, thus leading to a better understanding of the population’s decisions with respect to voting.

El-Nawawy and Kelly (2001) also contributed to the international communication scholarship by identifying and assessing obstacles in the flow of information between governments in Israel and Egypt on one hand, and foreign correspondents on the other hand. The study investigated the nature of the relationship between the governments and the press, making use of two mass communication models: the *news-making* model and the *two-way asymmetric model* of public relations. According to Grunig and Hunt (1984), asymmetric model

practitioners try to understand and anticipate journalists' behavior so that they can develop messages that would suit the communication habits of the latter. Results showed that the Israeli press relations directors were more accessible and professional in releasing information about the Middle East conflict than their Egyptian counterparts. The Israeli government applied the Western PR model and provided information in a natural and spontaneous way. Israel was more likely to hold timely press conferences, issue fact-laden press releases, and provide more useful information than Egypt. Furthermore, the Egyptian government had only one official spokesman for all ministries, unlike Israel which provided a professional spokesperson for every individual ministry.

Based on the findings and on the two-asymmetric model, the researchers concluded that correspondents in Israel were more investigative and suspicious than the ones in Egypt, and more inclined towards skeptically investigating government claims.

El-Nawawy and Kelly (2001) also analyzed the differences between the ways in which correspondents from America and those from Western Europe covered the news about the conflict in Middle East. According to their findings, American correspondents delivered the information rather quickly, whereas their counterparts laid emphasis upon the importance of a deep analysis of complex problems in delivering news.

The study conducted by El- Nawawy and Kelly (2001) led to a better understanding of what generally causes differences in the framing of the one and the same event in global media. Such discrepancies are the result of the different cultural background of the correspondents, the media ethics of their native country, and also of the way in which they perceive the information flow provided by the government. Whether they regard information with skepticism and continue to investigate it, or whether they just deliver it further in the same form, they exert

influence upon how people perceive the event they report on. The role of the correspondents is to contribute to the way people regard other cultures and society and they “play a vital role in the process of cultures communicating with and across other cultures, being an important factor in the sensitivity and understanding of people of other background” (El-Nawawy, & Kelly, 2001, p.93).

In other words, El- Nawawy and Kelly (2001) provided a better understanding of the reason for which news framing differs across countries.

The war in Iraq was another topic that researchers made use of in order to assess and understand the dimensions of objectivity in the news that were broadcast during wartime. Aday, Livingston, and Hebert (2005) provided a study based on the content analysis of 1,820 stories on five American networks (ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, Fox Channel) and on the Arab satellite channel Al Jazeera. Their study assessed the bias on the tone of the individual stories as well as at the macro-level portrait of the war that was offered by each network. The results revealed that news norm of objectivity is defined by culture and ideology more than by events, as the norm would imply. The premise of their content analysis was based on Entman’s (1993) definition of news framing, according to which news framing implies “the selection of certain information over other information, and the relative salience a news organization attaches to what is included in a story or newscast.” The results showed that Al Jazeera did not provide an anti-American slant as expected, and only 36 percent of the stories under study were critical in tone. American television however provided stories of full support resorting to interviewing retired military officials and using the personal pronoun “we” whenever they referred to the American attacks.

Since during wartime the public relies more on the press in order to be able to indirectly experience what is happening on the battlefield, press coverage in wartime proved to be more

patriotic and servile once the shooting starts. However, Aday, Livingston, and Hebert (2005) (2005) found more objectivity in news broadcasting than they had expected. By taking into account variables such as culture, ideology, and even broadcast format, the researchers provided close scrutiny into the objectivity of news.

Additionally, Dimitrova and Neznanski (2006) studied the Iraq war in order to explore how the Internet disseminated news about it. They compared 26 international newspaper sites along with their use of Web-specific features such as hyperlinks, multimedia content, animations, and interactive elements. Although the Internet had become a major source of information, few studies had examined the use of the Internet in the coverage of the Iraq War.

Moreover, Dimitrova and Neznanski (2006) were among the first to have compared the online news coverage between the U.S. and international media. Proposing a three-stage model of online journalism and applying it to the war coverage, the results suggested that online journalism had not reached the state of convergence and that differences between the U.S. and the international coverage could be caused not only by cultural discrepancies, but also by the slant provided by countries that had not been in favor of the war, such as Germany, or France.

The study of the Gulf war coverage, conducted by Harville, Wawrzyniak, and Kaid (2003) corroborated the results of previous cross-cultural research according to which, each newspaper tells its own country's story and journalists attempt to create a "national relevance" for international news, emphasizing upon individuals of national stature as well as upon regional settings. The content analysis of five "elite" newspapers such as the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Tokyo Asahi Shinbun*, *London Times*, *Washington Post*, and the Paris *Le Monde*, examined the framing of the Gulf war in terms of the communication process. The researchers used variables such as tone, actors, and settings in order to accurately measure the differences in

story telling. The importance of this study lies in the fact that it can lead to a better understanding of what influences the way in which a conflict is presented in the media, since the relationship of communication about conflict to the actual conflict is fundamental and the communication process can create, intensify, or deintensify a certain conflict (Arno, 1984).

Several studies that assessed the cultural discrepancies of media in different countries focused on the European Union. Such is the case of the research study conducted by Jochen Peter and Claes H. de Vreese in 2004 with the purpose of analyzing the European-Union politics as covered in the British, Danish, Dutch, French, and German television news. The study identified key characteristics of the coverage and investigated influences that shaped it. Results showed that the EU politics was marginally represented in national television news and EU officials were absent. Additionally, the study revealed that the EU news was more prominent in public broadcasting news programs, in countries with higher level of public satisfaction with democracy, and during periods of EU summits. Although the European integration is one of the most significant events in history and involves political and economic developments, prior to this study little had it been known about this process. The merit of Peter and de Vreese (2004) consists in showing that the Europeanization of television news coverage could be regarded more as an illusion than as a reality since the EU coverage had limited visibility and lacked protagonists. Another study that focused on the EU, namely on the way in which the EU elections were covered in global media was conducted by Williams, Kaid, Landreville, Fernandes, Yun, Bagley, and Urriste (2008). Since the 2004 EU elections raised issues about the future role of the EU, and since media framing exerts influence upon the citizens' perspective and perception about an event, it was important to determine how media covered the EU election. The results of the content analysis revealed the media concentrated mostly on the

turnout of the elections, their long-term planning implications, and used in most of the cases either a neutral or a positive tone. Negative tone was found only in the news coverage from the countries that were not members of the EU and in the American media. Additionally, the coverage of the EU elections was dominated by frames such as: political consequences, the EU expansion, apathy/low turnout, and skepticism.

Hypotheses

Based on the above literature review, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1a: News articles in pro Kosovo independence countries (France, Germany, UK, the U.S, and Italy) will frame the event from the perspective of democracy and freedom.

H1b: News articles from countries which expressed their support for Kosovo would be more likely to discuss about the *U.S.*

H2a: News articles from countries against the Kosovo independence (Russia, Romania, and Spain) will frame the event from a perspective of fear of a precedent for the rest of Europe.

H2b: There would be a significant difference in the prevalence of framing of the *E.U.* between pro- and anti- Kosovo countries.

The purpose of this thesis is to provide an insight into the controversial independence of Kosovo, being one of the first to compare the differences in the coverage of the event in the European and American newspapers.

Regarded as the right of a minority to be free on one hand, and as immoral and illegal on the other hand, the issue of Kosovo raised serious questions with respect to democracy, religion, and ethnicity.

Research Method

Units of analysis, newspaper articles ($N=291$) that appeared between November 17, 2007 and May 18, 2008, three months before and three months after Kosovo declared its independence, were coded and content analyzed. The newspaper articles were selected from countries that showed a pro or against position so as to accommodate the language skills of the researcher and coders. Therefore, news articles were chosen from countries where the official language is English, Spanish, Italian, German, French, Romanian, and Russian and, a random sample of every third article that appeared between November 17, 2007 and May 18, 2008 was content analyzed. For the purpose of the analysis, newspaper articles with the highest circulation from each country were selected. In countries where, the newspaper with the highest circulation had been known for not totally adhering to journalistic standard, the second newspaper with regard to circulation was chosen.

Sample

The newspaper articles were selected from the Lexis-Nexis data base, by the use of the keywords *Kosovo Independence*. In each country, the most widely read newspaper available through Lexis- Nexis was included for the purpose of analysis.

Therefore the sample selection includes the following newspapers:

Countries that supported the independence

Germany (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*- $n=38$)

France (*Le Monde*- $n=22$)

Italy (*La Stampa*- n=7)

UK (*The Guardian*- n=7)

U.S.A (*The New York Times*- n=9)

Countries that expressed disapproval towards the independence of Kosovo

Spain (*El Mundo*- n=23)

Romania (*Adevarul*- n=102)

Russia (*Moskovsky Komsomoletz* -n=83)

For the purpose of the study, only the news articles that dealt exclusively with the independence of Kosovo were included. News stories that only referred to or mentioned this event were excluded from the content analysis.

In all cases, the articles were translated into English for coding. Translations were performed by an individual with fluency in the host language and English to ensure translations were accurate. In cases where language subtleties did not have an equal match in English, an online translation system was used as a default. The online system was interpreted for accuracy by using the researcher's native language (Romanian) and translation of several articles into English. In each case, the online translation produced an accurate result.

Coding Issues and Frames

The following variables were measured: diagnosis, prognosis, conflict, responsibility, political and economic consequences, religion, ethnicity, democracy, and freedom. The study also assessed whether certain topics found in the articles were recurrent frames or issues, as well as the connections between different types of frames such as ambiguous/positive and negative/substantive.

In each story, the coders determined the issues present from the following: independence, democracy, freedom, minority, ethnic cleansing, economy, unemployment, corruption, survival, dependence, separatism, precedent, Russia, the United States, tension, George Bush, Vladimir Putin, immoral act, illegal act, Cyprus, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, EU, religion, Islamism, Yugoslavia, war, Serbia, Boris Tadic, Fatmir Sejdiu, and Slobodan Milosevic.

After reading each story and listing all the issues present, the coders determined which was the most important issue by considering the salience or the importance of the issue in the story. As far as the generic frames are concerned, the coders were asked to determine the presence or absence of the following frames : *Responsibility*- the story suggests that some level of government has the ability to alleviate this tension , or is responsible for causing a possible precedent, mentions that an individual/ group of people in the society is responsible for a future precedent, suggests solutions to this tension, or requires urgent action, *Human Interest* - the story provides a human example or “human face” on the issue, employs adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy-caring, sympathy, or compassion, emphasizes how individuals/ groups/ countries are affected by this event, or contains visual information that might generate feelings of outrage, empathy- caring, sympathy, or compassion, *Consequences (economic, social, political, military etc)*- the story mentions types of losses or gains (economic, social, political, military etc) now or in the future, the costs/degree of expense involved, or refers to consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action, *Morality*- the story contains moral messages, makes reference to morality, God, and other religious tenets, the story offers specific (social) prescriptions or solutions about how to behave/act.

Other generic frames that coders took into consideration are: *Conflict*- the story reflects disagreement between parties/individuals/groups/countries, one party, individual, group, or

country reproaches another, the story refers to two sides or to more than two sides of the issue, or it refers to winners and losers, *Cynicism*- the story reflects attitudes of disdainful or jaded negativity, especially as a general distrust of others' integrity or motives, there are feelings that ordinary people cannot influence what the powerful do, there are statements implying that politicians and other powerful individuals in a society do not care about what others do, or statements implying that powerful states will mingle into the internal affairs of countries that have less power.

When analyzing cynicism frames the coders also looked for indications of (bitter) irony or sarcasm toward certain individuals or issues, and for a perceived sense of surrender to “greater forces” or alienation (i.e. refusal to participate in any social or political actions like voting, protesting etc).

Speculation is another frame that this study analyzes and coders looked for speculation about what happened or will happen and considered if a story mentioned any hypothetical assumptions about the event, and if it asked or implied any rhetorical questions or inferences. The generic frame of *Metacommunication* (Constantinescu & Tedesco, 2007) used for the purpose of this analysis asked the coders to identify if a story included the reporter's own opinions, or if the author of the story cited other journalists, a story mentioned how the news media handled the crisis, or if it discussed the communication strategy of a particular individual or group of individuals.

After reading each story and listing all the frames present, the coders determined which was the most important and the most dominant of the first eight frames by considering the salience or the importance of the frame in the story.

The following frames were identified in each unit of analysis:

Cynicism Frame: If cynicism frame was present, the coders were asked to identify who was the subject of cynicism: the media (including the author of the article, other journalists, or media channels), the politics (including any foreign political system, democracy, Serbian government, EU, political parties, other political actors etc), or other.

Prognostic Frame: The coders looked for predictions about the future state of events or developments in Kosovo and in Europe.

Diagnostic Frame: The coders identified if the story specifically stated or implied who or what was the cause for the event and if the story mentioned any past historic events, or political personalities that led to Kosovo independence.

Issue Specific Frames: The coders identified frames that dealt exclusively with only one issue and did not reach toward identifying it across different topics and events.

Thematic Frame: The coders analyzed if, when dealing with issues, frames provided contextual and background information.

Episodic Frame: The coders looked to see if stories provided solely specific information with regard to the event and no contextual and background information.

Metacommunication Frame Presence: Metacommunication is defined for stories as news mediacoverage of themselves (self-reflexive metacommunication), and the reporting of the way the actors involved in the event have spoken out (strategy/ process metacommunication). If the metacommunication frame was present, coders were asked to indicate which type of metacommunication emerged from the news story: self reflexive, or strategy/process.

Stories: For the self-reflexive metacommunication, the coders were instructed to further identify which of the following characteristics were present: journalists discussing their opinion

about the event, journalists interviewing/citing/reporting about other journalists, or the news media/journalists emphasizing their role in the event.

Intercoder Reliability

Two coders were closely trained for the purpose of checking the intercoder reliability. The coders were provided with the translations of 19 articles from Spanish, German, Italian, Romanian, Russian, and French into English. From the total sample of 19 articles, the ones that contained the cipher “8” (e.g., articles 8, 18, 28 thru 188) were included for intercoder reliability. An initial coder was removed from the project after results of the coding process revealed failure to pay close attention to the codebook. This coder was replaced with a second coder. The second coder received training and instruction using the codebook and codesheet. Replacement of the first coder was key to intercoder reliability as the coders reached an intercoder reliability alpha of .92 using Holsti’s formula, which ranged from .84 to 1.00 across categories.

Results

The five research questions addressed the following major categories of inquiry: emerging dominant issues and dominant frames, potential shifts during the six-month analysis pre- and post- Kosovo declaration, as well as differences that emerge between media from pro- and anti- Kosovo countries. The sample consisted of 293 newspaper articles from countries that either supported the Kosovo Independence such as Germany, U.K., France, Italy and the U.S., or expressed their disapproval toward the event, such as Romania, Spain, and Russia.

Issues

Research Question 1 asked what issues were dominant in the overall newspaper coverage of the Kosovo independence. Thirty pre-determined issues were coded for absence and presence in the newspaper articles from the eight countries mentioned above and a frequency analysis was performed to identify the *dominant* issues in the stories. As Tables 1 and 2 show, *Independence* had the most mentions (172, 59.1%), followed by *Precedent* (23, 7.9%). The third and fourth dominant issues in the news stories were *Serbia* (21, 7.2%) and *Russia* (18, 6.2%), while issues such as *Minority* and *War* were the fifth dominant issues (8, 2.7%). Interestingly, *Minority* and *War* rarely occurred in newspaper coverage.

Another finding resulting from Tables 1 and 2 is the distribution of frequencies of the overall dominant issues. More specifically, the news stories were not dominated by issues such as *Immoral* (3, 1.0%), *Ethnic cleansing* (4, 1.3%), *Dependence* (5, 1.6%), or *Freedom* (7, 2.4%). The most employed issues were *Independence* (287, 98.6%), the *European Union* (156, 53.6%), and the *U.S.A* (123, 42.3%), followed closely by *Russia* (120, 41.2%).

Frames

Generic Frames

In order to answer Research Question 2, which asked what frames were dominant in the global media, two separate analyses were performed. First, the five generic frames (responsibility, human interest, consequences, morality, and conflict) developed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) were used for this thesis along with the three “macro-frames” developed by Constantinescu and Tedesco (cynicism, speculation, and metacommunication). Second, the articles were coded for the supplemental frames (diagnostic, prognostic, episodic, and thematic).

Table 3 shows that all five generic frames, as well as the three macro-frames, were present in media coverage to varying degrees. The most frequently used of the twelve frames were *Conflict*, *Consequences*, and *Responsibility* (74.6%, 72.5%, and 70.8%, respectively), while the least employed frames were *Morality and Human Interest* (9.6%, and 15.1%, respectively).

Overall Frames

Table 4 shows the generic and the overall frames in the global media coverage. A frequency analysis was performed to identify and establish a ranking of the top frames. As table 4 illustrates, the *Conflict* frame dominated both as a generic frame and as an overall frame (41.9% and 37.5%, respectively). Interestingly, the second and third most dominant generic frames (*Consequences* and *Responsibility*, respectively) coincided with the third and fourth most dominant overall frames. The frequency of the *Consequences* and *Responsibility* frames was 23.7% and 22.7%, respectively as generic frames and 23.7% and 19.9%, respectively, as most dominant overall frames. The least dominant generic frames were *Human Interest* and *Morality* (19.9% and 2.7%, respectively) while the analysis revealed the least dominant overall frames to be *Human Interest*, *Morality*, and *Metacommunication* (2.7%).

Research Question 3 asked whether there was any evidence of frame shifts during the six-month analysis pre- and post- Kosovo declaration. A series of chi-square tests were performed in order to determine if there were any differences in the coverage during the period of analysis. Results revealed significant difference in pre- and post Kosovo independence for *Prognostic* framing, $X^2 = 6.75 (1), p = .009$ and for the *Unemployment* framing $X^2 = 4.33 (1), p = .037$. Similarly, differences were recorded with regard to the *Speculation* framing $X^2 = 4.43 (1), p = .035$ with the *Speculation* frame more dominant in the three month period that preceded the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Table 5 illustrates the framing difference in coverage during the six month period of study. Chi-square tests were also performed to determine if any differences emerged in the coverage of the issue specific frames. Thus, results in Tables 6 and 7 reveal that issues such as *Immoral* and *Illegal* were more prevailing during the three- month period prior to Kosovo independence ($X^2 = 10.24 (1), p = .001$ and $X^2 = 20.70 (1), p < .001$, respectively). Analogously, the issue of *Cyprus* was more dominant in the period before the declaration of independence ($X^2 = 6.14 (1), p = .013$).

Research Question 4 inquired if any differences emerged between media from pro- and anti- Kosovo independence countries. In order to answer RQ4, results from newspapers in countries that supported the Kosovo independence were combined as were news articles from countries that opposed it.

Table 8 shows the comparison of frames from global media in countries that either supported or opposed the Kosovo independence. Results revealed that media in pro- and anti- Kosovo independence countries used significantly different generic framing when reporting about the issue. For example, results show significant difference for three of the five generic

frames: *Conflict*, *Human Interest*, and *Morality*. The *Human Interest* frame was significantly prevalent in the pro- Kosovo countries, ($X^2 = 13.18 (1), p < .001$). Similarly, the *Morality* and the *Conflict* frame dominated in the pro-Kosovo countries as follows: $X^2 = 10.57 (1), p < .001$ and $X^2 = 9.72 (1), p = .002$, respectively.

Among the macroframes, *Cynicism* was more prevalent in countries that supported the independence of Kosovo, $X^2 = 16.85 (1), p < .001$. It is clear that reporting styles were also different. For example, use of the supplemental frames, the *Prognostic* and the *Episodic* framing significantly differed in the media from pro- and anti Kosovo independence countries. *Prognostic* and the *Episodic* framing was significantly more likely in anti- Kosovo independence countries. ($X^2 = 79.92 (1), p < .001$, and $X^2 = 13.41 (1), p < .001$), respectively.

The analysis also showed that the frame of *Metacommunication* prevailed the coverage in countries that opposed the event $X^2 = 7.99 (1), p = .005$. Additionally, the last frame to show a significant difference in coverage was the *Thematic* frame which was significantly more likely in the coverage from countries that supported the event $X^2 = 7.67 (1), p = .006$.

Results of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1a predicted that news articles in pro- Kosovo independence countries (France, Germany, UK, the U.S, and Italy) will frame the event from the perspective of democracy and freedom.

The series of Chi-square tests performed partly confirmed hypothesis 1a. More precisely, *Democracy* was found more prevalent in pro-Kosovo newspapers under analysis, i.e. *Le Monde*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *The Guardian*, and *The New York Times* $X^2 = 5.86 (1), p = .015$. On the other hand, the tests showed that the *Freedom* issue did not dominate the coverage $X^2 = 0.85 (1), p = .357$.

While not a specific test of this thesis, analysis of other issues beyond *Freedom* and *Democracy* differed in pro- and anti- Kosovo independence countries. For example, the issue of *Minority* was more prevalent in the pro-Kosovo coverage $X^2 = 7.67 (1), p = .006$.

Hypothesis 1b assumed that news articles from countries that expressed their support for Kosovo would be more likely to discuss the *U.S.* The Chi-square tests showed that results did not support this hypothesis and the media in such countries were half as likely to mention the *United States* issue than the media in pro-Kosovo ones, $X^2 = 8.22 (1), p = .004$.

Hypothesis 2a presumed that news articles from countries that expressed disapproval of Kosovo independence, such as Russia, Spain, and Romania, would frame the event from the perspective of fear of a *Precedent* for the rest of Europe. Thus, the *Precedent* issue was measured by the use of the Chi-square tests and the results revealed that, in media from anti- Kosovo independence countries, the issue of *Precedent* was nearly three times more prevalent than in media from pro-Kosovo independence countries: $X^2 = 8.22 (1), p = .004$.

Furthermore, hypothesis 2b posited that there would be a significant difference in the prevalence of framing of the *E.U.* between pro- and anti- Kosovo countries. The tests showed that countries which did not support the Kosovo independence covered the *E.U.* almost twice as much as those who expressed their consent to the event ($X^2 = 7.09 (1), p = .008$). Consequently, the *E.U.* had a presence of 103 (66.2%) in the media from countries against Kosovo independence, in contrast to 53 (66.2%) in media from pro- Kosovo countries. Thus, hypothesis 2b was confirmed.

According to the expectations for the last hypothesis, H3, there would be a significant difference in the framing of the *War* issue between pro- and anti- Kosovo countries. Results shed light on a significant difference, $X^2 = 5.24 (1), p = .022$, such that the *War* issue had a presence of

20 (25%) in pro-Kosovo independence countries compared to 29 (13.7%) in newspapers from anti-Kosovo independence countries. Therefore, hypothesis H3 was confirmed.

Discussion

The independence of Kosovo spurred an array of newspaper reports. This study employed a content analysis of 291 news stories from countries that supported the Kosovo independence such as Germany, the U.K., France, the U.S., and Italy, and from countries that expressed their disapproval toward an independent Kosovo such as Romania, Spain, and Russia.

The goals of the study were to identify (1) emerging dominant issues in the newspaper articles (2) the distribution of Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) five generic frames in the media, (3) potential shifts during the six-month analysis pre- and post- Kosovo declaration, and (4) differences that emerged between media from countries which were pro- and anti- the Kosovo independence.

Issues

Research Question 1 asked what issues were dominant in the overall news stories. Thirty pre-determined issues were coded for absence and presence in the newspaper articles from the eight countries mentioned above. As expected, the results revealed *Independence* as a dominant issue both in newspapers from countries that supported Kosovo and from countries that were against it. Furthermore, the second dominant issue present in the global media was *Precedent*. Media from countries like Russia, Romania, and Spain, which opposed the Kosovo independence expressed fear toward what this event might cause since they themselves were experiencing separatism in their own countries. For example, the Russian newspaper *Moskovsky Komsomolez* mentioned that conflicts might arise in regions such as Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Tran-Dniester, and Nagorno-Karabakh, where Russia still exerts paramount influence, in the Spanish regions of Basque and Catalan, as well as in the Romanian region of Transylvania.

The article entitled “Who’s next?” which was published on February 16, 2008 in the Romanian newspaper *Adevarul*, deals exclusively with the independence of Kosovo as a precedent:

The proclamation of Kosovo independence generates worries with regard to a possible ‘domino effect’ in Europe. Europe is confronted with separatist movements starting in Scotland and ending in Spain. The latter is facing issues of separatism in Basque and Catalan and Spanish officials have already announced they would not recognize an independent Kosovo. Yet, in Belgium, the nationalist party NVA, which is in closely connected with the future prime minister, affirms that the Kosovo independence gives the essential right to sovereignty to all people. (“Who’s Next,” 2008)

Yet, newspaper articles from countries like U.K, Italy, Spain, and the United States mentioned *Precedent* in connection to the regions in the world that were concerned about the consequences of the event and laid emphasis on the fact that, the fear of a precedent as perceived by Russia might negatively influence the relationship between the two long time rivals: Russia and the United States.

The third most dominant issue was *Serbia* and the global media mentioned it with reference to Kosovo as the cultural cradle of Serbia and expressed concern of an increase in tension between the Albanians and the Serbs. The *Serbia* issue was also mentioned in the context of the war in Yugoslavia. Especially news articles from Romania, the U.S., and Britain briefly related the breakaway of Serbia from Yugoslavia in 1991.

It should not come as a surprise that *Russia* dominated the international media since its stand on the Kosovo issue came in contradiction with that of the United States. Most of the times when Russia was mentioned in the global media, journalists quoted from the position of the

Russian President Vladimir Putin, associating his stand with that of his country, even though his name was not mentioned. Putin's attitude was very firm and vehemently uttered during the six-month period of analysis. Consequently, media quoted from his speeches on the illegality and immorality of the Kosovo independence as well as on his emphasis that the approval of Kosovo independence was not in accord with the United Nations 1244 resolution. It is interesting to note that the majority of newspapers that mentioned Vladimir Putin used the same quote from his speeches on Kosovo independence:

“Kosovo independence is immoral and illegal...For 40 years northern Cyprus has practically had independence. Why aren't you recognizing that? Aren't you ashamed for having these double standards?” (*The Guardian*, February 15, 2008)

Further on, the issues of *Minority* and *War* were both mentioned to the same extent in the global media. News articles entailed references mostly to the Serbian minority in Kosovo and their struggle for cultural and religious preservation. News media from Romania and Russia also speculated on the probability that the Serbian minority might leave Kosovo as a consequence of the event.

When framing the Kosovo issue, *War* was used mostly in news articles that provided a historic perspective on the region and described the relationship between the Albanians and the Serbs before and after the war in Yugoslavia. When discussing the issue of *War*, the Russian media mentioned Carla Del Ponte's controversial book on Kosovo, entitled *The Hunt*.

Carla Del Ponte, a former Swiss attorney and prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia created international controversy when she published her book called *The Hunt* in which she considered that she had collected enough evidence to say

that, after the Kosovo war ended in 1999, the Kosovo Albanians were smuggling human organs from kidnapped Serbs.

Another finding is the distribution of frequency of the overall dominant issues. More specifically, the news stories were not dominated by issues such as *Immoral*, *Ethnic cleansing*, *Dependence*, or *Freedom*. The most employed issues were *Independence*, the *European Union*, and the *U.S.*, followed closely by *Russia*. When mentioning the E.U., the German newspaper, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, quoted the the former rebel leader Hashim Thaci in an interview with the *Financial Times*. According to Thaci, the Kosovar parliament could wait until the end of March before it proclaimed independence. The separation of Kosovo from Serbia would have to be made only in cooperation with the EU. Thaci said, "The EU is the key. We are here for a well coordinated declaration of independence."

Frames

Research Question 2 asked what frames were dominant in the global media. The five generic frames (responsibility, human interest, consequences, morality, and conflict) developed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) were used in this study along with the three "macro-frames" (cynicism, speculation, and metacommunication). Additionally, the articles were coded for the supplemental frames (diagnostic, prognostic, episodic, and thematic).

The results showed that all five generic frames, as well as the three macro-frames were present in media coverage, but to varying degrees. Of all the twelve frames the most frequently employed were *Conflict*, *Consequences*, and *Responsibility*, while the least employed frames were *Episodic*, *Morality*, and *Human Interest*. In the three-month period prior to the Kosovo independence, the global media emphasized more on the repercussions of the event from the

perspective of the possible conflicts that might arise between the Serbian and the Albanian population on one hand, and the long-time political rivals the U.S. and Russia on the other hand.

News articles also mentioned the economic consequences of the event, especially the Romanian newspaper *Adevarul* which wrote extensively on Kosovo's high level of corruption and unemployment, as well as on its dependence on Serbia and Russia for natural resources which might be ceased as a consequence of the separation. In an article entitled "Billions of dollars spent on an inexistent economy" and published one day before Kosovo declared its independence, the Romanian newspaper *Adevarul* mentions the failure of the West to reconstruct the province after the Yugoslavian wars as well as the current economic underdevelopment in the province:

" The international community failed in relaunching the economy of this province after the conflicts that took place between 1998 and 1999 between the Serbian army and the Albanian separatist movements. Up to 2004, almost 3 billion dollars had been spent on reconstruction, development plans, and donations. While the infrastructure is partially unfunctional because it had been destroyed during the Yugoslavian wars, many small cities lack electricity for about 12 hours a day. About 45% of the population in Kosovo is unemployed which makes up to 70% of the young adults. According to a report provided by the International Bank, 37% of the two million people living in Kosovo are underprivileged and live on less than 1.5 euros a day. Additionally, about 15% of the population of Kosovo lives on less than 1 euro a day."

The global media touched on the frame of *Human Interest* sporadically and seldom presented Albanian or Serbian personal stories.

It was expected that the *Episodic* frames should not prevail since newspapers wrote about the Kosovo issue by provided background information about its history or relationships with other states. Furthermore, the frame of *Responsibility* dominated the coverage and most of the articles mentioned the role of the United States and Russia in the Kosovo issue, and how their decision of support or disapproval would impact the future of the province.

Additionally, the frame of *Morality* was not prevalent, although it was expected that the global media would make allowances for the religious differences in Kosovo. However, with regard to religion, the European media referred to the creation of Kosovo as the formation of the first and single Muslim state in Europe.

The frequency test that was run for the dominant frames illustrated that the *Conflict* frame dominated both as a generic frame and as an overall one. Furthermore, the least dominant generic frames were *Human Interest* and *Morality*. The analysis also revealed that the least dominant overall frames were *Human Interest*, *Morality*, and *Metacommunication*.

Metacommunication is defined for stories as news media coverage of themselves (self-reflexive metacommunication), and the reporting of the way the actors involved in the event spoke out (strategy/ process metacommunication). In the newspaper articles under analysis the most dominant form of metacommunication was the strategy/process one. More precisely, the newspapers quoted political personalities as well as key figures in the Kosovo issue, from other media outlets.

Research Question 3 asked whether there was any evidence of frame shifts during the six-month analysis pre- and post- Kosovo declaration. The test results revealed significant difference in pre- and post Kosovo independence for *Prognostic* and *Unemployment* framing. As expected, the newspaper articles were dominated by more references to the future of Kosovo

before the province declared its independence. Furthermore, concerns related to the survival of the independent Kosovo were made in the three months that preceded the declaration of independence. The concerns were related to the fact that Kosovo had no economy of its own and an unemployment rate of fifty percent. Similarly, differences were recorded with regard to *Speculation* framing with the *Speculation* frame more dominant in the three month period that preceded the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Tests were also run to determine if any differences emerged in the coverage of the issue specific frames. The results showed that issues such as *Immoral* and *Illegal* were more prevailing during the three- month period prior to Kosovo independence and, analogously, the issue of *Cyprus* was more dominant in the period that preceded the declaration of independence.

Such results show that media expressed concern of Kosovo as a precedent by broaching the situation of Northern Cyprus which had been struggling for independence for forty years. Additionally, the dominant presence of the issues such as *Immoral* and *Illegal* before Kosovo became independent reveals the fact that media covered the doubt of the opposing countries.

Discrepancies in coverage were also registered with regard to issue frames such as *Putin*, *Tadic*, and *Milosevic*. The media covered the key figures of the Kosovo issue more after the independence. *Milosevic* was mentioned more in the three- month period of analysis after Kosovo became independent as part of the historic background the media covered when referring to Kosovo. This should not come as a surprise since the tests revealed that newspapers were dominated more by the *thematic* frame after Kosovo became independent. Interestingly, *Putin* dominated the post-Kosovo independence period almost seven times more than the previous one. However this was expected since, even after February 17, 2008, the day when Kosovo proclaimed its new status, Russia convoked several meetings with the U.N. in order to ask for a

reconsideration of the Kosovo issue. For example, the Romanian newspaper *Adevarul* mentioned in an article published one day after Kosovo had become independent, that Russia was asking the Secretary General of the United Nations (U.N.) to clarify his position with regard to the independence of Kosovo.

“We consider that Ban Ki-moo has to clearly define his position. He need to respect the UN 1244 resolution regarding Kosovo” asserted Aleksandr Boţan-Hartcenko, an official of the Russian Minister.

The President of Serbia, *Boris Tadic* was covered more in the same period as *Putin* since media mentioned the close and historic ties between Russia and Serbia.

Research Question 4 inquired about whether any differences emerged between media from countries that were pro- and anti- Kosovo independence. The results revealed that media in pro- and anti- Kosovo independence countries used significantly different generic framing when reporting about the issue. For example, results showed significant difference for three of the five generic frames: *Conflict*, *Human Interest*, and *Morality*. The *Human Interest* frame was significantly prevalent in the pro- Kosovo countries. In this regard the media presented the case of the Albanians living in Kosovo who hoped that their life would improve after the independence, as well as stories of Albanians from Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina who wished to join their brothers in Kosovo and take part in the historic event. Similarly, the *Morality* and the *Conflict* frame dominated in the pro-Kosovo countries.

Among the macroframes, *Cynicism* was more prevalent in countries that supported the independence of Kosovo. Such results are relevant because they could stem from the fact that the countries which supported the independence of Kosovo had long been known for being democratic and for having had freedom of speech and free media. In countries such as the U.S.,

France, Italy, or U.K. media systems would challenge the governmental decisions without fearing repercussions. Therefore, one could draw a correlation between the democracy in such countries and their support for the creation of Kosovo, a new state that they considered as sharing the same values that prevail their systems. For example, on the day when Kosovo declared its independence, George Bush asserted:

In its declaration of independence, Kosovo committed itself to the highest standards of democracy, including freedom, tolerance and justice for citizens of all ethnic backgrounds...these are the principles that honor human dignity and values America looks for in a friend." ("Bush Hails Kosovo" 2008, para 2).

The results also revealed that other frames under analysis, such as the *Prognostic* and the *Episodic* frames significantly differed in the countries that opposed the issue and the ones that supported it, dominating the coverage of the former. Newspapers from countries like Italy, the U.S., France, and U.K. showed a penchant for describing the Kosovo issue without providing a lot of background information about the history of the province or past tensions between the Albanian and the Serbian population. Furthermore, the media from countries that expressed a pro-Kosovo attitude were more prone to look into the future of the region without making much reference to its past.

The analysis also showed that the frame of *Metacommunication* prevailed the coverage in countries that opposed the event. Media from countries like Russia and Romania, frequently quoted what key figures political asserted when interviewed by other media outlets.

Limitations

Results of this study with regard to the way in which global media covered the independence of Kosovo need to be considered in light of a few limitations.

The first limitation concerns the language barriers. Newspaper articles from countries where no speakers were available for coding were not included in the analysis. For example Serbia, which was directly affected by the Kosovo issue was excluded from the study as a result of the language barrier. Media coverage analyzed in this study was media from countries for which Kosovo represented a precedent and therefore they opposed to its independence, as well as from the ones which regarded the event as democratic. Therefore such countries did not experience the Kosovo independence to the same extent as Serbia and, including Serbian media into the thesis might have rendered different results. The second limitation concerns the use of only one major newspaper from each country under analysis. For best results on the framing of the Kosovo independence, further studies should include articles from several newspapers in each country as well as other traditional media outlets such as TV, radio on one hand, and new media like blogs, Facebook, or Twitter on the other hand. Studying new media with regard to Kosovo could provide insight into whether people's comments mirrored the media coverage, or whether it was blogs that set the media agenda.

The third limitation concerns the uncertainty of the generalization of this thesis. It is yet unclear the extent to which the results could be applied to similar events on an international scale.

Suggestions for Further Research

The Kosovo independence was, without doubt, an event highly covered in 2008. As the country is currently fighting corruption and unemployment, the survival of Kosovo is a test for both Europe and the U.S. To this very day, the Kosovo is still on the media agenda and will continue to lead to controversies.

For a better understanding of the Kosovo independence, future studies should analyze the presence of frames and issues in different media outlets throughout Europe. Furthermore, research should incorporate international media regardless of the language barriers.

Future research could investigate the shifts in frames between the period of analysis in this study and the year that followed the event, so as to determine the way in which media covered the struggle of Kosovo for survival as well as the tensions that took place between the Serbs and the Albanians in the region after Kosovo had become sovereign. Since this study revealed that the *Cynicism* frame was more dominant in the media from democratic countries that sustained Kosovo in becoming independent, future research could explore this aspect more in depth by analyzing media from a larger variety of countries in order to determine more discrepancies in framing between countries known for tradition in democracy and those in which media are less free.

Conclusion

By applying the theory of framing to analyze the controversial independence of Kosovo, this thesis provides insight into the differences in media coverage at an international level.

The results revealed significant discrepancies in framing between media from the countries that supported the independence such as France, Italy, UK, Germany, and the U.S., and countries that opposed it such as Spain, Russia, and Romania. More precisely, media in America, Germany, Great Britain, and France made use of more *Prognostic* framing, thus looking into the future of Kosovo, whilst newspapers from the countries that opposed the sovereignty of Kosovo made references to past tensions, conflicts, and wars in the region.

Additionally, media in countries in which the Kosovo step was considered a step toward democracy were dominated by frames such as *Human Interest*, *Morality*, and *Conflict*, while the

Prognostic and *Diagnostic* frames pervaded media in countries that feared that Kosovo would set a precedent for international practice.

Interestingly, the *Cynicism* frame prevailed in the media from countries with long tradition in democracy and whose governments welcomed and supported the Kosovo independence. This relevant finding shows that, due to the freedom of speech, media in those countries were more prone toward questioning the governmental decisions. This thesis contributes to the framing theory and international research by analyzing a historical event that has been generating controversy and tension for centuries. The analysis of the Kosovo independence sheds light on the media coverage discrepancies caused by history and culture, and most importantly political systems.

Future research should focus on expanding the current thesis by content analyzing media from a number of more countries that regarded Kosovo as a precedent because of their own separatist issues, and should aim to find differences in coverage. Such findings will help countries in which media is not free to gradually implement journalism practices that would lead in time to media practitioners being able to question and challenge governmental decisions. Furthermore, future international studies focusing on controversial issues such as the situation in Tibet, Cyprus, or the Gaza Strip could provide a better insight into the events and bring valuable information not only for communication scholars, but also for politicians, diplomats, and other officials, who can, through their power and influence, change the lives of millions of people.

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Table 1

Issue Frames Present in Global Media Coverage of Kosovo Independence

<i>Issue Frame</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neutral</i>
Independence	287 (98.6%)	7 (2.4%)	41 (14.12%)	239 (82.1%)
Democracy	17 (5.7%)	8 (2.7%)	1 (0.3%)	8 (2.7%)
Freedom	7 (2.4%)	2 (0.7%)		5 (1.7%)
Minority	45 (15.4%)	1 (0.3%)		44 (15.1%)
Ethnic Cleansing	4 (1.3%)		1 (0.3%)	3 (1.0%)
Economy	34 (11.7%)	3 (1.0%)	22 (7.6%)	9 (3.1%)
Unemployment	11 (3.7%)		10 (3.4%)	1(0.3%)
Corruption	13 (5.4%)		10 (3.4%)	3 (1.0%)
Dependence	5 (1.6%)	1 (0.3%)	3 (1.0%)	1 (0.3%)
Separatism	30 (10.3%)		18 (6.2%)	12 (4.1%)
Precedent	57 (19.6%)	2 (0.7%)	28 (9.6%)	27 (9.3%)
Russia	120 (41.2%)	10 (3.4%)	8 (2.7%)	102 (35.1%)
U.S.A	123 (42.3%)	4 (1.4%)	23 (7.9%)	96 (33%)
Bush	10 (3.4%)			10 (3.4%)
Putin	26 (8.9%)	3 (1.0%)		23 (7.9%)
Immoral	3 (1.0%)			3 (1.0%)
Illegal	39 (3.4%)		16 (15.5%)	23 (7.9%)
Cyprus	26 (8.9%)			26 (8.9%)
South Ossetia	22 (7.5%)		1 (0.3%)	21 (7.2%)
Abkhazia	22 (7.5%)		1 (0.3%)	21 (7.2%)

<i>Issue Frame</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neutral</i>
E.U.	156 (53.6%)	6 (2.1%)	24 (8.2%)	126 (43.3%)
Religion	14 (4.8%)	1 (0.3%)		13 (4.5%)
Islamism	19 (6.5%)		3 (1.0%)	16 (5.5%)
Yugoslavia	33 (11.3%)		1 (0.3%)	32 (11.0%)
War	49 (16.8%)		19 (6.5%)	30 (10.3%)
Serbia	167 (64.3%)	3 (1.0%)	11 (3.8%)	173 (59.5%)
Tadic	65 (22.3%)	9 (3.1%)	1 (0.3%)	55 (18.9%)
Sejdiu	18 (6.2%)			18 (6.2%)
Milosevic	30 (10.3%)		6 (2.1%)	24 (8.2%)
Basque/Catalan	21 (7.2%)		21 (7.2%)	

Table 2

Dominant Issue Present in Global Media Coverage of Kosovo Independence

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>
Independence	172	59.1%
Minority	8	2.7%
Economy	6	2.1%
Corruption	3	1%
Separatism	2	0.7%
Precedent	23	7.9%
Russia	18	6.2%
U.S.A.	1	0.3%
Putin	5	1.7%
E.U.	7	2.4%
Religion	1	0.3%
War	8	2.7%
Serbia	21	7.2%
Tadic	3	1%
Basque/Catalan	2	0.7%

Table 3

Frequencies for Generic, Macro, and Supplemental Frames in Global Media Coverage of
Kosovo Independence

Generic Frames:

<i>Generic Frame</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>
Responsibility	206	70.8%
Human Interest	44	15.1%
Consequences	211	72.5%
Morality	28	9.6%
Conflict	217	74.6%

Macro Frames:

<i>Macro Frame</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>
Cynicism	54	18.6%
Speculation	47	16.2%
Metacommunication	49	16.8%

Supplemental Frames:

<i>Supplemental Frame</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>
Diagnostic	59	20.3%
Prognostic	79	27.1%
Episodic	5	1.7%
Thematic	105	36.1%

Table 4

Dominant Generic and Overall Frame in Global Media Coverage of Kosovo

<i>Generic Frame</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>
Responsibility	66	22.7%
Human Interest	58	19.9%
Consequences	69	23.7%
Morality	8	2.7%
Conflict	122	41.9%

Dominant Overall Frame:

<i>Frame</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>
Responsibility	58	19.9%
Human Interest	8	2.7%
Consequences	69	23.7%
Morality	8	2.7%
Conflict	109	37.5%
Cynicism	15	5.2%
Speculation	11	3.8%
Metacommunication	8	2.7%

Table 5

Pre- and Post- Kosovo Declaration of Independence Media Framing Comparison

<i>Dominant Issue</i>	<i>Pre</i>	<i>Post</i>
Independence	15.6%	43.6%
Democracy	21.8%	72.7%
Freedom	22.5%	75.1%
Minority	20.4%	64.7%
Ethnic Cleansing	22.8%	75.8%
Economy	19%	69.6%
Unemployment	21.1%	75.4%
Dependence	22.5%	98.3%
Separatism	19.7%	69.9%
Corruption	21.1%	74.4%
Precedent	19.7%	69.9%
Russia	12.8%	46%
U.S.A.	12.5%	4.3%
Bush	22.5%	74%
Putin	21.8%	69.2%
Immoral	21.8%	77.2%
Illegal	15.9%	70.6%
Cyprus	19%	72%
South Ossetia	20.8%	71.6%
Abkhazia	20.8%	71.6%
E.U.	9.3%	37.4%
Religion	22.5%	72.7%
Islamism	21.8%	71.6%

<i>Dominant Issue</i>	<i>Pre</i>	<i>Post</i>
Yugoslavia	20.8%	67.8%
War	18.7%	64.4%
Serbia	7.3%	28.4%
Tadic	16.3%	61.6%
Sejdiu	21.5%	72.7%
Milosevic	19%	70.6%
Basque/Catalan	20.4%	72.3%

Table 6

Dominant Frames in Pre- and Post- Kosovo Declaration of Independence

<i>Generic Frame</i>	<i>Pre</i>	<i>Post</i>
Responsibility	52 (25.5%)	152 (74.5%)
Human Interest	11 (25%)	33 (75%)
Consequences	53 (25.4%)	156 (74.6%)
Morality	4 (14.3%)	24 (85.7%)
Conflict	49 (22.7%)	167 (77.3%)
 <i>Macro Frames</i>	 <i>Pre</i>	 <i>Post</i>
Cynicism	15 (28.3%)	38 (71.7%)
Speculation *	16 (34.8%)	30 (65.2%)
Metacommunication	12 (25.0%)	36 (75%)
 <i>Supplemental Frames</i>	 <i>Pre</i>	 <i>Post</i>
Prognostic	6 (10.2%)	53 (89.8%)
Diagnostic	20 (25.6%)	58 (74.4%)
Thematic	10 (9.6%)	94 (90.4%)
Episodic	1 (20%)	4 (8%)

Table 7

Dominant Issue Specific Frames in Pre- and Post- Kosovo Declaration of Independence

<i>Dominant Issue Specific Frame</i>	<i>Pre</i>	<i>Post</i>
Independence	64 (22.5%)	221 (77.5%)
Democracy	3 (18.8%)	13 (81.2%)
Freedom	1 (14.3%)	6 (85.7%)
Minority	7 (16.3%)	36 (83.7%)
Ethnic Cleansing	0 (0%)	4 (100%)
Economy	11 (33.3%)	22 (66.7%)
Unemployment	5 (50%)	5 (50%)
Dependence	1 (20%)	4 (80%)
Separatism	9 (30%)	21 (70%)
Corruption	5 (38.5%)	5 (50%)
Precedent	10 (17.5%)	47 (82.5%)
Russia	29 (24.4%)	90 (75.6%)
U.S.A.	30 (24.6%)	92 (75.4%)
Bush	1 (10%)	9 (90%)
Putin	3 (11.5%)	23 (88.5%)
Immoral	3 (100%)	0 (0%)
Illegal	20 (51.3%)	19 (48.7%)
Cyprus	11 (42.3%)	15 (57.7%)
South Ossetia	6 (27.3%)	16 (72.7%)
Abkhazia	6 (27.3%)	16 (72.7%)
E.U.	39 (25.3%)	115 (74.7%)
Religion	1 (7.1%)	13 (92.9%)
Islamism	3 (15.8%)	16 (84.2%)

<i>Dominant Issue Specific Frame</i>	<i>Pre</i>	<i>Post</i>
Yugoslavia	6 (18.2%)	27 (81.8%)
War	12 (24.5%)	37 (75.5%)
Serbia	45 (24.2%)	141 (75.8%)
Tadic	19 (29.7%)	45 (70.3%)
Sejdiu	4 (23.5%)	13 (76.5%)
Milosevic	11 (36.7%)	19 (63.3%)
Basque/Catalan	7 (33.3%)	14 (66.7%)

Table 8

Comparison of Frames in News Media Coverage from Countries

Pro- and Anti-Kosovo Independence

<i>Generic Frame</i>	<i>Pro-Kosovo</i>	<i>Anti-Kosovo</i>
Responsibility	59 (73.8%)	147 (69.7%)
Human Interest ***	22 (27.5%)	22 (10.4%)
Consequences	64 (80%)	147 (69.7%)
Morality ***	5 (18.8%)	13 (6.2%)
Conflict **	70 (87.5%)	147 (69.7%)
<i>Macro Frame</i>	<i>Pro-Kosovo</i>	<i>Anti-Kosovo</i>
Cynicism	27 (33.8%)	27 (12.8%)
Speculation	15 (18.8%)	32 (15.2%)
Metacommunication	11 (13.8%)	38 (18.0%)
<i>Supplemental Frames</i>	<i>Pro-Kosovo</i>	<i>Anti-Kosovo</i>
Prognostic	21 (26.2%)	38 (18%)
Diagnostic	52 (65%)	27 (12.8%)
Thematic	39 (48.8%)	66 (31.3%)
Episodic	5 (6.2%)	0 (0%)

* Chi-square test indicates significance at the $p \leq .05$

** Chi-square test indicates significance at the $p \leq .01$

*** Chi-square test indicates significance at the $p \leq .001$

Appendix

Codebook

Unit: The coders will assign the current order number, starting with 1.

Story/ Post Source: The coders will assign the following codes for the story/post source:

- for any news story from “Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung” (Germany)
- for any news story from “ Le Monde” (France)
- for any news story from “La Stampa” (Italy)
- for any news story from “The Guardian” (UK)
- for any news story from “New York Times” (USA)
- for any news story from “El Pais” (Spain)
- for any news story from ”Adevarul” (Romania)
- for any news story from ” Moskovsky Komsomoletz” (Russia)

Text Type: The coders will assign the following code for each of the texts:
for news story for opinion article

Story/ Post date: The coders will write the date of the article (i.e.mmdd).

Story/Post Number: There are days when the same newspaper published several stories about the event. The coders will assign an order number, starting with 1, for each sequence of stories from the same day.

Issues: The coders are asked to identify the presence of a number of issues from a predetermined list based on prior research. They have to indicate whether each issue is mentioned favorably, unfavorably, or neutrally.

1. Independence
2. Democracy
3. Freedom
4. Minority
5. Ethnic cleansing
6. Economy
7. Unemployment

8. Corruption
9. Survival
10. Dependence
11. Separatism
12. Precedent
13. Russia
14. United States
15. George Bush
16. Vladimir Putin
17. Immoral act
18. Illegal act
19. Cyprus
20. South Ossetia
21. Abkhazia
22. EU
23. Religion
24. Islamism
25. Yugoslavia
26. War
27. Serbia
28. Boris Tadic
29. Fatmir Sejdiu
30. Slobodan Milosevic

Dominant Issue: After reading each story and listing all the issues present, the coders will determine which is the most important issue by considering the salience or the importance of the issue in the story. For instance, a story that discusses the Kosovo independence as a precedent by referencing several future similar events will have the issue #12 as a dominant issue.

The dominant issue will be coded by writing the corresponding issue number from the above list.

Central Issue: After listing all issues present, the coders will determine which is the pivotal issue in the article.

Generic Frames: The coders are asked to determine the presence or absence of the following frames, as listed and described below:

Responsibility:

Does the story suggest that some level of government has the ability to alleviate this tension?

Does the story suggest that some level of government is responsible for causing a possible precedent?

Does the story suggest that an individual/ group of people in the society is responsible for a future precedent?

Does the story suggest solution(s) to this tension?

Does the story suggest the situation requires urgent action?

Human Interest:

Does the story provide a human example or “human face” on the issue?

Does the story employ adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy-caring, sympathy, or compassion?

Does the story emphasize how individuals/ groups/ countries are affected by this event?

Does the story contain visual information that might generate feelings of outrage, empathy-caring, sympathy, or compassion?

Consequences (economic, social, political, military etc)

Is there a mention of any type of losses or gains (economic, social, political, military etc) now or in the future?

Is there a mention of the costs/degree of expense involved?

Is there a reference to any kind of consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action?

Morality

Does the story contain any moral message?

Does the story make reference to morality, God, and other religious tenets?

Does the story offer specific (social) prescriptions or solutions about how to behave/act?

Conflict

Does the story reflect disagreement between parties/individuals/groups/countries?

Does one party/individual/group/country reproach another?

Does the story refer to two sides or to more than two sides of the issue?

Does the story refer to winners and losers?

Cynicism

Does the story reflect any attitudes of disdainful or jaded negativity, especially as a general distrust of others' integrity or motives?

Are there any feelings that ordinary people cannot influence what the powerful do?

Are there any statements implying that politicians and other powerful individuals in a society do not care about what others do?

Are there any statements implying that powerful states mangle into the internal affairs of countries that have less power?

Is there any indication of (bitter) irony or sarcasm toward certain individuals or issues?

Is there any perceived sense of surrender to "greater forces" or alienation? (i.e. refusal to participate in any social or political actions like voting, protesting etc)?

Speculation

Does the story make any speculation about what has happened or will happen?

Does the story mention any hypothetical assumptions about the event?

Does the story ask or imply any rhetorical questions or inferences?

Metacommunication

Does the story include the reporter's own opinions?

Does the author of the story cite other journalists?

Does the story mention how the news media has handled the crisis?

Does the story mention/discuss the communication strategy of a particular individual or group of individuals?

Dominant Generic Frame: After reading each story and listing all the frames present, the coders will determine which is the most important of the first five frames by considering the salience or the importance of the frame in the story. For example, a story that revolves around assigning responsibility to the U.S. will have frame #1 as a dominant frame.

The dominant frame will be coded by writing the corresponding frame number (1 through 5) from the predetermined generic frame list.

Dominant Overall Frame: After reading each story and listing all the frames present, the coders will determine which is the most dominant of the eight frames by considering the salience or the importance of the frame in the story. For instance, a story that revolves around assigning responsibility to the American international affairs by making speculations about the Kosovo independence, will have frame #1 as a dominant frame.

Cynicism Frame: If cynicism frame is present, the coders will be asked to identify who is the subject of cynicism (check one):

The media (including the author of the article, other journalists, or media channels)

The politics (including any foreign political system, democracy, Serbian government, EU, political parties, other political actors etc)

Prognostic Frame: Does the story make any predictions about the future state of events in Kosovo?

Does the story make any predictions about the future state of events in Europe?

Does the story propose a solution?

Does the story predict any developments?

Diagnostic Frame: Does the story specifically state or imply who or what is the cause for the event?

Does the story mention any past historic events, or political personalities that led to Kosovo independence?

Issue specific frames: Are there any frames that deal exclusively with only one issue and do not reach toward identifying it across different topics and events?

Thematic Frame: When dealing with issues do the frames provide contextual and background information?

Episodic Frame: Do the stories provide solely specific information with regard to the event and no contextual and background information?

Metacommunication Frame Presence: Metacommunication is defined for stories as news media coverage of themselves (self-reflexive metacommunication), and the reporting of the way the actors involved in the event have spoken out (strategy/ process metacommunication). If the metacommunication frame is present, coders will be asked to indicate which type of metacommunication emerges from the news story: self reflexive, or strategy/process

Stories: For the self-reflexive metacommunication, the coders will be instructed to further identify which of the following characteristics are present (check all that apply):

Journalists discussing their opinion about the event

Journalists interviewing/citing/reporting about other journalists.

The news media/journalists emphasizing their role in the event.