Media Framing: How Can the Constitutional Name of One Country Be Changed?

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ABSTRACT: The Macedonian-Greek agreement to change the name of the Republic of Macedonia resulted in a referendum. The columns of relevant opinion leaders published in electronic media during the official referendum campaign was the focus of interest and research presented in this article. The sample comprised 57 columns by 19 columnists. The discussion of the findings in this paper is based on framing theory with media content analyses; the template for media monitoring was used as an instrument based on human coding. The main research question addressed in this paper is: "How are opinion leaders setting frames?" The hypothesis is that opinion leaders use different themes and scripts to construct media framing due to narrow public opinion "for" or "against/boycott" the change of the constitutional name. Two negative, emotionally charged frames were identified: the frame "for" promoted positive messages reinforced with ideas about the EU and NATO membership; the frame "against/boycott" promoted messages that Macedonian identity will be lost.

KEYWORDS: media frames, opinion leaders, referendum campaign, emotionally-charged words, Prespa Agreement, Republic of Macedonia.

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INTRODUCTION

The dispute over the name between the Republic of Greece and the Republic of Macedonia became 'real' after the dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Due to the name dispute, Macedonia was admitted to the United Nations under the temporary reference to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYRM). This term has been for use only in the United Nations, and does not imply that the Republic of Macedonia has any ties to the former Yugoslavia (Floudas,

2002). By December 2011, 133 countries had come to recognize Macedonia as the Republic of Macedonia, representing over 66% of the total number of UN member states. To resolve the dispute, the United Nations acted as a mediator. The entry of the Republic of Macedonia into NATO and the EU was on condition that the name dispute between the two countries be resolved. In the spirit of Euro-Atlantic integration processes, the new government of the Republic of Macedonia, led by Zoran Zaev, signed the agreement in Prespa on June 17th, 2018. With this agreement (TNH, 2018), the name of the Republic of Macedonia is changed to the Republic of North Macedonia, *erga omnes*.

In order to declare a change of name, the Government held a referendum with the following question: "Are you for membership of the EU and NATO by accepting the Agreement between the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Greece?" (Souli, 2018). In Macedonia, the referendum is a constitutional category regulated by Article 73 of the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia (Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, 2014). A referendum can be called after most parliamentarians have voted, or the Assembly is obliged to announce a referendum when a proposal is submitted by at least 150,000 voters. The decision reached through the referendum is compulsory (Pravo.org.mk, n.d.). The referendum on changing the state name of the Republic of Macedonia was scheduled for September 30th, 2018, and the referendum campaign was conducted three weeks before that date. For a referendum to be successful, according to the Constitution, over 50% of the electorate should vote. The turnout in the referendum was 36.9%, of which 94.1% were "for" (BBC news, 2018) and according to the government this referendum was a success. The change of name was promoted by the ruling parties (SDSM and DUI), by Albanian political parties in opposition supported by the international factor (EWB, 2018) and the president of Albania (BIRN, 2018).

The Prespa Agreement, from which came the referendum for changing the name of the Republic of Macedonia, was fully supported by the official international public. According to the statements of the representatives of the Government, such historical changes will lead the Republic of Macedonia towards democratic processes and Euro-Atlantic integration. Contrary to these, there is the opinion that with these changes the national identity and the historical continuity of Macedonia and the Macedonian people will be lost. This opinion was based on the long-lasting struggle of the Macedonian people for their independence. The great number of historical facts speaks about the actions and activities of the Macedonian people to show and prove to the world that it is unique and different from other nations.

Considering all these political and historical struggles, media reporting during the referendum campaign is a somewhat daunting topic for scientific analysis. Of particular interest to this research were the individuals who stood out as leaders in public opinion and whose columns were published in electronic media. During the referendum campaign, several directions (instructions, suggestions for the audience) in those columns (published in electronic media) were identified: *Go and vote*

"for", *Go and vote "against"*, *Just go and decide which option to vote for,* and *Boycott the referendum*.

THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

Agenda setting, agenda building, framing

The foundations of agenda setting theory that speaks to the ability of the media to set a public agenda, to create public awareness and determine the importance of certain issues (McCombs & Reynolds, 2002; McCombs, 2005) have been proven by a number of researchers for different types of media (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Over numerous years of study, the concept of agenda setting has expanded to agenda building and political agenda setting (Rogers & Dearing, 1988; Walgrave & Van Aelst, 2006) and from the first level "came" the second-level of agenda setting, framing (McCombs & Ghanem, 2001). All extensions and expansions are important in proving the complex relationship between the media and society.

This article presents a framing analysis approach of the columns published in electronic media during the period of the referendum campaign for change of the country's constitutional name. For the first time this term was defined by Goffman in 1974 in the book entitled: 'Frame Analysis, an Essay on the Organisation of the Experience' though the concept was first given by Bateson in 1972 (Hallahan, 2008) as psychological frames. According to Goffman (1974), people understand what is happening around them through the primary framework for whose presence people are not even aware. The primary frameworks can be natural and social, and both have the role of enabling the individual's orientation in the environment in which he/she lives. Framing as a theory of mass communication is about how information is organized and provided to the audience. According to this theory 'hot' events are packaged in a way that can provoke some type of interpretation among the audience. How messages are 'framed' influences how the audience will perceive the reality, as the audience is not in real, physical contact with the events; people understand the reality mediated through the media, so it can be said that framing is a process of construction of social reality (Scheufele, 1999). Frames are a system of ideas which organize the elements of the text (words, pictures). They are the result of previous life experiences and they are culturally determined. Each word can be a frame for most people or for some. In addition, the same word can be a different frame for different people. Goffman (1974) argued that people see the world through their internalized frames, so each new piece of information is processed to fit in with the already-existing frames. Therefore, those who would like to introduce new ideas, strategies and so on, will have to use culturally known and acceptable ideas and develop new concepts that fit in with existing frames. As the construction of public opinion is connected to the way experts or leaders frame relevant and important events (Chong & Druckman, 2007), it will be challenging to explore and explain how frames are used in a case/cases of polarized public opinion.

One of the focuses in recent research in political communication is about framing the news/texts published in media. The media following a certain discourse and wanting to impose a particular narrative will present the information in a certain way depending on that discourse, or narrative (DeVreese & Semetko, 2014). This article presents a framing analysis approach to columns in which the main theme covers the referendum campaign. The basic idea of this article is to apply a linguistic approach (Matthes & Kohring, 2008) as a method for frame analysis. This approach defines the framing process in which particular elements of the real world engraved in words are noted and presented as important (Entman, 1993). In this article, columns are assumed as frames which limit the perception and narrow audience reality in the elements framed in the perception field.

Scheufele (1999) pointed out a very important issue which clarifies the framing process — the text can communicate if the frames are the same or similar both in the sender and in the receiver. According to this author, there should be a distinction between media frames and audience frames. Frames as shared figures are based on the attitudes of the journalist (columnists) who organize the reality and the audience that is able to understand the meaning of the frame (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015).

Opinion leaders during the referendum campaign

The term 'opinion leader' appears for the first time in the two-step flow of communication theory by Paul Lazarsfeld and Elihu Katz (DeFleur & Lowery, 1983). Like any other theory that undergoes developmental changes, this theory has undergone several changes in several directions (Bennett & Manheim, 2006). However, what is constant in the meaning of the term opinion leader is that he/she is a person, a very active media user, with higher levels of interest in relevant issues, well-informed about new events and developments in the living space where he/she lives, and is considered to be an expert in a specific field. The opinion leader (OL in the further text) has a special place in a wider social network; he/she is respected by others to whom he/she conveys the main messages and at the same time interprets them (Weimannet et al., 2007). Opinion leaders are people who have the skills to influence the opinions, attitudes, beliefs, motivations, and behaviors of others (Valente, 2008) because their special position in the social network — nowadays online social networks (Bodendorf & Kaiser, 2009).

In this research, it was assumed that the columnists were an OL, as electronic media continuously published their columns during the period of the referendum campaign. This is especially true for political columnists who comment frequently on various political events during official campaigns.

A referendum is a form of direct decision-making by citizens for a certain legal act or for the adoption of a specific decision of special importance for the state or the local community. A referendum is the most important and widespread institution of direct democracy in the world. It is "an increasingly important means of

enacting or preventing legislation in countries around the world" (Vreese & Semetko, 2014). Although it seems that this is a simple referendum vote (Yes = For or No = Against), behind this simple statement there are complex and not one-sided and unambiguous questions and topics (Vreese & Semetko, 2014). Therefore, presented facts, arguments, frames in which all the information is stored, and the credibility of information sources during the referendum campaign can certainly influence the outcome of the referendum vote (Lupia, 1992; 1994). Hence, it is very important what information flows through the media during the referendum campaign because this information will contribute to the learning of something new as well as crystallizing unformed attitudes and opinions, no matter if it is a one, two, or multiple step flow of communication process.

LeDuc (2002) identifies three types of referendum campaigns that might be a starting point when the preparations for campaigns start. There are campaigns where voters do not have fully formulated views, so during the campaign the views need to be formed; campaigns where opinions have already been formed, but they are not rigid so they can be reformed, and campaigns where there are strong views regarding the referendum issue(s) so no one believes that a quick reversal will happen. But whatever the situation with the voters before the referendum campaign, the information that flows during the campaign is, nonetheless, very important (Bennett & Entman, 2001).

METHODOLOGY

The main research goals are to identify the opinion leaders who write columns in electronic media in the Macedonian language during the official referendum campaign for the change of the constitutional name of the country, and to identify the frameworks (frames) they use to influence public opinion. The main research question is: How do OLs in their columns, published in electronic media (portals, blogs, and electronic versions of printed media) set the frame to change the constitutional name of the state?

The general hypothesis predicted that different OLs following a certain discourse will use different themes and scripts to construct media framing due to narrow public opinion "for" or "against/boycotting" the change of the constitutional name in other to join the EU and NATO. The first hypothesis predicted that OLs who want to impose a narrative "for" the change of the constitutional name of the country will set the agenda including different themes in comparison with OLs who want to impose a narrative "against/boycotting" the change of the constitutional name in order to join the EU and NATO. The second hypothesis predicted that OLs who want to impose a narrative "for" the change of the constitutional name of the country will set the frame including different scripts in comparison with OLs who want to set a frame imposing a narrative "against/boycott" the change of the constitutional name.

This article is based on the linguistic approach for the measurement of media frames, which is similar to hermeneutic studies, but the crucial difference is that the researcher determines linguistic elements that signify a frame (Matthes & Kohring, 2008). In this research, columns written by OLs and published in electronic media were the focus of analysis, as OLs are relevant in creating public opinion. It is assumed that they have relevant knowledge on a particular topic and they will 'install' frames which will be particularly influential.

Content analysis of media frames in this research is based on the linguistic approach where frames are identified by analyzing the selection and structure of specific words and sentences in a text (according to Matthes & Kohring based on: e.g. Entman, 1991; Esser & D'Angelo, 2003; Pan & Kosicki, 1993). This research was based on the Entman (1993) concept that particular words are the 'building blocks' of frames. Framing has been recognized as a process in political communication where the news promoted in media defines the essential topic of relevant political issues (Nelson, Oxley, & Clawson, 1997). Framing analysis is about the choices of words as mental representations of reality and their organization into news stories. The most elaborate linguistic approach in literature comes from Pan and Kosicki (1993). The authors distinguish structural dimensions of frames that can be measured. They are syntactical (the focus is on the title of the article, following the pyramid structure where the title is the most powerful element of the whole text), script (what has been written in the text), thematic (what is the main theme), and what are the rhetorical and stylistic choices (for example, metaphors etc.). This approach of framing analysis of the text structure is used for this content analysis of media frames in OLs' columns. The framing analysis has been concretized with several of the following questions which constitute a content analysis template (Table 1). Emotions were classified in several categories: confusion, anger, patriotic feelings, fear, security, urgency, inspiration, sadness, happiness, admiration, disgust, frustration, and honor.

Table 1. Content analysis template

Title (headline)
- What is the main function of the title?
- Does the language formulation of the title contain emotionally-charged words?
- Does the title contain a clear message regarding the referendum?

Theme
- What is the main, referential and secondary theme of the column?

Script
- What is the primary role of the text without a title?
- Does the text identify the position of the OL(s) for the referendum?
- What sources and actors are named, used by the author?
- Does this script provoke certain emotions?

Source: Authors.

The goal of the research was to identify opinion leaders who were writing columns about the referendum during the referendum campaign, to identify where they published their columns, and to define the criteria of OL(s) selection and their columns. First, the authors of columns who wrote on the topic of the referendum during the referendum campaign in blog form, portals, and newspapers (the electronic version of a newspaper that has a printed version) were selected. The criteria of opinion leaders' selection was a publication of at least three columns (a minimum of one per week) for the period of the three-week official media campaign. In cases where the author published more than three columns, a deliberate and purposeful selection of the columns was undertaken (concerning the content of the column). Overall, the sample comprised 57 columns by 19 columnists (Table 2).

Table 2. Sample of the study: Media and the columnist

Website	Electronic version of the newspaper with printed edition/Blog	Columnist	Profession of the columnist
NOVA	–	Biljana Sekulovska	Journalist
Plusinfo	–	Branko Trichkovski	Journalist
Plusinfo	–	Dzabir Derala	NGO activist
Plusinfo	–	Branko Gerovski	Journalist
Deutsche Welle on mk	Nezavisen Vesnik	Petar Arskovski	Expert/political analyst
	Nezavisen Vesnik	Erol Rozaov	Journalist
Prizma	–	Sasho Kakalanov	Journalist
Prizma	–	Katerina Blazhevska	Journalist
Prizma	–	Dzwezdan Georgiev	Journalist
NetPress	–	Janko Ilkovski	Journalist
–	Skazam da kazam	Goran Mihajlovski	Journalist
Civil Media	–	Sasho Ordanovski	Journalist
–	Nova Makedonija	Aleksandar Rusjakov	Writer
–	Nova Makedonija	Biljana Vankovska	University Professor
–	Nova Makedonija	Eftim Kletnikov	Writer
–	Nova Makedonija	Pande Kolemishevski	Journalist
–	Nova Makedonija	Sasho Klekovski	Expert/Analyst
Express.mk		Goran Momirovski	Journalist
–	Nezavisen Vesnik	Aleksandra Mitevska	Journalist

Source: Authors.

FINDINGS

Title construction

Overall, there were 57 titles which contained between 1 and 70 words (including the subtitle). The most frequent were those with three words (19.3%) and those with five words (15.8%). Titles with between three to six words made up more than half (54.4%) of all titles in the research. In the context of sentence form, declarative sentences constituted 80.7% of all titles, for example "If Zaev was a good man, he would have been our Forrest Gump" (Rusjakov, 2018), interrogative sentences like: "With us or against us?" (Kolemisevski, 2018) amounted to 3.5% and sentences with exclamation marks: imperative and exclamatory sentences like "Macedonia won the European referendum!" (Trickovski, 2018) made up the remainder (15.8%) of all 57 analyzed texts (Table 3).

Table 3. Findings: The primary role of the title

Title which:	Frequency of titles	Percent (%)
Calls for specific action/behavior	5	8.8
Convinces	6	10.5
Mocks/criticizes and belittles	13	22.8
Informs/educates	3	5.3
Reprimands/warns/threatens	11	19.3
Praises/commends someone else	2	3.5
Boasts and magnifies itself/its attitude	1	1.8
Complains	2	3.5
Asks/sets a dilemma or topic	1	1.8
Something else	2	3.5
Cannot be determined	11	19.3

Source: Authors.

The most frequent title type is one which criticizes/mocks/belittles or reprimands/warns/threatens. Titles which convince make up 10.5% and titles which inform/educate account for barely 5%. The percentage of titles whose primary role cannot be determined was high because in this group were titles which were a mix of more types, for example "Party breakers" (Arsovski, 2018), or titles which are some sayings/phrases considered to be "uncommon" or "understandable to only a limited number of the general public" — "Dial 'M' for Murder" (Blazevska, 2018).

From all 57 titles, in 44 (77.2%) there were emotionally charged words or phrases. The table below is an illustration of specific emotion representation (Table 4).

Table 4. Findings: Titles with emotionally charged words/phrases

		Titles which are with emotionally charged words (%)
Emotional state which would be provoked by certain emotionally charged words	Confusion	22.7
	Anger	15.9
	Patriotic feelings	6.8
	Fear	13.6
	Safety	4.5
	Urgency	1.8
	Inspiration	7.0
	Sadness	3.5
	Disgust	29.5
	Happiness	7.0
	Admiration	13.6
	Satisfaction	1.8
	Frustration	18.2
	Honor	11.4
	Other	11.4

Source: Authors.

The data are indicators for the overall media tendency to provoke negative emotions and feelings through titles: almost 30% have titles that produce emotional states which can induce disgust; 22.7% have titles which produce emotional states which can provoke confusion, and 18.2% have titles which produce emotional states which can provoke frustration. With only 4.5% of the titles, the readers may feel safe. The titles with a mix of emotions are seen as being provocative of more than one emotional state. It was also interesting to analyze whether or not the title contains a clear message regarding the voting on the referendum. Of greater interest is that the data shows in only 7% of the titles was there a clear message regarding the voting. In the majority of the titles there is no clear message directly related to the referendum voting (Table 5).

Table 5. Findings: Context of the message about the referendum

Message context	Percent (%)
There is no clear message regarding the referendum voting	63.2
There is a clear message but not directly regarding the referendum voting	29.8
There is a clear (direct) message regarding the referendum voting	7.0

Source: Authors.

At the end of this summary for the title analysis it is useful to present the data about the subject (issue) correspondence between text and title. In only 5.3% of cases is there no subject (issue/theme) correspondence between text and title. These are situations when the title is a metaphor or something that only the columnist knows about.

Theme

All the 57 analyzed columns (only text without a title is now the focus of the analysis) were from 269 to 2,088 words in length. The most frequent are those texts with between 600–900 words (24 titles or 42%) and those with 900–1,200 words (13 texts or 22.8% from all 57); one is less than 300 words and two of the texts are more than 2,000 words in length. The next step of analysis was to look at the main, referential, and secondary themes of the column text. We found that 84.2% texts have a referential theme and 38.6% have a secondary theme, or in other words there are only 12.3% of texts which have only a main theme, while 84.2% texts contain both a main and a referential theme, and 35.1% texts contain a main, referential, and secondary theme (Table 6).

Script

The next analysis was to study the primary role of the text and what kind of message the text delivers to the readers. The most frequent texts are those with a clear message but not directly related to the referendum voting. It is a situation when the message can be easily drawn from the text, and this message could only indirectly influence the reader's attitude and behavior. For example, if the text speaks about how the leader of the opposition party is a person who is untrustworthy, it means that the reader should vote FOR in the referendum, because the opposition party does not support the Prespa Agreement. Texts of this kind make up 45.6% of all the 57 analyzed texts. One-third of the texts has a clear message regarding what to do and how one should vote in the referendum, while the remaining 21% of texts are those with an indistinct message regarding how one should vote.

Table 6. Findings: Main, referential, and secondary themes of the texts

Theme	As main theme (%)	As referential theme (%)	As secondary theme (%)
Activities of Government/Ministries/ State and Public Institutions	3.5	2.1	4.5
Activities of the Opposition	15.8	12.5	13.6
Activities of the President	5.3	2.1	4.5
Public Prosecutor (Special Public Prosecutor)	1.8	–	–
International Relations/Affairs	1.8	4.2	22.7
Referendum, Constitutional Amendments, Voting, Censuses	36.8	60.4	–
Macedonian Identity, National Interests, Language, Nationality/Culture	24.6	14.6	9.1
Event on April 27th	1.8	–	–
Prespa Agreement	3.5	–	4.5
Political manipulation	1.8	–	–
Macedonian Diaspora	–	2.1	–
Corruption/ Abuse of Official Services	–	–	22.7
State Security	–	–	4.5
Other	3.5	–	13.6

Source: Authors.

Similarly to the previous data (about the primary role of the column title), is the data that the primary role of the text is to mock, criticize, and belittle someone. If the text does not do that, then it reprimands/warns/threatens. Only 12.3% of the analyzed texts were written to inform and educate the public (Table 7).

Table 7. Findings: Primary role of the text

Text which:	Frequency of texts	Percentage (%)
Convinces	11	19.3
Mocks/criticizes and belittles	21	36.8
Informs/educates	7	12.3
Reprimands/warn/threaten	6	28.1
Praises/commends someone else	2	5.0

Source: Authors.

Table 8 illustrates the interconnection between the primary role of the texts and the message(s) that the authors tried to send to the readers.

Table 8. Findings: The crosstabs of the two variables: primary role and clear message show the following

Text which:	No clear message about voting (no.)	Clear message but not directly related to the voting (no.)	Clear message for the voting (no.)	Total (no.)
Convinces	0	5	6	11
Mocks/criticizes and belittles	2	10	9	21
Informs/educates	6	1	0	7
Reprimands/ warn/threaten	4	8	4	16
Praises/commends	0	2	0	2

Source: Authors.

The texts which intend to inform/educate have no clear message about the referendum voting. On the contrary, the texts which want to warn and threaten, and especially to mock/criticize and belittle or to convince have clear messages (directly or indirectly) for voting (what to do, what to think or how to vote in the referendum) (Table 9).

Table 9. Findings: Position of the text regarding voting

Voting	Frequency of texts	Percent (%)
For	35	61.4
Against	1	1.8
Boycott	11	19.3
Cannot be identified (neutral, balanced)	10	17.5
Total	57	100

Source: Authors.

Analysis continued with the emotionally charged words in the texts. From all 57 texts, in 54 (94.7%) there were emotionally charged words or phrases. In more detail, in 10.5% of the texts, emotionally charged words/phrases made up to one quarter of the whole text, while in 24.6% of the texts, emotionally charged words/phrases were literally in every sentence (or in some cases even more, with more than one ECW in one sentence). In 28.1% of the texts emotionally charged words/phrases made up 50–75% of the whole text. The remaining percentage of text had

ECW make up between 25–50% of the whole text. The table below illustrates the specific emotion representation (Table 10).

Table 10. Findings: Texts with emotionally charged words

		Percentage of the text with emotionally charged words
Emotional state which would be provoked by certain emotional charged word	Confusion	13.0
	Anger	64.8
	Patriotic feelings	27.8
	Fear	7.4
	Safety	24.1
	Urgency	7.4
	Inspiration	25.9
	Sadness	3.7
	Disgust	72.2
	Admiration	14.8
	Happiness	1.9
	Satisfaction	1.9
	Frustration	20.4
	Honor	22.2

Source: Authors.

The data indicates that the media has a tendency to provoke negative emotions and feelings through texts. Texts with ECW number 72.2%, which can induce disgust, and 64.8% are texts with ECW which will very likely provoke anger. In only one text can readers find a text that activates positive emotional states like happiness and satisfaction. At the end of this analysis about the text are data regarding named sources of information and actors in the texts. No source of information is mentioned in more than half of the analyzed columns (56.1%). In those which have some type of source (43.9%) the picture presented is that unclear sources can be found in only one text, imprecise sources in 24% of the texts, and precise sources of information can be read in 84% of the texts. From precise sources, domestic official sources dominate.

The number of actors named in the texts varies from 0 to 28. Three texts are without any actor, eight are with only one actor, and 12 texts are with six actors.

More than 70 different actors are named in the all analyzed columns. There were individuals, domestic politicians such as Hristijan Mickoski (leader of the oppos-

ition party), Zoran Zaev (the Prime Minister), President Gjorgji Ivanov and international players such as Angela Merkel and Sebastian Kurtz. Collective domestic political parties included VMRO-DPMNE (the opposition party) and SDSM (the ruling party) while collective international bodies included the EU and NATO. Certain countries have also emerged as actors and have been named as Macedonia, Greece, Germany, Russia, and Croatia. There were also collective non-specific actors like the general public. There was also the use of personal pronouns such as I, We, You, They. The most frequent actors are shown in Table 11.

Table 11. Findings: Actors in the texts

	The number of texts in which the actor appears as a first actor	The number of texts in which the actor appears as a second actor	The number of texts in which the actor appears as a third actor	The number of texts in which the actor appears as a fourth actor	The number of texts in which the actor appears as a fifth actor	The number of texts as a sixth actor/actress	Total number of texts in which the actor appears
VMRO-DPMNE	2	7	6				15
Hristijan Mickoski	12	4	1	1	1		19
Zoran Zaev	5	1	1	1	1		9
Gjorgji Ivanov	5		1	1			7
Macedonia	4	4	1	1	2		12
I/me/we	2/2	1/1		1/2			4/5
They	3			1			4
EU/NATO		2/0	5/1	1/3		1/1	9/5

Source: Authors.

Obviously, the attention of the majority of the columnists was directed at the opposition party VMRO-DPMNE, its leader Hristijan Mickoski and, at then President Gjorgji Ivanov. Their evaluations are mostly negative, as shown in Table 12.

DISCUSSION

Taking into consideration the postulates of the framing theory, the research was directed towards recognizing and identifying the frames. Two dominant frames recognized in Opinion Leaders' columns were:

Table 12. Findings: Evaluation of actors

	The number of texts in which the actor received a positive evaluation	The number of texts in which the actor received a negative evaluation	The number of texts in which the actor received a neutral evaluation
VMRO-DPMNE	2	12	10
Hristijan Mickoski	1	17	1
Zoran Zaev	5	2	2
Gjorgji Ivanov	–	6	1
Macedonia	4	4	1
EU	2	4	3
NATO	1	3	1

Source: Authors.

- Frame FOR: The name change should happen because it will enable Macedonia to become a member of the NATO alliance and will allow for membership of the European Union.
- Frame BOYCOTT: The change of the name should not happen because in this way Macedonia is losing its centuries-old national identity and integrity.

Frame FOR was more frequent during the official campaign. More than 6% of all OL columns promote the attitude to vote FOR (for changing the constitutional name of the country) in the referendum. Frame BOYCOTT was a less frequent frame — just 19% of all columns promote this attitude, which means not to vote and not to give legitimacy to the referendum (Figure 1).

CONCLUSIONS

The creation of public opinion, especially for events of historical importance to a nation is a challenge for researchers. The change of the name of a country is of historical importance and is a serious challenge for politicians, especially when it is known that the name of the state, like the name of each individual, is part of the identity and integrity that enters both the individual and the collective memory and determines certain attitudes and behaviors. The Macedonian people were exposed to the challenge of deciding whether or not to vote for a change to the constitutional name of the state. To that end, a decision by the Government to conduct a referendum on the name change was followed by activation of the attitude on whether citizens 'are' or 'are not' in favor of the Euro-integration processes. This question was of particular importance, as indicated by the overproduction of columns during the referendum campaign (88 columnists reported 385 columns of

FRAME "FOR"	FRAME "BOYCOTT"
Title:	Title:
– Declarative sentences in 3–6 words; – Mocks/criticizes and belittles, calls for specific action/behavior and convinces; – Emotionally charged words that provoke disgust, fear and anger; – No clear message for voting, or clear but indirect message for voting.	– Declarative sentences in 3–6 words; – Mocks/criticizes and belittles or reprimands/warns/threatens; – Emotionally charged words that provoke disgust and confusion; – No clear message for voting.
Script:	Script:
– 600–900 words; – Main theme: Referendum, Constitutional amendments, voting, censuses; – Clear message (directly/not directly) for referendum voting; – Mock, criticize and belittle someone, convince or reprimand/warn/threaten; – Emotionally charged words that provoke mostly anger, but inspiration and safeness also; – No source of information; – Actors: Mickoski (president of oppositional party VMRO-DPMNE — negative evaluation), Ivanov (president of state — negative evaluation), "We", Zaev (prime minister — positive evaluation), VMRO-DPMNE (political party-negative evaluation).	– 600–900 words; – Main theme: Macedonian identity, national interests, language, nationality/culture; – Clear message but not directly related to the referendum voting; – Dominantly reprimands/warn/threaten; – Emotionally charged word that provoke mostly disgust, anger and patriotic feelings; – No source of information; – Actors: VMRO-DPMNE (neutral evaluation), EU, NATO (negative or neutral evaluation), Macedonia (positive evaluation).

Figure 1. Findings: The two frames identified in the study

Source: Authors.

which 61.4% supported a name change, 28.4% boycotts and 10.2% were neutral (Serfimovska & Markovikj, 2019).

Taking into consideration the postulates of the framing theory, the research was directed towards recognition of the main frames in OL columns. Two dominant frames were identified. The first is 'For': *It is progressive to change the name as it will enable Macedonia to become a member of both NATO and the EU*. The second is 'Boycott': *The change of the name should not happen because in this way Macedonia is losing its centuries-old national identity and integrity*. The two frameworks that OLs tried to promote were very similar in many ways. In both frames short titles that criticize/mock/belittle or reprimand/warn/threaten dominated. These titles contain emotionally charged words (ECW) or phrases, which provoke negative emotions such as disgust/retaliation, confusion, or some frustration or stress. This feeling of 'disgust' is present as a response to the situation when one should accept or 'swallow' something, which is unassimilable (not acceptable for the well-being of the organism's self-regulation) (Francesetti et al., 2013). The state of confu-

sion (according to the Psychology Dictionary, Krstic, 1991) is a situation where it is hard to think clearly. It is therefore hard to concentrate and it decreases the ability to make a decision. Frustration is the situation where one has a need but is unable to satisfy it. Strong frustration leads to regression and it enables personal development (Levin et al., 1941). The change of name issue was at least associated with the feeling of safety.

The primary role of the script in the frame FOR is to mock, criticize, and belittle someone, to convince the public or to reprimand/warn/threaten. The primary role of the script in the frame BOYCOTT is mainly and dominantly to reprimand/warn/threaten. The most exploitative themes in the columns were: Referendum, constitutional amendments, voting, and censuses (especially in the frame FOR — in 43% of the cases), Macedonian identity, national interests, language, nationality/culture (especially in the Frame BOYCOTT — in 63.6% of the columns) and activities of the opposition party (only in frame FOR).

In almost every script there were ECW or phrases and in almost one quarter of the scripts ECW were to be found literally in every sentence, sometimes with more than one ECW in one sentence. This is an indicator of the extreme tendency to provoke negative emotions and feelings, especially disgust and anger. There is no difference between the two frames in this respect. More than 70 different actors are named in all the analyzed columns. The attention of the first mentioned frame was directed at the opposition party VMRO-DPMNE, its leader Hristijan Mickoski, and the then President Gjorgji Ivanov. Their evaluation was mostly negative.

To sum up, the data clearly show the proof of the general hypothesis which predicted that different OL following a certain discourse will use different themes (the first hypothesis) and scripts (the second hypothesis) to construct two opposite media frames reflecting the two opposing "for" and "against" discourses outlined in the two possible answers to the referendum challenge: YES or NO for changing the name of the country. These findings challenged the justification of the way OLs seek to influence public opinion concerning the very sensitive issue of changing the name of the country. As has been discussed previously (Scheufele, 1999), messages promoted through media can only have an influence if media frames and audience frames are able to recognize one another. The final outcome of the referendum shows that the frame 'for' does not completely match the audience frame.

The overall content of the messages that abounded during this time provoked negative emotions, preventing the fulfilment of needs and causing a general state of anxiousness. What is the justification for causing disgust, frustration, and confusion and jeopardizing the mental health of citizens when they are expected to make a clear, deliberate, and conscientious decision on an issue important for the well-being of the whole country?

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