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Is it time to break up?

Localizing and analyzing framings surrounding the political debate on Scottish independence

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Abstract

By using the method of framing analysis this bachelor's thesis investigates how the debate of Scottish independence is framed by leaders representing the four largest political parties in Scotland. The material consists of speeches the politicians have held in the year of 2013, all speeches addressing the 2014 referendum and the issue of Scottish independence. By deconstructing the arguments communicated in the respective speeches the author attempts to identify dominant narratives that serve the purpose of promoting certain political agendas and framing the perception of independence.

This study also aims to determine whether the dispute on Scottish independence is best described as a policy disagreement or a policy controversy. This is done in accordance with the research on "intractable policy controversies" by Donald A. Schön and Martin Rein.

The findings show that there are conflicting framings of the issue of independence and that three of those are predominant. They also show that the debate on independence is best described as a policy controversy.

Key words: Scotland, discourse analysis, framing analysis, narrative, devolution, framework
Words: 10063

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1 Introduction

The people of Scotland will vote in an independence referendum on September 18, 2014. They will answer the question: Should Scotland become and independent country - Yes or No (Carrell, 2013)? The main Scottish Independence Referendum Bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on March 21, 2013, and the Scottish Parliament has been granted the powers to organize the referendum and both the United Kingdom and the Scottish Government have agreed they will respect the result. Independence has been described as the key to Scotland's future economic growth among actors who wish to see it a reality, but among those who oppose it, it is described as undesirable and financially harmful (ibid.).

1.1 Scientific aim

The primary scientific aim of this study is to investigate how a policy conflict can be understood by analyzing the frameworks surrounding it. European regionalism has interested me ever since I began my bachelor in European studies in 2010 and as of late especially the situation in Scotland. The main objective will be to analyze how the issue of Scottish independence is perceived among party leaders of the four largest political parties in Scotland. I will attempt to investigate how different narratives are constructed to promote voting either for or against independence in the 2014 referendum. This thesis will strive to give an account of the historical background leading up to the referendum and the development of the question of independence. As a student of European Studies it interests me a great deal to see what underlying reasons there are for a country such as Scotland to distance itself from a long established context such as belonging to the British Empire and instead turning to… well to what? Is it superfluous to be part of the British Empire when the state can be independent and remain part of the European

Union? Are they looking for independence whilst retaining some form of social union with for example the Scandinavian countries? Is it max devolution (full fiscal autonomy) that is desired whilst retaining loose links to the British nations within the umbrella of the United Kingdom? Or is it in fact so that the majority of Scots are happy with status quo, in other words devolution with block grant (UK government with large authority over taxation, welfare and economy) determined by the Westminster government? The use of the term 'Westminster' will in this thesis refer to the parliament of the United Kingdom.

This thesis will not aim to predict the outcome of the referendum, nor will it try to answer the question of what the majority of Scots want Scotland to transform into in the future. It will instead focus on how the narratives surrounding the issue are put forward by leaders of the four biggest political parties. Applying a form of discourse analysis called frame analysis allows for the researcher to localize and look into the frames surrounding the issue. To identify the existence of frameworks, and to analyze whether those are in conflict with one another. To see how at times identical information is used to prove opposing points by framing the issue in a certain fashion. The focus will be to isolate and analyze the different frames present in the on-going debate on Scottish independence as well as determining whether the issue is best described as a policy disagreement or a policy controversy.

1.2 Research question

This study will attempt to answer two questions:

- What frameworks or narratives dominate the debate on Scottish independence among party leaders in Scotland?
- Is the dispute on Scottish independence best described as a policy disagreement or a policy controversy?

1.3 Disposition of Thesis

The disposition of this thesis encompasses a total of seven chapters. The initial chapter named introduction outlines aim (1.1.), research question (1.2.), purpose and relevance of research (1.3.) and delimitation of scope (1.4.). The next chapter provides a brief background to the issue, providing the reader with a historic overview of the development of the question of Scottish independence (2.1). In the ensuing chapter 'methodology and theory' the epistemological basis of this thesis is described to further clarify how the material is approached and on what theoretical and methodological grounds the analysis is realized. It defines the type of discourse analysis which constitutes the theoretical framework of this thesis (3.1.) and the following two chapters explain the definition of frame analysis and the theory of intractable policy disputes used in this study (3.2, 3.3.). Different frameworks are listed under the subchapter "Constitutional frameworks" (2.4.) and assist in systematizing and categorizing the narratives present in the material for analysis (3.4.1, 3.4.2, 3.4.3, 3.4.4.). After that other possible frameworks (3.5.) and limitations to the research design are discussed (3.6.). The following chapter argues for the relevance and limitations of the material selected as object for analysis (4.1 & 4.2.). Chapter 5 contains the analysis in which I deconstruct the narratives and frameworks present in the speeches by the party leaders Willie Rennie (5.1.), Johann Lamont (5.2.), Alex Salmond (5.3.), and Ruth Davidson (5.4.). In the following chapters I give an account of the result (6) along with the conclusion (7), discussion (7.1) and suggestions for future research (7.2).

1.4 Purpose and relevance of research

The main explanatory value of this research paper is to analyze how frameworks and narratives can serve an agenda-setting purpose in the area of policymaking. Additionally, it will aim to locate what visions for the future or new political set of models are presented, the rhetoric surrounding the most recurring arguments and how the different visions are narrated. In my research I have come across a lot

of studies investigating Scottish nationalism, separatism, the concept of devolution and other important aspects of the Scottish situation. However, I have come across little research that focuses on the discrepancy of the perception of independence, the many narratives surrounding it and how it is framed. Therefore I would argue that this study fills a relevant academic purpose by analyzing thes factors mentioned.

1.5 Delimitations of Scope

This thesis will solely focus on locating the dominant frames in the political debate of Scottish independence by analyzing political speeches. This will provide the reader with a deeper understanding of the underlying reasons for the policy dispute. Other notions which are not accounted for in this study are the definition and development of Scottish Nationalism and the effects of European regionalism connected to membership within the European Union. These are interesting and highly relevant factors that could provide further understanding for the issue at hand. It could also prove interesting to make a comparative analysis between the Scottish situation and other nations that are experiencing similar, and in that regard, highly relevant political changes such as Wales, Catalonia, and many other regions within Europe where separatist movements are strong.

2 Background – the development of the question of independence

The union of England and Scotland in 1707 involved the abolition of both English and Scottish parliaments, replacing them with a new parliament of Great Britain. The effective change from this was that all political power was moved to London, apart from the legal system, the Church of Scotland and the education system (Keating, 1998). One argument is that it came about because of the lack of strong cultural markers such as language, specifically between lowland Scotland and England (Anderson, 2006, p.91). Scottish economy strengthened during the 1800'th century and many Scots played key roles in the development of the British empire. The first proposal of home rule within the UK was voiced by William Gladstone during his time as liberal in the 1880's (Carrell, 2013). Apart from the nationalistic tides that arose with southern, catholic Ireland breaking away from the British empire in 1922, support for independence in Scotland was marginal throughout the first part of the twentieth century. The very idea was almost inconceivable. (Nairn, 2003). The change in attitude towards the empire was unforeseen and changed rapidly between 1960 and 1970. It was considered an option first by 1979 when 7% of the population supported independence (McCrone and Paterson, 2002). Between then and 1997 support for independence fluctuated heavily and peaked with the referendum of 1997 when 28% supported Scottish independence within the EU (ibid.). In 1999 a Scottish parliament was reestablished in Edinburgh with extensive policy making and legal power, but dependent on a direct grant from Westminster (Carrell, 2013). Internal restructure and devolution were part of the factors leading up to SNP's election success in 2007, a party motivated by the question of Scottish independence (Mitchell et al 2011, p.1). In May 2011, Salmond and the SNP unexpectedly won an historic landslide victory giving the nationalists majority control of the Scottish

parliament. This enabled the first minister to finally enforce the independence referendum (Carrell, 2013).

3 Methodology and Theory

The scientific base of this thesis will have its root in that society depends on ideas and how actors and people interpret the world, and it is with this in mind that I have opted use the method of discourse analysis and in particular framing analysis. When using a qualitative method, explaining the steps pronouncedly and systematically are of paramount importance in order to achieve high intersubjectivity. Motivating to the reader of this study the use of McCrone's list of possible political strategies for Scotland's future as indicators in the analysis is also important. As expressed by Teorell and Svensson, being able to motivate and argue for every choice and result reached throughout a thesis is the epitome of good scientific research and will be pursued also in this thesis (Teorell and Svensson, 2007, p.55). The following chapters will describe more in depth the definition of each method and to what use it is applied.

3.1 Discourse Analysis

This thesis will build on the philosophical basis that our knowledge of the world cannot be immediately looked upon as an objective truth and is therefore best described as resting on post-structuralism and social constructivism in its interpretation of reality. Reality is only made available to us through our categories, and our knowledge and worldviews are not reflections of reality, but a product of our way of categorizing the world (Winther & Jorgensen, 2000, p.11). Our view of the world could have been different and might change over time. Discursive action is a form of social action, which contributes to constructing the social world (including knowledge, identities and social relations) and thereby preserving certain social patterns. Discourse analysis in the words of Arts and Buizer describes a similar approach and defines it as a collection of theories that all presupposes that reality can be understood through analyzing the social

meanings of concepts and figurative structures and orders (Arts and Buizer, 2008, p.2). They place frame analysis within the scope of discourse analysis which fits well for the purpose of this study. Another researcher within the field of discourse analysis Marteen Hajer argues the capability of discourse analysis as a method when researching policy conflicts. He makes the case that any discourse analysis aims to show how language shapes reality (Hajer, 2003, p.103).

In this thesis, the object of analysis is different types of texts which represent and create social meanings and structure. The type of discourse analysis used in this study will focus on linguistic elements used to frame information in a certain way, in this sense it differs from the approach of Hajer (Hajer, 2003, p.103-108). One researcher of discourse analysis who however does favor analyzing the linguistic elements is James Paul Gee. He argues that the primary purpose of language isn't only to convey information, but also to support the performance of social activities and social identities. In addition to this it serves the purpose of supporting human affiliation within cultures, social groups and institutions. Seeing as they are interlinked, however, cultures, social groups and institutions shape social activities and identities in an identical way. Gee's research focuses on how language is recruited "on site" to establish specific social activities and social identities, "identities" as in participating in a social group of some sort as a culture, an institution etc. The language-in-use to describe and define these participants is according to Gee always political. The definition of "political" here referring "how social goods are perceived, argued over and distributed in society. Gee defines "social goods" as anything that a group of people believes to be a source of power, status, value or worth (Gee, 2013, p. 1-2).

Together these approaches form the theoretical base of my research design and will shape the way I approach the material in my analysis.

3.2 Frame reflection and frame analysis

> "If you have ever had a picture framed, you know that the frame you chose emphasized some elements of the picture at the expense of others. Similarly, if you were to reframe the picture, you would notice that the very elements previously emphazised-colours, patterns, composition-would subsequently

> be de-emphasized by the new frame. Instead, a different combination of elements would be highlighted. Similar to pictures, ideas and events-facts-are also framed. When we frame in a particular way, we encourage others to see these facts in a particular way. Framing in this sense can be understood as taking some aspect of our reality and making them more accessible than other aspects." (Kuypers, 2009).

This is the general description of how frames work and affect us as voiced by Kuyper. He argues that frames are powerful due to their innate ability to induce us to filter our perceptions of the world in specific ways, highlighting certain aspects of our multidimensional reality more than others. It is often phrased in the area of frame analysis as "making some information more salient than other information" (Kuypers, 2009, p.181).

Another researcher in the scientific field of political studies and frame analysis William Gamson argues that facts are neutral until framed, that they have no intrinsic meaning until they are set in a frame or a narrative. This frame or narrative then organizes them and gives them coherence, consciously or unconsciously selecting certain facts to emphasize and others to play down or omit completely (Gamson, 1989).

Framing, then, can be described as the process whereby actors construct a certain point of view that makes the facts of a given situation to be regarded in a, from the actors point of view, desired manner, prioritizing some information over other. In stressing some aspects of reality over others, frames serve the purpose of defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral judgments and suggesting remedies. (Kuypers, 2009, p.185)

The type of framing analysis used in this thesis will be comparative framing analysis as described by Kuypers. The argument made by Kuypers is that framing theory can be used to understand any rhetorical artifact. Framing is a natural part of the communication process and a way for us to sort and contextualize the large amount of information that comes to us every day (Kuypers, 2009). Kuypers himself utilizes framing theory, and especially comparative framing analysis, to better understand mediated communication as in comparing for instance the difference in a message delivered by a politician and the media's interpretation of the same message. In this thesis, however, I will use the very same theory of

framing used by Kuypers but for a different purpose. Instead of comparing how politicians and British news outlets differ in how they frame the question of Scottish independence, I find it interesting to instead make a comparative analysis of how party leaders in the four largest Scottish political parties, vouching either for or against independence, frame the primary question of Scottish independence and secondary issues related to the issue. The reason for this being is that I wish to see how arguments are presented in the political discourse and how they are presented to the Scottish voters.

3.3 Policy controversy or policy disagreement?

In the publication "Frame Reflection – Toward the Resolution of Intractable Policy Controversies", Donald A, Schön and Martin Rein argue that when applying frame analysis on an issue that is up for debate - be it anything from the protection of our natural environment to the causes and remedies for homelessness – it is critically important to distinguish between two types of policy disputes: those that may be settled by reasoned discourse and those that are stubbornly resistant to resolution through the exercise of reason(Schön & Rein, 1994, p.3)

The term *policy disagreement* refers to disputes where the question at the root of argumentation can be resolved by examining the facts of the situation. By recourse to evidence, these disputes can be resolved in a way to which parties of opposing opinion can agree (ibid.).

The term *policy controversy* refers to disputes that are immune to resolution by appeal to the facts. Emblematic themes in this type of dispute are crime, welfare, abortion, drugs, poverty, mass unemployment, the conservation of energy etc. Disputes surrounding these types of issues share a tendency to be intractable, enduring and rarely resolved (Schön & Rein, 1994, p.4).

Even though it is conceptually clear how these two types of policy disputes differ in nature, in a given case it is often problematic to determine which type is predominant. Schön and Rein list a number of indicators that can be used in the analytical process of defining a policy dispute as disagreement or controversy.

The first indicator is that policy controversies are stubbornly resistant to resolution by recourse to facts. They play a whole other role in controversies than in disagreements. Parties to a controversy are much more inclined to selectively and strategically focus on facts that work in favor of their view on a certain issue while dismissing other facts that are controversial to the point they wish to make. An example brought up by Schön and Rein is the difference between conservatives and liberals in debates over the alleged decline of the welfare state. Political conservatives tend to focus on data that relate to economic competitiveness while liberals, on the other hand, tend to focus on data that demonstrate the need for income support or the inequity of income distribution (ibid.).

The second indicator differentiating a disagreement from a controversy is found in a scenario where the parties to a policy dispute focus their attention on the same facts but give them different interpretations. This indicates that the dispute is more of a controversy than a disagreement (Schön & Rein, 1994, p.5). For example, a report showing that emission of co2 within a certain country has decreased by 1% can be used to make the argument that the nation is headed in the right direction but it can also be used to make the argument that development is proceeding far too slowly.

When entangled in controversy we have a notable ability to dismiss evidence put forward by our opponents and an astonishing talent for creating a narrative that strengthens our own cause and undermines counterevidence. The controversies become intractable as contending parties hold conflicting frames, frames that determine what counts as fact and what arguments are taken to be relevant and compelling. Moreover, the frames are generally tacit and exempt from conscious attention and reasoning (Schön & Rein, 1994, p.22).

It is by searching for the indicators stated by Schön and Rein that I wish to answer my secondary research question of whether the Scottish debate on independence is best described as a policy disagreement or policy controversy.

3.4 Constitutional frames

In this chapter I will identify and define different frameworks based on the research of Scottish scholar David McCrone that are prominent in the debate on Scottish independence. The frames will serve as a template and guide me through my framing analysis of the selected material, allowing clearer systemization of the information found in the material and how it is framed. Although the frames are found in McCrone's research, in the definition of them the work of several researchers will be taken into account to create as clear and broad a definition as possible of the frame in question. These frames cannot be regarded broad approaches to the issue of state- and/or union-building on a global level, but are first and foremost relevant in the debate on desired development of political systems in the specific case of Scotland. However, they are highly relevant in the Scottish case as they contain broad schemes and categories of ideas regarding the issue. The material will be approached with the understanding that some of the texts might not correspond to any of the given frameworks but place themselves within another, and this will be taken into account in the analysis. For explanatory purposes and further clarification I will list key standpoints of the four frameworks in a table by the end of this chapter.

3.4.1 Confederalist framework

The confederalist framework is in short described by McCrone as favoring loose links between nations of the UK within an umbrella of British state (McCrone, 2012). Murray Bookchin describes the confederalist view as involving a clear distinction between policymaking and the coordination and execution of adopted policies. Policymaking is exclusively the right of popular community assemblies based on the practices of participatory democracy whilst administration and coordination are the responsibility of confederal councils. The power lies with the people and flows from the bottom up instead of from the top down (Bookchin, 1990, p.8). According to Bookchin a crucial element in giving reality to confederalism is the interdependence of communities for an authentic mutualism

based on shared resources, produce and policymaking (Bookchin, 1990, p.9). That independence is not favorable for the membership countries of the UK would fit this narrative well. However, they would with utmost probability be in favor of max devolution to favor the empowerment of the people in the business of policy making but as opposed to the neo-nationalist framework they would not be inclined to work out new social unions.

3.4.2 Neo-unionist framework

In the Neo-unionist framework the UK is regarded as a nation-state with common civil, political and social rights. Unlike old-style unionism, it favors devolution within limits and supports a stronger territorial dimension to government generally. It is not however in favor of substantial policy divergence or to Scotland working out its own social settlement (McCrone, 2012). Statements that place themselves within the scope of this narrative would argue the importance for Scotland to remain part of the UK more or less as they are today with possible minor alterations. They would presumably argue the shared values of the British countries and the fraternal bonds between them. They would strongly oppose Scotland working out social unions with for instance the Scandinavian countries and are strong opponents of Scottish independence.

3.4.3 Neo-nationalist framework

Tom Nairn describes Scottish nationalism as a sui generis phenomenon which should not be equated with classical European or Third World ‘Nationalism’ at all. Neo-nationalism surges at a far more advanced stage of general development than traditional nationalism. Nairn argues that neo-nationalism arises on the fringe of metropolitan growth zones which suffer from relative deprivation, making them prone political action against that development. It is similar to old-school nationalism particularly in its ideology, but it starts from a higher level and belongs to a more advanced stage of capitalist evolution, namely the age of multinationals and the effective internationalization of capital (Nairn, 2003, p.117).

According to McCrone the neo-nationalist approach to the issue is that Scotland is the main focus of citizenship, loyalty and social integration. It is nested within multiple unions, in the UK, the 'Isles', Europe and the North Atlantic, and negotiates its way among these without necessarily claiming statehood (McCrone, 2012). The neo-nationalist narrative would argue Scotland's right to make decisions directly affecting them and be in favor of max devolution, enabling the Scottish parliament to have a high degree of fiscal autonomy and control over income tax and business taxes. Scottish representation in terms of defense and foreign affairs politics would still be carried out under the banner of the UK and the EU.

3.4.4 Pro-independence framework

The very essence of the independence narrative is that all decisions for Scotland should be made by the Scottish parliament. Independence in the Scottish case means that Scotland would cease to be part of the UK and claim statehood within the European Union. Furthermore, they would with all likeliness try to retain some form of 'social union' with for instance Scandinavia on political issues where shared values and goals are exist. (McCrone, 2012). The narrative argues the negative aspects of belonging to the UK and emphasizes the opportunities that would follow independence. Similarly to the neo-nationalist framework the argument that Scotland is the main focus of citizenship, loyalty and social integration is central. The narrative favors all type of devolution with the ultimate goal of independence.

3.4.5 Summary of frameworks

In the table below the approach of each narrative or framework to the question of Scottish independence and devolution will be inserted.

Table. 1.1

Framework	Condederalist	Neo-unionist
Perception of independence and approach to devolution.	Interdependence rather than independence. Positive towards devolution. The power of policy making should lie with the people.	Strongly opposes independence. Favors devolution within limits but strongly opposes substantial policy divergence.

Table. 1.2

Framework	Neo-nationalist	Pro-independence
Perception of independence and approach to devolution	Not completely opposed to the option of independence but it is not the ultimate goal. Eager support of max devolution, high degree of fiscal autonomy and control over taxes.	Strongly supports independence. Positive towards devolution but it is seen as a stepping stone towards independence rather than a solution.

3.4.6 Other possible frameworks

Other possible frameworks that are not included in the table and that possibly are present in the political dispute of Scottish independence are "The Calman framework" based on the report presented by the Calman Commission (or the Commission on Scottish Devolution) in 2009 (McCrone, 2012). In short, the report reaches the conclusion that Scottish devolution works well within the union but should be kept at a minimal level (Commission on Scottish Devolution, 2009).

Other frameworks that could prove interesting to include in the table are the ones that could be defined as the 'status quo framework' and the 'status quo ante 1999 framework' (McCrone, 2012). The status quo narrative argues that Scotland should maintain the current situation of devolution with block grant determined by the Westminster government and the status quo ante 1999 narrative argues that Scotland return to the system pre 1999 when all decisions for Scotland were made by the UK government.

In my analysis I have chosen to leave these perspectives out as they have not seemed as relevant as the other narratives in the material I have selected for analysis. However, during an in depth analysis it might prove that the narratives put forward in the material are more compatible with these frameworks than the ones I have chosen and so they will not be disregarded as not fruitful.

3.5 Delimitations of research design

The methods of discourse and frame analysis are useful tools in describing and clarifying how something happens and how it is narrated. In explaining why something happens, however, they are incapable of providing a clear explanation as to what variables effect the outcome. Nevertheless, the explanatory value of this thesis is not found in causal mechanisms or variables, but rather in increasing the understanding of a given situation by emphasizing how information is perceived and narrated creating an interpretation of the world (Schön & Rein, 1994, p.44).

In the field of frame analysis it is important to have stepped out of our own frame to ensure that our position is not self-evident and that other ways of framing an issue are possible. Only when this has been achieved one can face the basis for a reasoned choice among possible frames. Other important aspects are coherence and utility. Coherence to certify that the framing of the policy situation integrates disparate values and beliefs and utility to make sure that the framing analysis applied on the issue is carried out with the purpose of suggesting plausible explanations that answer to the research question stated in this thesis (ibid.). Furthermore, it is important throughout the analysis to not only focus on the

narratives and information present in the selected material, but to have a keen eye on the look-out for which are not (ibid.).

4 Material

In selecting material to be used for a qualitative method it is a major challenge for the researcher to stay objective. In selecting material to apply a frame analysis on I have opted to go for a small, strategic choice of data aimed at achieving qualitative results and theoretical generalization. The material for analysis consists of four speeches held by party leaders of the four largest political parties in Scotland. In order to reach high validity and objectivity I have taken into account a number of aspects in choosing the material. One of these is the length of the speech. The speeches are about equal in length ranging from around 4000 to around 5000 word, the exception being the speech by Liberal Democrats leader Willie Rennie which is about 2800 words long. This being said, the somewhat shorter nature of Rennie's speech has not proven to limit the results of the analysis in any way.

Other aspects I have kept in mind in the selection of my material are the circumstances of where and when the speech was held. All speeches have been held at party conferences within three months of each other this year (2013), from the 16'th of March in the case of Rennie to the 8'th of June in the case of Davidson. Hence no major advantage is given to either speech in terms of actuality. The last and most important aspect I looked for in my selection of the material was that they should all address the issue of the 2014 referendum and the question of Scottish independence. This has been accomplished as all speeches do so, some more than others, but all of them provide a clear description on where the speakers stand in the mentioned issues.

The analysis of my empirical material will relate to theory of framing as expressed by Kuyper along with the theory on intractable policy disputes as expressed by Schön and Rein. Kuyper's method for detecting and categorizing frames or narratives in a text will be used to see whether or not conflicting frames exist. Schön and Rein's theoretical framework on policy disputes will be used to answer the secondary research question of whether the Scottish debate on

independence can be classified as either a policy disagreement or a policy controversy. The frameworks used as a template throughout the analysis are gathered loosely from a PowerPoint presentation held at the University of Edinburgh by scholar David McCrone; these frameworks have then been further developed with the help of other research from scholars within the field.

Apart from the primary methodological and theoretical material, empirical information is gathered from research within the field of Scottish devolution and British constitution; the development of the issue of Scottish independence and relevant history.

4.1 Limitation of scope

I have opted for excluding the Scottish Green Party in my analysis. The reason for this is that their approach to the issue of Scottish independence is much the same as that of the SNP and they are currently the party with the least amount of MSP's (Member of Scottish Parliament) among the five parties.

5 Analysis

The material selected for analysis consists of speeches delivered by representatives from the four largest Scottish political parties, namely the Scottish National Party (henceforth referred to as SNP), the Scottish Labour Party (henceforth referred to as Labour), the Scottish Conservative Party (henceforth referred to as Conservatives) and the Scottish Liberal Democrats (henceforth referred to as LD). All speeches debate its respective vision for Scotland and all argue either for or against voting for independence. Each text will be briefly covered in terms of disposition and content. I will analyze how the issue is presented and framed by analyzing the use of certain words, metaphors and other textual tools to highlight certain information while leaving out other. I will determine whether the text correlates with any of the narratives or frameworks previously stated by McCrone and for further clarification I will place the framings found in the material in a framing table. This makes it easier for me as well as for the reader of this thesis to identify the level of correspondence with McCrone's frames and whether contesting frames exist surrounding the issue.

5.1 Speech by Rennie

The narrative built up by Rennie regarding the issue of the upcoming referendum and the question of Scottish independence largely consists in that the SNP regard independence as a 'magical power' that will solve all known problems, but that reality is of a different nature (Rennie, 2013). In his argument against independence he relates to a leaked report that predicts the detrimental aspects of independence such as volatile oil revenue, cuts to pension and the loss of public service. In a ridiculing manner he suggests that the SNP are as aware of these consequences of independence as everyone else is and that it frightens them a great deal. It is clear from the very outset of his speech that independence is not

considered a viable constitutional option for Scotland. Rennie follows up this somewhat didactic section of arguments with a presentation of an alternate vision. His ambition is, based on the research made in the LD's home rule commission, to increase power for the Scottish parliament by a massive transfer of financial and constitutional power (ibid.). Rennie speaks of this as a lasting settlement, thereby rhetorically closing to gates to further devolution or potential independence. His vision is a Scotland with home rule within a 'Federal UK' which, according to Rennie, is an idea that is gathering support from a wide range of bodies and thinkers (ibid.). Rennie paints the picture of the LD as the torchbearer in seeking solutions across the political spectrum for a lasting solution:

> "The breakthrough moment is possible […] a breakthrough for a lasting, settled solution. And it is the liberal democrats that seek solutions. We are constructive, seek consensus where possible and work for that greater good." (Rennie, 2013)

Rennie believes it possible to develop the consensus that a "No" in the referendum actually means "Yes" to more powers. The narrative in this sentence frames voting against independence as something positive, that voting against independence would lead to more political influence for Scotland than independence would. The closing part of the speech argues the need for SNP to attend to imminent issues rather than obsessing with: "[…]the behind-the-scenes patch-up job on the referendum[…]" (ibid.).

The narrative that is visible throughout the speech delivered by Rennie is that the upcoming referendum and the issue of Scottish independence has to an extent blindfolded the governing party that is the SNP and that their obsession with it has rendered them unable to focus on impending issues. Independence is not only framed as undesirable but also as harmful to Scotland's economic system and its welfare section. Even though the narrative favors Scotland remain part of the UK it focuses very little on what the positive aspects of that option are as opposed to the negative aspects independence would bring. Which of the frameworks is then most coherent with the narrative present in the speech by Rennie? In the case of Rennie it becomes quite complicated. I could be argued that its attitude towards devolution corresponds mostly to the frameworks of neo-nationalism and confederalism, eagerly favoring a high degree of fiscal autonomy and control over

taxes, in other words favoring a high degree of devolution. The strong aversion to independence, however, places it further away from the neo-nationalist perspective and closer to the confederalist framework as defined by McCrone and Bookchin, favoring interdependence over independence. Even so, the lack of arguments in terms of the UK countries as a unified body, having shared values and a responsibility towards one another, makes it difficult to justify placing the narrative put forward in Rennie's speech within the confederalist frame. There are arguments opposing centralization but there is little to no emphasis put on elaborating on the joint responsibility of the UK countries and on what level of society policymaking should be carried out. To summarize, the narrative present in Rennie's vision for Scotland corresponds to both the neo-nationalist and the confederalist framework in terms of devolution but cannot be linked to either of them in terms of its attitude towards independence.

5.2 Speech by Lamont

The narrative present in the speech by Lamont takes off in the statement that the Scottish Parliament was created because of Labour's belief in devolution. She addresses the issue of the bedroom tax (BBC, 2013) and how the SNP sees it as an opportunity to show how devolution can protect Scots from a Tory government (Lamont, 2013). She pledges to work together with the SNP against the injustice of the bedroom tax if they are willing, saying that if they truly believe in social justice they can work together (ibid.). This initial part continues with a change of tone wherein Lamont questions the SNP's 'after the referendum'-rhetoric by referring to a speech delivered by Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning Michael Russell in which he voiced an ambition to bring about a change to the educational system but says that it is only possible after independence (Lamont, 2013). She makes another reference to a speech held by First Minister Alex Salmond in which he referred to Iraq ten times, independence twenty-five times but did not mention poverty at all (ibid.). This is relevant as Lamont with these segments forms a narrative in which she frames the issue of independence as overshadowing a far more pressing issue, namely that of poverty.

Lamont paints a picture in which the SNP's preoccupation with independence makes them neglect more urgent issues. Salmond himself would presumably argue that independence is a requisite for being able to free up financial leeway to invest into care for the lesser fortunate. Lamont, on the other hand, frames independence, more specifically the amount of attention it is given, as standing in the way for acute measures to remedy the situation of the poor. In relation to the research of Schön and Rein this is a typical situation of conflicting frames, frames that determine what counts as fact and what arguments are taken to be relevant and compelling (Schön & Rein, 1994, p. 22). The main point of the narrative present in the speech by Lamont is that the enemy of Scotland is not its neighbors, but poverty (Lamont, 2013).

Lamont states in her speech that she will not walk an inch down the road to independence (ibid.). Labour has appointed its own devolution commission in order to form a strategy for how devolution is to be developed, but she states clearly that it is not made for the appeasement of the SNP. She puts forward two principles she is determined to protect. The first one is the redistribution of power from institutions to the people, devolving power not only from Westminster to Holyrood (the Scottish parliament) but beyond to the people by reinvigorating democracy at council level and beyond (Lamont, 2013). This approach to devolution relates clearly to Bookchin's definition of confederalism and how policymaking is an exclusive right of the popular community assemblies based on the practices of participatory democracy (Bookchin, 1990, p.8). The second principal stated by Lamont is that sovereignty lies with the Scottish people, that they choose to be in partnership with its neighboring countries and that it is a partnership that should be respected. Lamont's argument is that SNP wishes to separate Scotland from the UK while allowing Westminster to retain all power of the Scottish currency, interest rates, loans and spending, this without there being a single Scot at Westminster to argue the Scottish case (Lamont, 2013). Lamont wants Scotland to have full Scottish representation at Westminster and play a full part in the partnership. This principle responds well to the confederalist framework and to some extent also the neo-nationalist one. The confederalist perspective in the sense that the partnership between the membership countries of the United Kingdom ought to be a fair and equal one respected by all parties. The neo-nationalist one in the sense that Scotland is the main focus of citizenship,

loyalty and social integration, and the main reason to remain part of the UK is to defend the Scottish position on joint British political decisions (McCrone, 2012). To recapitulate in short, Lamonts approach to both independence and devolution is most coherent with the confederalist framework. She puts forward a vision to decentralize Scotland so that the policy-making authorities reside with the population. In terms of her approach to independence she not only shuns it, but also frames it as harmful in that it steals attention from more critical issues such as poverty.

5.3 Speech by Salmond

The introductory key point in the narrative present in Salmond's speech is that the population of Scotland is lucky to receive the opportunity to vote for its future. He frames voting Yes for Scottish independence as voting for a new future for Scotland, implicitly equating a No vote with no change. He also states that the sovereignty of the Scottish people is in its DNA (Salmond, 2013). A second narrative arises as Salmond argues the need for Scotland to move forward. He does so by listing what he refers to as 'parts of the why of independence' (henceforth referred to as 'part of why').

The parts of the why of independence consist in a number of issues which according to Salmond cannot be resolved unless Scotland separates itself from the UK. These first of these is war. Independence would enable Scotland to enforce constitutional guarantees ensuring they will not go to war without a proper process of parliamentary approval. The second part is about weapons of mass destruction and how they could be removed from Scottish soil. In the third part of why, Salmond paints a grim picture of oppressive guardianship where Scotland is under threat of a Westminster which does not have Scotland's best interest at heart. He describes it as out of date and further than ever away from Scottish values. He raises attention towards a survey showing that the people of Scotland trust Holyrood four times more than Westminster and that since the restoration of the Scottish parliament in 1999, policies that reflect the views and votes of the Scottish people have been delivered to a larger degree. This information builds up

the final argument of the third part of why which consists in that what Scotland needs is not mitigation of Westminster rule through devolution, but enforcement of Scottish authority through independence (Salmond, 2013). The argument is that devolution is positive, but it can only take Scotland so far.

The following part of the speech focuses on what can be achieved by realizing an independent Scotland. Salmond lists a transformational shift towards childcare as the last part of why and an example of the nation's ability to build prosperity and wellbeing by separation from Britain (ibid.). He ends his speech by comparing the debate on Scottish independence with the debate on devolution before the referendum of 1997, making the case that the same fears were voiced then, but that today hardly anyone regrets the outcome, and that people will look back on the referendum of 2014 thinking the same thing (Salmond, 2013).

The framing of facts and the ideas put forward surrounding the issue of Scottish independence in Salmond's speech coheres well with the pro-independence framework based on the ideas of McCrone (McCrone, 2012). A fully autonomous Scotland is described as the only possible option in order for the country to thrive in terms of economic stability, a strong welfare system and the best childcare system in the UK. Devolution is seen as a something positive but will not give them the biggest bang for their buck (ibid.). What differs from McCrone's description of the pro-independence perspective is the lack of rhetoric regarding potential other 'unions' where Scotland could play its part. McCrones mentions statehood within the European Union along with some form of social union with for instance the Scandinavian countries. In the case of statehood within the European Union it is arguably the case that it is taken for given, but the lack of rhetoric regarding what Scotland could achieve within the union is worth noting. The absence of arguments treating the issue of a social union with for instance Scandinavia does not necessarily place the narrative present in Salmond's speech outside of the pro-independence framework as McCrone describes it as likely, but not as an obvious. Salmond's approach towards as well independence as devolution corresponds largely to that of the pro-independence framework.

5.4 Speech by Davidson

Davidson's speech can be described as having three key narratives which all are used to frame the option of independence as undesirable. The first revolves primarily around the issues of economy and security. In terms of economy she describes it as a predicament standing outside of the union. The narrative created by Davidson tells the tale of a Scotland isolated from both the UK currency and the Bank of England, and in the case they were not, Scotland's main economic decision-making authority would be under control of a foreign treasury. Pensioners would be affected negatively as they benefit from the costs of an ageing population being split across all UK taxpayers and trade between Scotland and the UK would be greatly inhibited, directly affecting Scottish jobs. In relation to trade, she frames independence as building barriers rather than tearing them down, and she describes a vote to leave the UK as the greatest barrier of them all. In large she describes membership of the United Kingdom as a prerequisite, or a key, to a "fairer, more secure and more successful Scotland" (Davidson, 2013).
In terms of security Davidson frames it as a joint responsibility, and one with a historical value. She refers to soldiers from the British Isles as brothers in arms, having fought for a common aim. To honor what they fight for and to support the joint forces of the United Kingdom.

The second narrative frames the idea of an independent Scotland as a naïve dream where no hard choices would have to be made and where everlasting oil revenues would solve all problems. She defines it as a 'virtual Scotland', a Scotland that is not rooted in reality. According to Davidson an independent Scotland is a Scotland that survives, far from a prosperous and healthy state.

The third narrative is built up around the idea of identity. Davidson argues her right to remain both Scottish and British, and the value of such a partnership. The common factors bringing together the people of the United Kingdom should be celebrated as togetherness makes them stronger and better. She describes the union of countries as a family of interaction, integration and interdependence, and that independence would rob Scotland of its place in such a family (ibid.). Davidson argues that an independent Scotland is a Scotland that stands alone in the world, and that a vote 'no' vote in the referendum is not a vote for 'no

change'. Davidson 's idea of change includes the follow three points: *A Scottish Parliament that is more accountable to the people of Scotland*, *a Scottish government which can't hide from its responsibilities* and *a Scotland that stands on its own two feet but which doesn't stand alone in the world* (Davidson, 2013).

Her argument is that there is a need to find a devolution settlement in Scotland, which answers to the desires of the Scottish people, and one that can be regarded a resolved solution on which a foundation for future generations can be built. She clearly states that she wants to prevent the possibility for another referendum in the future (ibid.). The factors mentioned to be part of such a solution are increased tax powers, an implementation of policies conducive to business growth, the creation of jobs, better education and an improved situation for those in need.

I would argue that the framework most coherent with the general narrative present in Davidson's speech is that of the neo-unionist. Her attitude towards independence corresponds well to the neo-unionist perspective since it is not regarded an option remotely up for consideration. It is clear that she values civil, political and social rights that are shared by the membership countries of the UK and that she carries a general conviction that Scotland is stronger within the union then outside it. On the subject of devolution Davidson's narrative does not discern itself noticeably from that of the neo-unionist approach. What makes it complex is the lack of elaboration on what her conception of devolution is. She mentions increased tax powers, which is a step to increased fiscal autonomy and arguably closer to the neo-nationalist and the pro-independence framework, but the way she defines this development is as part of the natural progress and not as deciding step away from the UK (ibid.). In this regard Davidson's narrative is closest to the neo-unionist framework in both aspects.

6 Result

To answer my primary research question I have focused on how the issue of Scottish independence is framed by searching for linguistic elements creating narratives in the respective speeches. I have used the frameworks based on the research of McCrone as a template and in accordance with framing theory as expressed by Kuypers, I have looked for how frames serve the purpose of emphasizing some features of reality while omitting others.

To answer my secondary question of whether the dispute is best described as a policy disagreement or policy controversy I have searched for the indicators mentioned by Schön and Rein to determine whether it is a dispute that is or is not resolvable by appeal to facts.

In reference to the primary research question I have reached the conclusion that there is great disparity in the framing of the issue of independence. The disparity is most transparent in primarily two aspects: The framing of the issue of Scottish independence and the framing of the issue of devolution.

I have been able to localize three narratives that I would argue are the most dominant in the four speeches. The first one is shared by Rennie and Lamont and consists in that independence is destructive and undesirable, and that the debate revolving it is stealing attention away from more urgent issues. Rennie frames it as dangerous as it puts Scotland's economy and well-fair system at risk. He argues that voting against independence would lead to more political influence for Scotland than independence would. His view on devolution is generally positive as his ambition is a Scotland with home-rule within a federal UK. Lamont frames the debate on independence as a way for the SNP to get away with postponing major political decisions which requires attending to until after the referendum with what she describes as "after-the-referendum-rhetoric". She is an eager supporter of all-embracing devolution, transferring power not only from Westminster to Holyrood, but beyond to the people of Scotland. The narrative put forward by conservative leader Ruth Davidson is that history has proven the value

of the union. Scotland can survive on its own two feet but it can never be as secure and prosperous outside of the UK as within it. Another part of her narrative is that the UK is a family and that it is every Scot's right to feel both Scottish and British. Her approach to devolution extends no further than the increase of tax powers in the Scottish parliament. The narrative of Salmond is that a fully autonomous Scotland is described as the only possible option in order for the country to thrive in terms of economic stability, a strong welfare system and the best childcare system in the UK. He equates independence with liberalization from and out-of-date system that does not operate with Scotland's best interest at heart, nor does it respect its values. Devolution is regarded a means to an end, the ultimate solution is independence.

Table 6.1

Speaker	Rennie	Lamont
Corresponding framework	Neo-nationalist/Confederalist	Confederalist
Assumptions	Independence will not benefit the Scottish economy or welfare system.	Policy making authority is far too centralized
Solution	Devolution with the aim of a Scotland with home rule within a federal UK	Devolution. Reinvigorating democracy at council level and beyond
Framing of independence.	Not only unwanted but also harmful.	Perilous as it eclipses more pressing issues.

Table 6.2

Speaker	Salmond	Davidson
Corresponding framework	Pro-independence	Neo-unionist
Assumptions	Independence is a must for Scotland to be able to prosper.	Stronger within the UK than outside it
Solution	Achieving independence through referendum.	Status quo but with devolution of tax powers.
Framing of independence	A must to liberate Scotland from a partnership that does not respect or benefit Scottish values.	Undesirable. Scotland can never be as successful outside the union as within it.

In reference to the second research question the findings conclude that the dispute on Scottish independence, based on the analyzed speeches, is best described as a policy controversy. The principal reason for this is that it has showed to be irresolvable among policy makers by appeal to facts. There are many conflicting narratives surrounding the issue of independence, and the information presented in the light of it, is framed to fit separate political agendas. Schön and Rein describes how politicians selectively and strategically focus on facts that work in favor of their view on a certain issue while dismissing other facts that are controversial to the point they wish to make (Schön and Rein). One lucid example of this is how the issue of economy is framed in relation to independence. Salmond raises attention to figures showing how in terms of GDP per head, an independent Scotland would be the 8th wealthiest country in the world, in contrast to the UK on place 17. Liberal Democrats leader Willie Rennie refers to a report showing that independence would entail cuts to pension and the loss of public service jobs. Lamont argues that independence would not offer fiscal autonomy

but rather place the currency, interest rates, loans and spending, in the hands of Westminster legislators beyond Scottish control. Davidson makes the argument that independence would isolate Scotland economically and worsen the conditions for trade.

The second indicator of a policy controversy stated by Schön and Rein is visible when policy makes focus their attention on the same facts but give them different interpretations. One example related to the discussion of independence is references made to future oil revenues which by Rennie are framed as volatile, by Davidson as short-term solution, by Lamont as a resource of secondary importance and by Salmond as a fantastic asset for generations to come.

7 Conclusion

By searching for different framings of the issue of Scottish independence I can conclude that there are conflicting narratives in the framing of Scottish independence in the four speeches. I can conclude that there are frames which are shared by more than one party leader and I have located three dominant framings of the issue. These three can in short be described as framing the option of Scottish independence as: *unwanted*, *destructive* and *a necessity*. In my analysis of whether the debate on Scottish independence is best described as a policy disagreement or a policy conflict I have by searching for indicators stated by Schön and Rein reached the conclusion that the Scottish situation is most coherent with the definition of a *policy controversy*.

7.1 Discussion

Do I reach my scientific aim of demonstrating how a policy conflict can be understood by analyzing the frameworks surrounding it? The findings in my analysis do demonstrate the occurrence of conflicting framings in the debate of Scottish independence. By applying discourse and framing methodology on the selected material the result shows how different perceptions of the idea of independence exist and by comparing the different speeches I am able to locate dominant narratives. As previously stated in the chapter on methodology and theory the method of discourse and frame analysis is greatly limited as to showing causality, providing a clear explanation in respect to what variables affect the outcome. My research does not answer why there is a longing for independence among part of the Scottish population, nor does it answer the question of whether it would benefit Scotland on the whole. Furthermore, it offers no anticipatory aid in terms of predicting the outcome of next year's referendum. As previously mentioned there is also the probability that other frameworks than the ones used

in this thesis are more suitable for categorizing the ideas put forward in the material for analysis in this study. The frameworks like the debate, are intricate and do not always correspond clearly to the ideas put forward in the material. These limitations aside, I am of the opinion that the analysis and the following result show that there are different ways of framing the issue of independence among politicians in Scotland and that some of these are dominant. It demonstrates how facts are presented to prove opposite points and how information is selectively presented.

Regarding the definition of the debate on Scottish independence as a policy controversy need also be put in context. The results corresponds well with the indicators put forward by Schön and Rein but the result is based on a qualitative collection of material which does not cover the entire spectrum of political ideas and assumptions influencing and affecting the debate. Naturally, the interpretative of framing analysis along with the aspect of having chosen a narrow, qualitative assortment of material limits the possibility of making general assumptions regarding the discourses surrounding the issue of Scottish independence based on the result of this thesis. Whether the study is fundamentally interesting in academic terms and applicable to similar cases is debatable. The frameworks used in this study would with all likeliness not be suitable in other cases. However, the method of researching separatist movements in other parts of Europe by analyzing conflicting narratives and framing of information should prove viable in other cases as well. I cannot but hope that this study inspires future research within the field.

7.2 Future research

A quantitative study researching the frameworks and narratives present in the Scottish debate on independence would be interesting and a great compliment to this study. Including other actors influencing the debate on Scottish independence such as scholars, research institutions, media and think tanks would presumably result in being able to draw general conclusions about the dominant discourses with higher validity. Moreover, as previously mentioned it would be highly

interesting to make a comparative study of the Scottish case with other European separatist movements, such as for instance Wales or Catalonia. Analyzing the differences in terms of history, the development of nationalism and separatism would with all likeliness bring further understanding to the issue of European regionalism. Analyzing the impact membership within the European Union has had on separatist movements in these regions would also be a topic interesting for academic research.

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