

European Elections in Dutch Talk Shows

A CONTENT ANALYSIS TO THE COVERAGE OF THE 2019
EUROPEAN ELECTIONS IN 'PAUW' AND 'BUITENHOF'

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Executive summary

The objective of this research is to document the conducted analysis on how the political event of the European elections of 2019 was covered by the Dutch television talk shows 'Pauw' and 'Buitenhof'. Due to numerous developments in mass media communication, the field of political communication is dynamic and subject to changes. The research is built on literature supporting these changes and describing the interrelationship between the actors in the field of political communication. More specifically, this research will focus on the power and influence these actors have on each other, according to their acting in infotainment talk shows. The central research question is, therefore, how the Dutch television talk shows 'Pauw' and 'Buitenhof' present the European elections of 2019? In order to answer this question qualitative content analysis is used, with a focus on textual analysis. The analysis is intended to research the themes, focus, guests, introduction of the presenter and a basic level of textual analysis of each selected fragment. Theories about changing political communication and on mediatization and personalization of politics helped to interpret the outcomes of the analysis. It is found that the analysed talk shows are mainly concerning national themes with a clear focus on national politics. Even though the intentions are to talk about the political event of the European elections, due to the type of guests that are invited and the raised topics, the national focus predominates the discussions. Moreover, the analysis shows that there is a focus on the personal dimension of politics. Likewise, the entertaining character is very much present in the analysed fragments. However, it has to be considered that entertainment partially belongs to the objectives of this type of shows. Nevertheless, a more balanced proportion was expected to be found. Furthermore, in-depth discussions about what the European elections entail and mean for citizens are found to a minimal extent. Therefore, it is concluded that these shows do not inform their viewers sufficiently about the European elections. Something that their name as being infotainment does suggest.

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List of terms and abbreviations

ALDE	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe: succeeded in Renew Europe in 2019 (EU parliament)
CDA	Christian democratic party (Dutch parliament)
D66	Social-liberal and progressive party (Dutch parliament)
ECB	European Central Bank
EU	European Union
Eurobarometer Commission	European public opinion polls executed by the European Commission
ESM	European Stability Mechanism: safeguard and provide financial assistance to Eurozone member states in financial difficulty
FVD	Forum for Democracy: new right wing party (Dutch parliament)
Greens/EFA	The Greens/Free European Alliance (EU Parliament)
GL	Groen Links: green left wing party (Dutch parliament)
IMF	International Monetary Fund: international organization for global monetary cooperation
Lijstduwer	Ceremonial position to show support or get attention for a party
MEP	Member of parliament: in this dissertation it is used only for members of the EU Parliament
NAVO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NL	The Netherlands
NRC	Quality Dutch newspaper
PVDA	Labour party (Dutch parliament)

PVV	Party for freedom: Right wing party (Dutch parliament)
Renew Europe	European alliance for liberals and democrats: former ALDE
SP	Socialist party (Dutch parliament)
Spitzenkandidat Commission	German word for lead candidate: candidate to be head of EU

Introduction

Over the last few decades, the influence of several types of media in our daily lives has become bigger than ever before. Television broadcasting media remain to be powerful and well established in Western societies. Due to many technological improvements much of our communication has become mediated, which means it is constructed with and spread through media channels. These major changes in the ways of human communication influence different parts of society, such as the political domain. All communication concerning politics has been subject to the changes in mass communication. Due to this, the ways of political communication have been changed drastically and have become more connected to media and the journalistic dimension of the society. The Dutch broadcasting media landscape has shifted towards an entertainment-based programming and the genre of infotainment, to which talk shows belong, are popular nowadays. Due to the stronger interrelationship between media and politics, infotainment talk shows also cover political items, especially around election time.

The key theories and principles that will be used as a basis for this dissertation are the mediatization and personalization of politics, and the changing profession of journalists in the always changing field of political communication. Earlier research has shown that political performances on television can influence public opinion, and at the same time there is a growing power of the media over the political domain. Due to this dynamic nature of the field of political communication, conducting research in it is considered relevant. Moreover, in May 2019 the European Elections took place for the ninth time in history. For all actors in the field of political communication this is their time to act. Therefore, more specifically, for this research is chosen to focus on this specific event. The main research question is: how do the Dutch television talk shows 'Pauw' and 'Buitenhof' present the European elections of 2019?

In order to answer this question, qualitative content analysis is used to analyse the selected fragments of both talk shows. It is chosen to use the talk shows Pauw and Buitenhof as study materials, because they are believed to be part of the more informative television talk shows Dutch television has to offer. While reviewing earlier conducted studies, a limited amount of content analysis to Dutch talk shows covering political events was found. This research is intended to be a useful addition to the knowledge about the interrelationship between the actors in political communication on Dutch television. It needs to be clear that the many limitations of this research, that come together with the methods of qualitative content analysis, are realized. Nevertheless, this research is considered to give a basic understanding of the implications of the developing nature of political communication.

Before the conduction of the analysis, a thorough discussion of relevant literature is provided, including an overview of the development of Dutch political and television culture. It is believed to be important and necessary to understand these theories in order to finally answer the main research question of this dissertation. In the second chapter, the methodology of the content analysis will be described in dept, per step. When doing content analysis, a main part of the research is leaving things out. It is impossible to analyse everything and therefore, the following aspects of content analysis are decided upon to analyse in this dissertation: themes, focus, guests, how the presenters introduce, and a basic level of textual analysis. By observing these aspects, it is believed to get a basic understanding of what the coverage of the European elections entails. Besides, they will help to interpret the motives of the actors in the researched fragments. The different parts of analysis are described in more detail in the methodology chapter. Then, the research moves on the subsequent chapter, in which the results of the qualitative content analysis are provided. First, the talk shows Pauw and Buitenhof are described in more detail. Thereafter, per selected fragment the themes, focus, and the type of introduction are presented. Followed by an overview of the guests and the most frequent words. The research then moves on to the analysis part where the results of the conducted analysis are discussed. In order to make sense of the results, they are connected to the theories earlier discussed in the literature review. Further interpretations and possible explanations for the results are considered and discussed. In the chapters after this, conclusions are given by answering the central question using the analysed data. Furthermore, some recommendations for further research will be stated, as well as recommendations to the talk show producers and politicians.

It is realized that because of the chosen research method of qualitative content analysis, the lay out of this dissertation might look different from the usual. Though, it is believed that the chosen structure serves the goal of answering the research question in the most effective way. This is because the analysed parts are presented in a clear and well-organized manner, giving an overview of the results found while conducting the analysis of talk show fragments.

Chapter 1. Literature Review

In order to define on what knowledge this research will be build, it is important to firstly outline the theoretical framework. Here, the main concepts and theories of this research will be outlined. This will be done by researching literature. By doing so, it will be defined where this research will be positioned within the academic landscape and how it relates to research conducted before related to the topic of media and politics. Moreover, the selected literature will be reviewed in a critical way.

This dissertation aims to research the presentation of the European Elections of 2019 in Dutch broadcasting media, in particular in talk shows. The literature that will be used to lay the theoretical foundations for this research mainly belongs to the field of study of political communication.

Generally speaking, one common statement found in articles while reading about the relation between broadcasting media and the political domain is that the media have got a prominent role in our daily lives. In our highly digitalized societies, new forms of media have a powerful position in spreading the news in faster and more effective manners. Nonetheless, traditional broadcasting media remain as powerful channels for news to spread around the world too. As this research will focus on the interrelationship between television broadcasting media and politics, specifically the 2019 European Elections, it is essential to have a closer look at previous research about the relationship between media and the political domain.

1.1. Defining political communication

To begin with is it important to define what political communication is. This is rather difficult since both words of the term already call for a variety of definitions. According to Blumler (2011), the field of political communication is an "exceptionally rich, complex, fluid and important sub-field in the overall field of communications studies". Due to these different characteristics there are various definitions, where none is universal. One very simple definition was given by Chaffee (as cited in Kaid, 2004) where it is described as "the role of communication in the political process".

A more concrete definition was given by Denton and Woodward (As cited in McNair, 2003) where they state that political communication is characterized by its intentions. As they put it: the crucial factor that makes communication 'political' is not the source of a message [or, we might add, referring back to their earlier emphasis on 'public discussion', its form], but its content and purpose". In the book *An Introduction to Political Communication* (2003), McNair describes it as "all purposeful communication about politics". It includes:

1. Communication of politicians and other political actors in order to achieve a specific goal.
2. Communication of non-political actors to political actors.
3. Communication about political actors and their activities.

After identifying these three types of political communication, McNair (2003) identifies the following actors that can be involved: political actors, the media and the audience. In figure 1 (McNair, 2003, p. 6) the relations between these three groups are indicated.

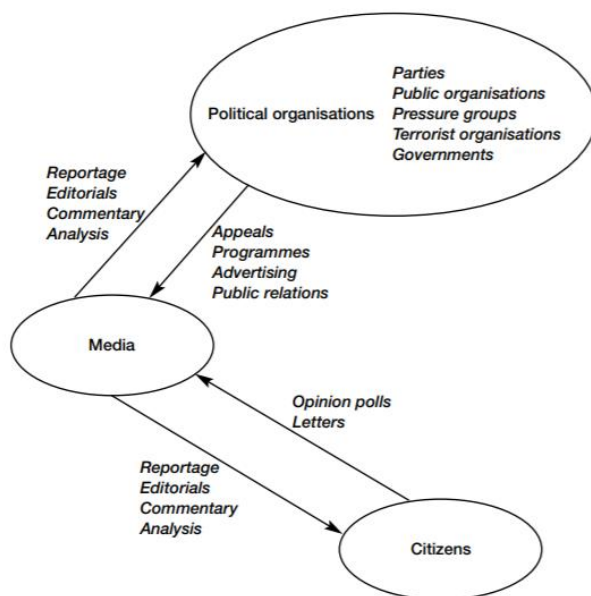


Figure 1. *Elements of Political Communication*. Note. Reprinted from "An Introduction to Political Communication", by McNair, B., 2003, p. 6, London, United Kingdom: Routledge.

This definition given by McNair clearly looks at the intentions of the communication. Different actors can be involved in political communication, as it is characterized by the purpose to communicate with a political purpose. An important note to make when defining this concept is that it only focusses on the communication which is open to the public. For So, behind door negotiations, inter-personal meetings and such are left out. This is exactly why it is so difficult to define and research this area. So, in this research only the public side of political communication will be looked at. To sum up, political communication is a very important field of study when studying the relationship between politics and media.

Another leading researcher in this field of study is Gadi Wolfsfeld. He is Full Professor in the department of political science and communication at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where he was former chair of the communication section of the American Political Science Association. In his book *Making Sense of Media and Politics* (2011) key principles of political communication are set out and a clear framework is provided that shows the interrelationship

between media and politics. According to Wolfsfeld (2011), a significant concern that comes with political communication are the many ways in which politics can influence the news media and vice versa. The news media and politics are inevitably connected to each other, as the news media are the central arena in which non-political active citizens can view the competition of what politics is (Wolfsfeld, 2011). The first main point Wolfsfeld (2011) states in this book is that “political power can usually be translated into power over news media”. This principle is explained by the fact that those who have political power find it much easier to get covered by the media, since journalists are more interested in elites. This can be explained by the simple fact that these elites, which hold high positions in politics, are more likely to have something newsworthy to say (Wolfsfeld, 2011). Powerful people are considered as more interesting by journalists since they are “most likely to have an impact on the country and the world”, Wolfsfeld (2011) explains. Regarding the research about the coverage of the European Elections of 2019 in Dutch media, it is important to keep this principle in mind because it is essential to realize that mostly known and influential people are getting provided a stage by the media.

1.2. Changes in political communication

One of the main statements found while reading about television media in everyday life, is that the television media have become very prominent in our current societies. Television media are used by people in a way its creators never had envisioned before. It has become a standard part of household interiors; a channel always there for the media to reach the people. (Bignell, 2004).

In the book *Political Communication in Postmodern Democracy* (2011b), different leading political communication scholars from the United Kingdom and the Netherlands are discussing different conceptions about political communication and how it has changed. As Brants & Voltmer (2011a) describe in the first chapter, changes in political communication roughly take place within two dimensions. This is illustrated in figure 2 (Brants & Voltmer, 2011a, p. 4)

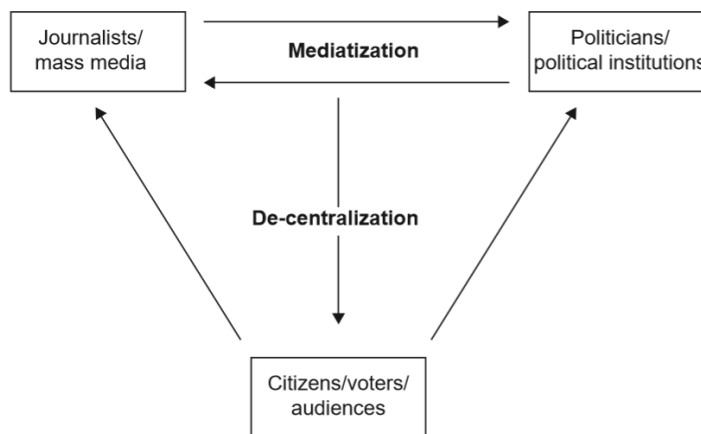


Figure 2. *Changes in Political Communication*. Note. Reprinted from “*Political Communication in Postmodern Democracy. Challenges the Primacy of Politics*”, by Brants, K. & Voltmer, K., 2011a, P. 4, Hampshire, Palgrave Macmillan.

Firstly, there is the horizontal dimension, in which political institutions and media institutions interact and collaborate. Both actors depend on each other, as the media need the politicians to make their news, and vice versa the politicians need the mass media in order to spread their ideas. Ultimately, this collaboration leads to the production of political messages. The balance between both actors is important to produce objective and trustworthy news coverage. According to different recent literature, this balance has shifted into a situation in which the mass media have gained all the control over the public agenda (Strömbäck, 2008); (Blumler & Kavanagh, 1999). This process is described as the Mediatization of Politics.

Secondly, changes in political communication in the vertical dimension are identified. This dimension refers to the relationship between the elites of mass media and politics – who produce the news – and the ordinary people in their role of citizens who vote. Citizens challenge the legitimacy and credibility of politics and mass media more and are now turning towards non-political spheres of communication. Moreover, the participation of citizens in elections and politics in general has decreased drastically. However, citizens have not detached from politics in total, but new forms of political debate have emerged and are valued as more reliable. These changes are identified as de-centralization (Brants & Voltmer, 2011a). There are more non-central ways of political communication. The rise of the internet has accelerated these changes in political communication.

A leading scholar who described changes in political communication is Andrew Chadwick. In his latest book *The Hybrid Media System* (2017), the development of new communication technologies and their relationship to the domains of media and politics is described. Chadwick

(2017), introduces the term of *hybrid media systems*, where old and new media interact with each other. All associated technologies, genres, norms, behaviours and organizations of these different media types merge, interact and influence one another. Chadwick (2017), argues to take an holistic approach when researching the complex field of political communication where the old and new forms of communication have become intertwined and interdependent. These changes have an impact on how political news is spread. For instance, a politician nowadays can easily post a tweet in order to support or react earlier news spread by a television program. This hybridization can also have an influence on the meanings of news. As Chadwick (2017) puts it, "The hybrid media system creates subtle but important shifts in the balance of power shaping the production of news".

1.3. Media and Politics

When conducting research in the field of political communication, a very important concept that needs to be considered is the given that everything has a bias. Wolfsfeld (2011) describes this principle in his book as follows: "there is no such thing as objective journalism (nor can there be)". Everything we see on the news has a bias. Even though most people have heard about these biases in news coverage, it is much more complicated than it may look. Journalists always have to make subjective judgements about what needs to be included in a story and what can be left out (Wolfsfeld, 2011). In order to make these decisions, journalists make use of news frames that function as organizing tools to let them tell a coherent story. However, not only journalists make use of frames, as the political actors always try to influence the news media and the electorate by promoting their own ideological and cultural frames. (Wolfsfeld, 2011).

According to Chong and Druckman (2007) the theory about framing can be looked at from different perspectives. They describe it as "the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue". Frames are defined by a set of beliefs that a person holds about a certain topic, so since everyone has their personal biases everyone uses frames and so do journalists. They need these frames in order to organize everyday reality (Tuchman, as cited in Chong & Druckman, 2007). By using these frames in communication, they can promote certain topics and therewith, interpretations of political issues (Shah et al., as cited in Chong & Druckman, 2007). Here the power of journalists is illustrated. By providing news from a certain perspective they can influence the behaviour and opinion of their audiences (Chong & Druckman, 2007). This is clearly illustrated by the well-known Asian disease framing experiment, by Tversky and Kahneman (1981). In this experiment participants get the following scenario: an Asian disease will break out in the US

and 600 people will be expected to die from this. Then two different survival programs were presented to one half of the participants:

- Option A: 200 people will be saved.
- Option B: there is a $\frac{1}{3}$ chance that 600 people will be saved, and a $\frac{2}{3}$ chance that no people will be saved.

The other half of the participants received the following survival options:

- Option C: 400 people will die.
- Option D: there is a $\frac{1}{3}$ change that nobody will die and $\frac{2}{3}$ change that 600 people will die.

The result of this experiment was that among the first group of participants, 72% chose for option A, which is the risk averse alternative. At the second group, most people opted for option D and only 22% chose for option C. Whereas, Option A and C actually mean the same (Tversky & Kahneman, 1981). This experiment clearly illustrates that by writing something down in different ways does affect the behaviour of people. This psychological principle is called the “framing effect” (Druckman, 2001).

By using framing techniques, journalists try to find a “narrative fit between existing frames and the events they are covering”, Valentino, Beckmann and Buhr (2001) argue. In their article they also state that news frames change accordingly to the opinion of average citizens (Valentino et al., 2001). An example to illustrate this is the development of public opinion on nuclear energy. When nuclear energy was firstly developed in 1945 in the United States, it was seen as a wonderful innovation with great potential and little risks. The only dominating frame was the one of progress, which influenced all the media coverage on the topic. From the late 1970s on anti-nuclear frames had been promoted, and it had become a political controversial topic. Journalists realized there were two competing frames out there: in favour and against nuclear energy. After a series of accidents in the United States and the disaster of Chernobyl in Ukraine, the anti-nuclear frame had become the prominent one and dominated the news from that moment onwards (Wolfsfeld, 2011).

In conclusion, both journalists and politicians make use of the psychology behind framing techniques. Frames can be obvious or subtle, visual or textual. According to Wolfsfeld (2011), there are only a limited number of frames available which are socially accepted. Which frames are accepted is also subject to the opinion of the public. While doing this research frames used in order to present the European Elections of 2019 will be identified.

Furthermore, when researching television, it is essential to understand the following principle: “the media are dedicated more than anything else to telling a good story and this can often have a major impact on the political process”. This means that news not only has to inform its public, it has to entertain them as well. The term often used to describe this type of news reporting is *infotainment*. A particular focus on drama and entertainment is something seen common in the news coverage of politics (Graber, 1994). This can be explained by the given that journalists are looking for something newsworthy to report on. But what is newsworthy about a politician doing a good job, when at the same time a politician is having an affair? This particular element, of journalists looking for the most newsworthy story is also known as a “commercial bias”. By choosing these commercial frames, journalists can give an unrealistic image. It also explains why political news is mostly rather negative and cynical, as a dramatic story sells best (Wolfsfeld, 2011). In a research conducted by Graber (1994), it was found that the entertainment frames often overshadow the policy-relevant aspects of news. Moreover, the fact that journalists choose certain types of frames when covering political news, results in a more cynical view to politics by the public, Cappella and Jamieson (1996) argue in a study. The cynical way of reporting thus, results in a cynical public. On the other hand, dramatic and entertainment frames are not only something negative. Since, it makes political news easier to access for the broader public. Someone who otherwise would ignore newscasts, will now be triggered by the sensationalist and emotional way of presenting (Sniderman et al., as cited in Graber, 1994).

According to the Dutch Council for Government Policy (2005), there have been major changes in the Dutch media landscape since the digital age. Before, there were strict lines between different services and genres on television. Whereas now there is a breakdown of these, which has resulted in the new jargon, such as ‘infotainment’, ‘edudrama’, ‘docutainment’ and ‘infomercial’. Another change described is the shift from ‘public logic’ to ‘market logic’ (Scientific Council for Government Policy, 2005). This means that television producers, including journalists, more act by the interest of the market than that by that of the public. This ‘commercial frame’ clearly influences the content of television. The Dutch Council for Government Policy adds to this that, “the media landscape of the future is likely to be more fun-oriented”.

Nevertheless, in this field it are not only the journalists that play a role in the presentation politics. It is clear that the media have a large influence, but on the other side the politician themselves have a major role too. Moreover, they are able to influence the media. In a paper that Wolfsfeld presented at the 2013 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science

Association, a theoretical framework is presented in order to better clarify the interrelationship between both domains. This framework is labelled as the Politics-Media-Politics (PMP) principle, and it is based upon two main claims:

First, the role of the media in political processes can best be understood as a cycle in which variations in the political environment lead to variations in media conduct that, in turn, lead to further variations in the political environment. Second, the media can play an independent role in political processes due to their ability to transform political realities into news stories that can at times have a significant impact on political outcomes (Wolfsfeld, 2013).

It is useful to see this cycle as an ongoing process, as it provides a framework to describe the interrelationship between the media and politics, since these both do not exist in a vacuum and thus, are both affecting each other. Political change and power of the politicians to spread their ideas lead to changes in the way how media cover certain issues. As this will influence the public opinion on its turn, it will lead back to political change again. Considering this PMP-cycle, it can be questioned how independent media really are.

However, using the PMP-model does not always mean that the politicians act on the first hand. It is also a possibility that the media focus on a specific phenomenon or occurrence from within the society. Which leads to coverage in media and by this, general attention will rise. Subsequently, this creates action in the political domain. Therefore, the model can also be changed to a MPM-cycle. In general, during this research the main focus will be on the idea that the actions of mass media and politicians are connected by an inevitable relationship, where both influence each other.

1.4. Mediatization of politics

While reading about the relationship of media and politics there is one concept that comes across frequently: Mediatization. The concept of mediatization is a relatively new concept, although multiple definitions have been given by different academics. In essence, the process of mediatization refers to a change in the domain of political communication, in which the media have become highly influential and deeply integrated in different levels of society (Hjarvard, 2013). Besides the fact that mediatization has been conceptualized as a part of mediation, which entails a more intensified use of media in our societies, it has also been connected to the worldwide process of globalization (Kriesi et al., as cited in Strömbäck & Esser, 2014).

The prominent role of media in our daily lives is illustrated by the American sociologist Stig Hjarvard in a journal article *The Mediatization of society*. According to Hjarvard (2008), the mass media have become an essential part of our societies and their power to shape these societies has increased. In this article it is argued that our societies are highly influenced by the media. Hjarvard (2008) identifies a process of change in the social structures of our societies due to the influence of media, which he describes as mediatization. Hjarvard (2008) speaks about the mediatization of the society as a whole. In this article an institutional approach towards mediatization is suggested, whereby it is characterized as a dual concept. On the one hand, the media are seen as an independent institution with its own logic and on the other hand, at the same time, the media have become integrated parts of already existing institutions.

A leading academic who also argues for mediatization in the broadest sense of society, is the Italian professor of Sociology of Mass Communication at the University of Genova, Gianpietro Mazzoleni. In his article *Mediatization of Society* (2008), he describes a development of mass media having influence into all different spheres of society. Moreover, he links this with the concept of culturalization, which is a process whereby all aspects of culture get a more important position in the activities of social institutions (Mazzoleni, 2008).

The political domain is one of these social spheres in which mediatization is institutionalized. Mediatization of the political life was firstly described by the Swedish media researcher Kent Asp. He described this as a process whereby “a political system to a high degree is influenced by and adjusted to the demands of mass media in their coverage of politics” (Asp, as cited in Hjarvard, 2008). An example he gives of this process is when politicians phrase their public statement in a personal way to catch the media’s attention. As well as when politicians polarize an issue in order to get a better chance of being covered by the media. Both examples demonstrate how politicians adapt their activities to the demands of the mass media. Furthermore, it is argued that the media have become independent from political sources. This is identified as a sign of mediatization, since it has resulted in the mass media having more control over the media content (Asp, as cited in Hjarvard, 2008).

In the article *The Four Phases of Mediatization: An Analysis of the Mediatization of Politics*, of the Swedish professor of Journalism and Political Communication Jesper Strömbäck (2008), it is stated that media have become the most important source for people to get information about politics, and at the same time it has become the most important channel of communication for politicians. This situation has been described as *mediated politics* (Asp, as

cited in Strömbäck, 2008). In such a situation, “the media *mediate* between the citizenry, on the one hand, and opinion formation on the other” (Strömbäck, 2008). Besides this, it is argued that the media, due to this situation, have gained all the power over the public agenda. This process is described as *Mediatization of Politics* (Strömbäck, 2008). The four phases of mediatization illustrate the multidimensional and inherently process-oriented nature of this concept. This research concludes that politics is highly influenced by the mass media and because of that, Strömbäck (2008) emphasizes the importance of the question to what extent the society and political domain can act independently from the mass media.

Furthermore, in an article of Mazzoleni and Schulz (1999), an extensive explanation of the process of mediatization is given. Politics and communication are inherently connected nowadays. Starting from the theory of mediatization of society, which thus also affects politics, Mazzoleni & Schulz (1999) argue that, “Mediatized politics is politics that has lost its autonomy, has become dependent in its central functions on mass media, and is continuously shaped by interactions with mass media”. Furthermore, in their article four important concepts are linked to the processes that contribute to the mediatization of politics.

Firstly, they describe the subjective selection by the media of what is newsworthy and not. According to certain rules it is determined whether an event has ‘news value’ or not. Using these framing techniques journalists create the reality for the citizens. Moreover, this creates a situation whereby a systematic bias affects the news stream (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999).

Secondly, the mediatized participation is identified as an important contributor in the process of mediatization. In a public sphere which is constructed by the mass media there is a clear division between actors and spectators. The mass media functions as the connection between those, and therefore they can decide how and if they connect the actor to the public. The mass media decides which event to cover and how. As well as which politicians they give attention to. All these decisions construct the public sphere and finally, the mass media have the ability to set the political agenda (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999).

Thirdly, they refer to the concept of ‘media logic’ (see paragraph 1.5) which means “the frame of reference within which the media construct the meaning of events and personalities they report” (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999). In this article it is argued that this media logic nowadays mainly reflects the commercialization of the media industry. Television talk shows and showbiz-like coverage of political events have become socially accepted. This logic of the mass

media is an important factor in the process of mediatization of politics (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999).

Fourthly, politicians make use of the logic of the media, as they change or adapt their behaviour in order to get media attention. When this happens, it can be seen as a sign of mediatization of politics. In situations like these, the media have a direct impact on the reality (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999).

To conclude the first part of their article, they describe the political domain as highly influenced by the mass media with an “excessive mediatization of political leadership and political practice”, where citizens are “forced to become consumers and spectators” (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999).

According to Bennet and Entman (2001), politics and political communication are mediated, just as all other domains of contemporary democracies. Even though, the traditional and unmediated features of politics also still exist, it not able to function without the uses of various media nowadays. Bennet and Entman (2001) describe the importance of mediated communication in the public sphere:

“It provides good or bad information, offers engaging or stupefying perspectives in social issues, stimulates conversations among friends or between strangers in trains, and offers a selection of political, scientific and socially authoritative or dubious sources that audiences may accept or reject in thinking about social issues” (Bennet & Entman, 2001).

How far this influence of media penetrates into our daily lives is shown by Nimmo and Combs (1990). In their book *Mediated Political Realities*, they argue that even realities we hold about politics are constructed through media. Nowadays little people learn what politics is and means by taking part in it themselves, as almost no one gains political experience in real life. This shows the impact and power that media have in societies. When we see our ideas about politics confirmed by the media, they turn into a reality.

Since we are living in a mediated society where the journalistic profession has become more connected to the political domain and the media itself have become actors in this field, the critical concept of ‘mediacracy’ was developed. This concept describes a situation in which the media are in a position where they have gained all the power over the voting public and basically set the political agenda. This concept was firstly used by European media and politics schools in the 1990s. Though, American and British scholars have been more critical towards

the process of political mediatization. Different terms for the mediatized society have been coined, such as, 'videocracy', 'radiocracy' and 'mediality' ('media reality') (Bodrunova, 2010). It is also argued by Meyer (2002) that our societies have become a mediocracy where the political domain as a whole is colonized by the media and therewith, politics and media are inherently connected by working together.

Even though, it is not argued that the political domain fully is taken over by the media. Mazzoleni and Schulz (1999) emphasize that the media and politics still have the power and ability to act according their own rules. In this case more of a 'media-driven democracy' is suggested. Besides this, research has shown that individuals are capable of forming stable and rational opinions in rather noisy politically manipulated environments. Despite of being bombarded with emotionally political messages and media spectacles, citizens have the ability to stay rational. They should not be seen as prisoners of poor information (Zaller, as cited in Bennet & Entman, 2001).

1.5. Media logic and political logic

In order to understand the thesis of mediatization in the 21st century, the logic of media is an important concept to consider when trying to grasp the complex world of political communication. In 1979, the term "media logic" was introduced by Altheide and Snow. They described it as a set of codes and rules that define the production and the content of media (Brants & van Praag, 2017). In more recent work, Altheide elaborates on the definition: "media logic refers to the assumptions and processes for constructing messages within a particular medium. This includes rhythm, grammar, and format" (Altheide, 2004). The logic of the media in western societies includes talk shows and other infotainment formats, there are a lot of advertisements and the entertaining character of the media is very present in everything the mass media produces. According to Altheide (2004), more people get exposed to logic of the media, which makes that they will take it for granted as normal. Following this line, it is clear to say that the media have an extensive effect on how people think. Also, the logic of politics is affected by the logic of the media. As a result of this, the strong relationship between media and politics is emphasized once again. Evidence, for the argument that politicians take over the logic of the media can be found in the numerous talk show-like television programmes politicians take part in. As Ronald Reagan once said, "Politics is like show business" (Postman, as cited in John Street, 2004).

In the article *Celebrity politicians: Popular Culture and Political Representation*, John Street (2004) illustrates this phenomenon. Even though, it is criticized for the debasing effect it would

have on liberal democracies. Street (2004) argues that the close relationship between what media cover and how politicians act does not always affect the fairness of representation. One of the claims he makes is that this visibility of politics is already an old tradition and therefore a necessity in order to create social and political change. The political domain shifts to an individual game in which politicians want to be the main character (Street, 2004).

As stated before by Wolfsfeld (2011), “political power can usually be translated into power over the news media”. This is driven by the political and media logic, Vos and Van Aalst (2018) argue. In a comparative study they research whether the visibility of politicians is determined by the political system. According to media and political logic journalists would follow the hierarchy of the country when covering politicians. In this study it is found that the type of political system does matter as well. As Vos and Van Aalst put it: “in countries where political power is more equally distributed across politicians, a broader range of (elite) politicians makes it into the news”. For instance, the Dutch consensus culture results in a more equal distribution of power and therefore a more equal coverage of different politicians by the news media (Schoenback et al., as cited in Vos & Van Aalst, 2018).

1.6. Personalization of politics

So far, we have seen that the domain of politics has been subject to many changes over the last decades. As well as the position and role of politician in society. The interaction between Dutch politicians and popular culture has changes because of mediatization. In the article *Popular Politicians: The Interaction Between Politics and Popular Culture in the Netherlands 1950s-1980s*, Kaal (2018) the interactions and changes between the political and other spheres in the Netherlands are researched. According to Kaal (2018), the changes of political representation in the Netherlands between the 1950s and the 1980s, were marked by visibility, simplicity, authenticity and emotionality. Due to technological developments politicians had to compete for visibility, as citizens could more easily occupy themselves by watching television, reading magazines or going to the movies. By appearing in the arena of popular culture politicians were still visible, also for groups of voters to whom politics was a minor interest. Moreover, by engaging in popular culture, politics became more understandable for digestible for the voters. Next to the disappearance of the pillar system in Dutch society (see paragraph 1.9), political constituencies became less communal and therefore, the person behind the politician became more important as it made politics less abstract (Kaal, 2018). Before the 1950s politicians had always, above all, presented themselves as representatives of the interests of the constituency. This used to be the main condition for a politician to gain trust among voters. However, with the changes in Dutch society due to the demise of the pillar system and the development of

popular culture, “the trust that underpinned political representation became more personal in nature”, Kaal (2018) explains. The authenticity of the politicians became relevant in order to be a successful politician: “authentic politicians were those who were ‘representatives of themselves’” (Coleman, as cited in Kaal, 2018). By showing their private lives, politicians were successful in building an emotional relationship with their electorate (Kaal, 2018). The four elements of personal politics: visibility, simplicity, authenticity and emotionality are still relevant in the political communication today.

Much is written about the phenomena of personalization in politics, and according to Van Aelst, Sheafer and Stanyer (2011), Personalization has become a central concept in contemporary democracy and they argue that “the focus of news coverage has shifted from parties and organizations to candidates and leaders”. The figure below illustrates the different dimensions in the news in which personalization plays a role.

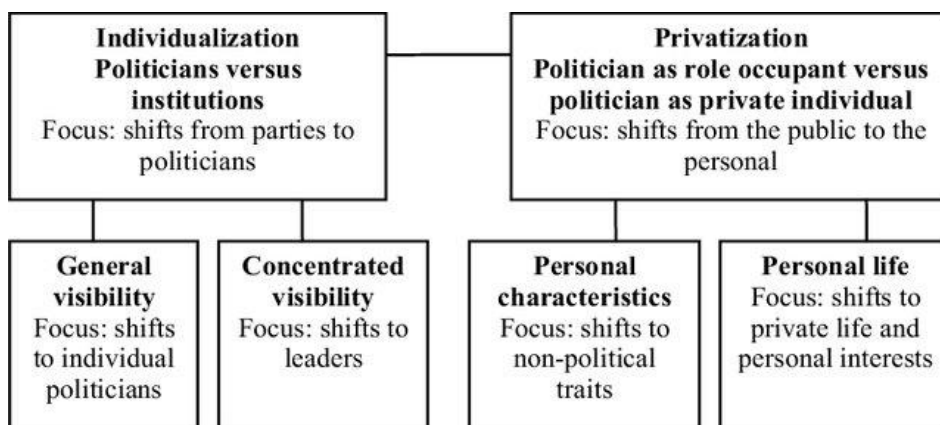


Figure 3. Dimensions of personalization in the news.

Note. Reprinted from “The personalization of mediated political communication: A review of concepts, operationalizations and key findings”, by Van Aelst, Sheafer and Stanyer, 2011, *Journalism*, Vol. 13, P. 207.

Moving on to different research about personal politics brings us to the book *Media and Political Process* of Eric Louw (2005), in which is argued that the political machinery of liberal democracies has two dimensions: the policy making dimension and the hype dimension. In policy making, the politicians are concerned with designing policy by strategizing, planning and organization of power. In the hype dimension, politicians are performers, in which they are concerned with image, myth and hype making. According to Louw (2005), these ‘stories’ politicians make are addressed to the mass audience, which mainly consist of passive citizens with little interest in politics. Politicians need to be able to act in both dimensions (Louw, 2005). Only then, they will get enough votes in order to be able to execute policies. Politicians

need to adapt to the logic of the media, which has become the main logic in political communication in The Netherlands (Brants & Van Praag, 2006).

This two dimensionality in political communication, described by Louw (2005), reveals a dichotomy in the work of politicians. The theory of sociological dramaturgy can be used in order to explain this. In the book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday life*, Canadian-American sociologist Erving Goffman links social interaction of everyday life with theatre playing (Goffman, 1956). He argues that people present themselves the same way as performers do on stage. This means that people can manipulate everyday situations by 'acting' in a way that conveys a certain impression. The dramaturgical perspective is about managing of everyday life by creating an alternate reality (Kivisto & Pittman, 2013). By the use of the front and backstage division these realities are created. The front stage is where the 'performer' is confronted with its 'audience', and the backstage is where the 'performer' is drawn to more privacy and does not have to focus on self-presentation or the presentation of the function it holds. The back stage is clearly divided from the front stage (Kivisto & Pittman, 2013). According to Goffman (1956), these specific front and back stages can be found in all social structures.

This means that the metaphor of life as a theatre can be applied to the political domain. Where politicians are the performers and the voting public the audience. With the current mediatization of politics this is what we see happening nowadays in political communication. On the one hand, politicians are concerned with the making of policy, which is their actual job (backstage), and on the other hand with presenting their decisions to the public (front stage). This dichotomy has widened the gap between the hype dimension and the policy making dimension.

According to the logic of the media, journalists are mainly focussing on front stage performances of politicians. This element, together with the mediatization of the political domain goes hand in hand with the personalization of politics. Different studies try to give a conceptualization of the phenomena of personalization in politics. In a study conducted by Rahat and Sheafer (2007), three different types of political personalization are identified. Firstly, they specify institutional personalization, which is concerned with the democratization of candidate selection methods. Secondly, personalization in the media is described, which can be found in an increase in the focus of media on individual politicians and a decrease in the focus on party politics in media coverage. Thirdly, they identify a personalization process in the behaviour of politicians themselves, which can be found in an increase in laws that are

initiated by a member of parliament that acts as an individual, rather than in name of their political party (Rahat & Sheafer, 2007). These different types are connected to each other, as they develop according to the Politics-Media-Politics model. Rahat and Sheafer (2007) explain: "institutional personalization leads to personalization in the media, which, in turn, leads to personalization in the behaviour of politicians."

1.7. Journalists in liberal democracies

As discussed before, journalists have a key role in the domain of political communication. Specifically, in this research there will be looked at political communication in liberal democracies, such as the Netherlands. Louw (2005) argues that there are three different ways people can relate to political processes in liberal democracies. There are the insiders, semi-insiders and outsiders. The first group consists of politically active people, which is a relatively small 'elite' group. The semi-insiders group consists of people that are aware of the political 'game', but do not 'play' in it themselves. Louw describes them as 'informed spectators', such as intellectuals, journalists, analysts and public opinion pollsters. Then there is the biggest group of people that live in liberal democracies, the political outsiders. These are the citizens that often passively consume the hype's and images distributed by the mass media. The 'outsiders' consume the work of insiders and semi-insiders", Louw explains (Louw, 2005). This theory shows the importance and at the same time the power of journalists in liberal democracies. They make the stories about politicians and thus decide how they are imaged to the audience.

According to Vliegthart, Boomgaarden, and Boumans (2011), journalism and political news coverage have changed drastically in the last decades. Both fields of journalism and politics are professionalized, and new technological developments were introduced. This changing relationship between the political domain and the mass media has affected the way politics is covered in the media. Vliegthart et al. (2011) illustrate this by the fact that the amount of political news coverage has decreased over the last decades. Whereas, there has been a growing focus on political strategy in mass media coverage. Furthermore, it is argued that there is an increasing negativity towards political actors and politics in general, as well as political leaders and their personalities have become more important (Vliegthart et al., 2011).

Altogether with the rise in numbers of political journalists in the Netherlands, the power of journalists in society is revealed. The press is a valuable institution in liberal democracies, with freedom of press as the highest good. Although, when journalists mainly report on what they

assess that is newsworthy, which is mostly hype based news, it creates a situation where people are not informed in the most possible objective way. According to Schmitt-Beck (2003), Journalists are powerful agenda setters, which shows that they have a powerful role in society. As well as that they can influence citizens in how they view politicians and their policies by the use of framing techniques. Different studies have shown that journalists can influence public opinion (Schmitt-Beck, 2003). By virtue of this, it is questionable whether this is wanted. Possibly people should be more informed about the fact that media do not always present the one and only reality. Presumably, situations where citizenry is influenced to a certain extent leads to danger for the objectivity of news and information presented to the public. How can people form their own opinion when they are constantly influenced by media with hype-based news?

1.8 Broadcasting media in the Netherlands

In order to do extensive research in the field of mass media, it is important to research the media landscape of the Netherlands and how it has evolved.

First experiments with television broadcastings took place in the 1920s. Two decades later, during the 1950s, television grew as a medium in Europe and took over popularity from cinemas (McQueen, 1998). In the beginning of the television broadcasting era in Europe, television was solely a public service and therefore, only one type of content was provided to the mass audience. There was only a limited choice of programs available, so all people could access the same content (Abercrombie & Longhurst, 2007). Over time television had become more diverse, as commercial television was introduced in Britain in 1955. This type of channels are funded by sponsorship or advertising (Bignell, 2004). Soon the upcoming of commercial channels expanded in Europe. The first Dutch commercial television channel aired in 1989 (Bruins Slot, 2004). The arrival of commercial television has been a significant development in the world of television, as it diversified and commercialized the broadcasting media landscape (Bruins Slot, 2004). In September 2013 on-demand video streaming service Netflix was launched in the Netherlands (Nu.nl, 2013). Online streaming platforms like these have gained popularity over the last years. By the end of 2018 almost 3 million Dutch people had a Netflix subscription (spreekbuis.nl, 2019). Some other streaming platforms available in the Netherlands are Videoland, Disney +, HBO Max, Amazon Prime and NLZiet. However, Netflix remains the biggest at the moment. Despite of these developments and the growing popularity of on-demand television, broadcasting television has a significant place in Dutch society. The on-demand television is popular among the younger population, whereas broadcasting television is accessible for all age groups of the society. According to Stichting

Kijkonderzoek (2019), a Dutch organisation that researches viewing rates and behaviour in the Netherlands, non-fiction is the most popular genre among Dutch television viewers. As this genre is not available on platforms like Netflix, it is likely that television will remain an important source of information. To watch the news and other current affairs programmes we still need the old way of broadcasting television.

In this research there will be a focus on the television broadcasting media, as the research that will be conducted researches the presentation of the 2019 European Elections in Dutch television talk shows.

1.9. Journalistic culture in the Netherlands

Regarding the fact that television is still relevant in Dutch society, television journalists play an important role as they decide how news is presented to the public. Therefore, it is vital to look at the culture of television journalism in the Netherlands.

The specific culture of television journalism is very different per country. According to Hanitzsch (as cited in Stamper & Brants, 2011), the culture of television journalism can be described as a “particular set of ideas and practices by which journalists, consciously and unconsciously, legitimate their role in society and render their work meaningful for themselves and others”. By this it is added that television journalism also functions as “the arena in which diverse professional ideologies struggle over the dominant interpretation of journalism’s social function and identity’. Another definition was given by Stamper and Brants (2011), where they describe the culture of political television journalism as, “the ideas and practices that guide the interaction between television journalists and politicians; the possible tensions that exist between the actors involved concerning the interpretation of these practices; and how these actors evaluate the political”. Thus, politics is very much connected and influenced by television journalism. As Stamper and Brants (2011) state, it is inevitable given that journalistic culture is subject and therefore shaped by external and internal factors. Examples of external factors are the political climate, the institutional environment, market competition and legal restrictions. An example where the journalistic culture is influenced from the inside is the rise of technological developments, which changed the *modus operandi* of journalists worldwide and therefore their culture. Nowadays, journalism is still evolving as these developments are still ongoing.

In order to better understand the culture of Dutch journalism we need to look back in history. As a result of religious and class conflicts in the late nineteenth century in the Netherlands, a social order called pillarization had developed. It divided the Dutch society into four ‘pillars’:

Catholic, Protestant, socialist and liberal. Each segment had its own media, political parties and social organizations (Lijphart, as cited in Brown, 2011). Due to this division, there was a tendency for separation on the social level, Brown (2011) argues. There was a parallel connection between media and politics, as the “journalists functioned as the mouthpiece of the political parties to which they were linked”, Stamper & Brants (2011) argue. Due to this ‘unhealthy’ system of political communication, the self-consciousness of Dutch journalists was underdeveloped (Stamper & Brants, 2011). By working only in one pillar, they did not realize the value and importance of being an independent journalist.

From the 1960’s on the pillarization of Dutch society crumbled down rapidly, due to the fact that religion and ideologies became less important and influential. By virtue of this, social structures changed and the electorate started to look at other political ideologies than they were raised in. Now the media had to serve the electorate’s new interests. As an effect of this, (television) journalism changed after the abolishment of pillarization, as the relationships between journalists and politicians became more transparent and objective. Journalists could be critical, without keeping the conventions of the pillar system in mind. Developments such as the arrival of commercial television in 1989 and, more recently, internet journalism, made that there has been an increase in competition; the media have become more diverse. Besides, there has been a significant rise in numbers of political journalists in the Netherlands (Stamper & Brants, 2011).

Before, people only read newspapers affiliated with their pillar, but with the growing popularity of television, viewers were able to watch a more diverse offer of programmes. Therefore, it has been argued that television played an important role in the transition to a non-pillarized society. Further social biases were undermined by the establishment of several non-pillar broadcasting organizations (Brown, 2011). Some say, even though pillarization does not exist anymore, the Dutch politics still have much of the characteristics of this earlier era (Andeweg & Irwin, as cited in Brown, 2011).

1.10. Talk shows

Since the introduction of television to the broader public there has always been a connection with politics. However, an important change in how these two are connected was described by Stamper and Brants (2011): “political journalism on television has shifted somewhat from news and current affairs programmes to talk shows, which range from the genuinely informative to the spuriously entertaining”.

Nowadays, talk shows play a big role in the political domain nowadays. The culture of talk shows started in the US and currently it also popular in Europe. Talk shows are not only there to inform, just like everything on television it has an entertaining element. As there are numbers of talk shows in Dutch television it depends per show whether their focus is more journalistic/scientific or entertainment based. Due to the commercial bias and the focus on the person behind politicians, political ridicule has gained popularity. The format of talk shows fit perfectly into this infotainment genre. According to Boukes (2017), interviewers in entertainment talk shows pose less critical questions to their guests than interviewers in journalistic programmes. This is because the goal of the producers plays a role in which topics are discussed at these type of talk shows. For the producers it is important to consider the expectations of the audience as well. The main focus of entertainment talk shows is to entertain their audience. Research has shown that politicians are approached more positive and friendly in entertainment talk shows (Lauerbach, 2007).

Talk shows need to find guests that fit the purpose of the show. In general guests are not paid to take part in a discussion. The main motive for guests to accept such invitation is in order to invalidate injustices or stereotypes, to sell something, spread a believe or just because of attention (Deshotel, 2003) . This also counts for politicians, but as stated before, popular media brings politicians closer to their public and therefore it is interesting for them to take part at talk shows.

For this research the talk shows Pauw and Buitenhof will be used for analysis. These shows are both presented by journalists. So, it could be presumed that they do pose critical questions. Although, it should be taken into consideration that these shows also have an entertainment element. Therefore, it can be assumed that their questions, in some cases are influenced by the fact it is on television and the questions should fit in the scope of the program. Later on, in chapter 3, a more extensive description of both talk shows used in this research will be given.

In conclusion, much has been found on the complex field of political communication. The actors do not exist in a vacuum: the media, politicians and citizens all influence each other. Over the last decades the Dutch media did undergo major developments. Television is mainly focussed on entertainment with talk shows having a prominent place in it. Politicians smartly make use of this stage in order to reach as many citizens as possible.

In the year 2019, basically all means of political communication are mediatized. Even the things we know about practicing politics are learned though media. Just like everything else: every reality is constructed by the society around you. Citizens are surrounded by the media

all day and therefore, they can be influenced easily. Because of this, the role of journalists has become more relevant and above all, more powerful. The rest of this dissertation will focus on the question of how talk shows in the Netherlands present the political event of the European Elections of May 2019. The above literature forms a basic body of knowledge which will be used while preparing, conducting and analysing the research.

Chapter 2. Methodology

The central research question of this dissertation is: 'How do the Dutch television programmes 'Pauw' and 'Buitenhof' present the European Elections of 2019? And how can this be linked to theories about political communication?' Last May the European Elections took place and in the run before those elections a very important period for journalists had started. It is the time to come with a 'selling story' as all eyes are on politicians and what they do and say. As discussed before, mass media can influence the public opinion as well as how the public views politicians and their policies. Moreover, mass media function as a primary source of information for the voters to turn to. By this, the relevance of this research can be underlined.

For this research it is chosen to conduct a media analysis in a case study about the coverage of the 2019 European Elections in two Dutch television talk shows. In order to conduct this research successfully, three fragments of both talk shows (Pauw and Buitenhof) will be analysed using qualitative content analysis. Other research methods like interviews and questionnaires will not be used. Next to the time-consuming content analysis these will not be achievable to conduct within the limited time set for this research. Moreover, a questionnaire to the public will not give results which enable to answer the research question, as they will give the opinion of viewers and not factual information on how the European elections are presented. This also applies for interviews. However, an interview with a talk show host about this topic would be a valuable addition to this research. As an interview will give more in-depth information on the motives of the host.

In order to conduct this research successfully, it is limited to 6 fragments only, because this is seen as a reasonable amount to be analysed within the intended time, without losing track of relevant details. In order to watch and analyse the fragments in full length and good quality, online platform 'NPO Start' and the websites of the show's broadcasters (BNNVARA & VPRO) will be used. A description of both talk shows will be given in section 3.1.

Qualitative content analysis is chosen to make use of as the research method for this study. It is used to analyse different sorts of messages: written, verbal or visual communication (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). According to Macnamara (2005), qualitative content analysis "examines the relationship between the text and its likely audience meaning, recognizing that media texts are *polysemic* – i.e. open to multiple different meanings to different readers - and tries to determine the likely meaning of texts to audiences." When using qualitative content analysis, it is not only the text that is researched, it also pays attention to the audience, media and contextual factors. This research method allows the researcher to better understand the context and the

perceptions of media credibility (Macnamara, 2005). Because this method is very time consuming, mostly small samples and media content are used in a study. By reason of this, some researchers criticize qualitative content analysis as an unscientific and unreliable research method. But as Macnamara (2005) emphasizes: "qualitative analysis of texts is necessary to understand their deeper meanings and likely interpretations by audiences – surely the ultimate goal of analysing media content". Macnamara (2005) suggests a combination of qualitative and quantitative content analysis for the most complete outcomes.

Furthermore, inductive reasoning will be used in this research, as data will be collected by specific observations. From there on, generalizations will be made in order to draw conclusions about the presentation of EU elections in Dutch television talk shows.

In order to conduct this research successfully, it is limited to 6 fragments only, because this is seen as a reasonable amount to be analysed within the intended time, without losing track of relevant details. In order to watch and analyse the fragments in full length and good quality, online platform 'NPO Start' and the websites of the show's broadcasters (BNNVARA & VPRO) will be used. A description of both talk shows will be given in section 3.1.

As there are many aspects to look at when analysing audio-visual materials, the scope of the research needs to be narrowed down. Therefore, in this research it is decided upon to examine the following aspects in the analysis: themes, focus, guests, how the presenters introduce, and a basic level of textual analysis. These 5 indicators will be used in order to analyse the fragments. It is believed that these will provide an image of how the EU elections are presented/framed in Dutch television talk shows. Besides that, transcripts of the to be used data will be added in the appendices.

First of all, six appropriate fragments of the talk shows will be selected and watched extensively. A short description of each fragment to be analysed will be given. As doing media analysis of audio-visual materials is time consuming, data needs to be analysed in an orderly way. This will be done by cutting the data, fragments in this case, into smaller units in order to make the analysis more manageable. This process will be based on logic, which means that every unit should only contain a small piece of information. By reason of this the units are very different from each other. Every time a new main subject/theme is introduced a new unit is started. This is necessary to conduct the 5 different aspects of analysis that are decided to work with. Moreover, one very important step when doing media content analysis is to fully understand the data. Media texts are polysemic and therefore, the researcher needs to have a good understanding of the to be used episodes in order to conduct the analysis successfully.

First of all, the transcripts will be typed out and read carefully. After this, all topics that are spoken about in the fragments will be assigned to a category. These different categories are decided upon by the use of logic. The following categories are decided upon: national, European, international relations, Dutch campaigns, personal politics. By placing each topic in these categories, a first impression on what is being discussed in the talk shows is provided. An overview of this will be provided in the appendices.

Subsequently to this, in every unit the main theme(s) will be identified, again by reading carefully. The overall themes are the topics that are talked about most in the analysed unit. In order to determine to which category a theme belongs, logic reasoning will be used. The same categories that were used to categorize the topics are used in this part. The thematical category of personal politics concerns all topics about actions of politicians, controversies about politicians, about their identity, integrity and other personal matters. In appendix 2 an overview of all themes per fragment will be provided.

Next, the focus of each fragment has to be determined. In order to do so, there will be looked at the most frequent theme per fragment. The following themes indicate a focus on national politics and affairs: national affairs, Dutch campaigns and personal politics. European affairs and international relations indicate a focus on international politics and affairs. By counting the times a theme per fragment was found the focus can be determined.

Then, the guests that are invited at the talk shows will be analysed. This will be done by the use of a simple analysis sheet. In this part only the guests that were invited for the specific fragment are analysed. People sitting at the discussion table because they were invited for another item in the same show are not taken into account. Since they were not invited to specifically talk about the European Elections, they are not relevant in this part of the analysis.

After this, the type of introduction by the talk show presenters will be analysed. In order to do so only a textual analysis will be conducted. The transcripts of the introduction part of the fragment will be analysed by reading closely. From here it will be determined what topic they are talking about and the different types of introduction will be identified. The following different types of introducing were identified after reading the introductions and by logic they were categorized into the following: introducing the guests (A1), stating recent events (A2), stating statistics/polls (A3), stating topics of the current European debate (A4), provoking the guests (A5), posing personal questions (A6). The last part of the research will consist of counting word frequency which will give an idea of the most popular topics at the talk show table.

The aim of this research is to make connections between the collected data and that this finally will give a clear understanding of how the European elections of 2019 are presented in the Dutch television talk shows Pauw and Buitenhof.

I am aware of the limitations of this research, as it only includes a few fragments of Dutch talk shows and the to be used research method has its limitations when executed only by one researcher. The research is almost fully textual and not visual and therefore it is limited in its results too. There are many things that are left out in the research, such as camera positions, the symbiotic meaning of words, and many more elements that can be analysed when doing media analysis. As a European studies student I will strive to look with an objective view, as far as that lays within my capacity. Being aware of my biases, I will try to look beyond them. As well as the biases and believes of the to be researched persons (guest in talk shows) will be considered.

Chapter 3. Results

3.1 Description of talk shows

The first talk show to be used in this dissertation is Pauw. It is a Dutch talk show broadcasted by the Dutch broadcasting service 'BNNVARA'. Yearly the show is aired for 6 months, daily from 23.00 till midnight. The show started in 2014 and has 5 seasons so far. It is presented by Jeroen Pauw, a Dutch television journalist and presenter. He has worked for different well-known Dutch current affairs shows. In 2019 he won an award for his work as a television journalist. The guests invited to this show are all different kind of people that are somehow connected to the actualities of that day. Also, politicians are regularly seen guests. Sometimes there are planned debates between two politicians during the talk show. These debates are guided by Jeroen Pauw. (Pauw.bnnvara.nl, 2019a). The studio where Pauw is recorded is located in the 'Westergasfabriek' in Amsterdam. The studio has the ambiance of a real television studio, with lots of lights and screens. There is one big table in the middle where Pauw and his guests sit. All around them the guests are sitting, which gives the result they are very visible (see figure 4 (Pauw.bnnvara.nl, 2019b)).



Figure 4. Still of Pauw.

Reprinted from the website of Pauw (Pauw.bnnvara.nl, 2019b)

The second talk show that will be used as study material in this research is Buitenhof. Buitenhof is a Dutch discussion programme, broadcasted every Sunday from 12.10 till 13.10 live from Amsterdam. As it exists since 1995, the programme is well established on Dutch television. Buitenhof is co-hosted by three presenters from different broadcasting services (AVROTROS, BNNVARA and VPRO). Currently it is presented by Jort Kelder, Diana Matroos and

Hugo Logtenberg. All three are journalists and work for leading Dutch newspapers, radio and television shows. The guests of Buitenhof are mainly politicians, high officials, scientists and other intellectuals. (vpro.nl/buitenhof, 2019). The studio of Buitenhof is located in Amsterdam in the 'Veenvloer'. Compared to the studio of Pauw, this studio looks calmer and less showbiz like. The colours are calm and behind the talk show table there is a window which gives an outlook over 'Het IJ', which is a river that flows through Amsterdam, north of central station. The audience is more located in the back of the studio and not all around the talk show table, as a result that they are not visible all the time (see figure 6 (Preunion, 2019)).



Figure 5. Still of Buitenhof

Reprinted from the website of Preunion (Preunion, 2019)

As discussed before talk shows can be more entertainment based or on the other hand more journalistic based. It is difficult to put each talk show in these boxes. Moreover, every talk show is entertainment based as the purpose of making television always has an entertainment element. Both Pauw and Buitenhof are presented by journalists, thus it is presumable that these presenters will use their journalistic skills at the talk show table as far as it lays within the scope of the program. Further differences will be analysed after the results of the analysis are completed.

3.2. Fragment 1

Rob Jetten wants to include EU membership in the constitution - 9 May 2019

In this fragment Jeroen Pauw is talking about the upcoming EU elections with Rob Jetten. He is the party leader of D66 in the Dutch House of Representatives. D66 is a Dutch social-liberal and progressive party. They are part of the Renew Europe party in the European Parliament (former ALDE). Eva Jinek is also sitting at the talk show table. She is a Dutch journalist and

television programme presenter. She had her own daily talk show which was broadcasted yearly for a time period of 6 months. Recently her show stopped, and she moved from the public broadcaster to a commercial one. There are two other persons sitting at the table: Jan Swinkels: Psychiatrist and professor by special appointment at the University of Amsterdam, and Mick van Wely: crime journalist at newspaper *De Telegraaf*.

Unitization	
Unit	Time
1	00.00-02.02
1a*	02.03-04.42
2	04.43-07.54
3	07.55-10.18
4	10.19-12.35
5	12.36-14.48
6a*	14.49-16.35

*are not further analysed as they contain detailed information/discussions not relevant for this research.

Themes & Focus					
	<i>International themes</i>		<i>National themes</i>		
Unit	European	International Relations	National	Dutch campaigns	Personal politics
1	Day of Europe, Payments of MEP's			Dutch campaign (D66)	Controversial declarations Dutch MEP
2	Transnational cooperation		EU membership in Dutch constitution, Nexit		
3		Europe as a powerful block	EU membership in Dutch constitution, Nexit	Dutch campaigns (SP, PVV, FVD)	Timmermans parody
4	Finances of MEP's	International position of EU	Europe feels far away, EU membership		

			in Dutch constitution		
5	Safety, European cooperation	EU dependency on US, Independency of EU			
Total	6	4	6	2	2
Focus	(10)		(10)		

Introduction of presenter		What do they talk about?	Type
F1	Today is the 9 th of May. Does someone know which day that is? Eva, do you know?	9th of May: Day of Europe	Stating recent events (A2)

3.3. Fragment 2

European elections: Rob Jetten & Jesse Klaver in debate - 20 May 2019

In this fragment Rob Jetten, party leader of D66, is in a debate with Jesse Klaver. He is the party leader of Groen Links, which is a progressive left-wing party, founded in 1990. They are part of the Greens/EFA party in the European parliament. Jeroen Pauw is leading the discussion. Another guest sitting at the table is Frits Huffnagel, a city marketing specialist.

Unitization	
Unit	Time
1	00.00-01.54
2	01.55-03.37
3	03.38-05.55
4	05.56-09.46
5	09.47-13.51
6	13.52-15.36
7	15.37-17.35

Themes & Focus					
	<i>International themes</i>		<i>National themes</i>		
Unit	European	International Relations	National	Dutch campaigns	Personal politics
1			Popularity of European elections in NL, election turnout		
2	European party families		Dutch political parties in EP		
3					Frans Timmermans
4	Security, migration		Dutch government	Differences between D66 and GL	
5	Climate, CO2 tax		Tata steel factory		Action of Jetten, action of Klaver
6	CO2 tax, European trade	Unfair competition of China, US-China trade war			
Total	8	2	5	1	3
Focus	(10)		(9)		

Introduction of presenter		What do they talk about?	Type
F2	Europe, because we are talking about the European elections, is it still a kind of 'corvee', as Hans van Baalen once called it?	Europe as an obligatory job, unthankful job. Nothing to do with passion.	Provoking the guest (A5)

3.4. Fragment 3

European party Volt wants to join elections - 10 May 2019

In this fragment the party leader of the Dutch department of the pan-European party Volt, Reinier van Lanschot, is interviewed by Pauw. Also, the youngest electable person of Europe, Bibi Wielinga, is sitting at the talk show table. She is also a member Volt.

Unitization	
Unit 1	00.00-03.10
Unit 1a*	03.10-06.18
Unit 2	06.18-07.01
Unit 3	07.02-07.43
Unit 3a*	07.44-08.22
Unit 4	08.23 – 09.13
Unit 5	09.14-10.33

*are not analysed as it is a clip or it is not about the European Elections

Themes & Focus					
	<i>International themes</i>		<i>National themes</i>		
Unit	European	International Relations	National	Dutch campaigns	Personal politics
1	New pan-European party				Personal question to van Lanschot
2	VOLT campaign, transnational problems				
3			Dutch political situation	Dutch campaigns (FVD, PVV, SP)	Frans Timmermans parody
4				Dutch campaign (VOLT)	
5	European elections				Personal question to Wielinga
Total	4	0	1	2	3
Focus	(4)		(6)		

Introduction of presenter		What do they talk about?	Type
F3	The latest polls give them two seats and they claim to be the first truly European party. It is about Volt and let's find out who Volt is. Reinier van Lanschot, you are lead candidate. It is a nice name and evokes questions. Are there any relations to the bank?	New European party, Surname of guest.	Introducing the guests, stating statistics/polls, posing personal questions (A1, A3, A6)

3.5. Fragment 4

European elections debate - 12 May 2019

In this fragment a debate between Bas Eickhout and Derk Jan Eppink is leaded by Jort Kelder. He is a Dutch television and radio journalist. Bas Eickhout is a Dutch MEP of the Groen Links party. Since 2014 he is a member of the European Parliament. Derk Jan Eppink is a Dutch journalist and politician (former member of VVD). From 2009 till 2014 he was a MEP in Europe for this party. From 2019 on he will be in the European Parliament for FVD (Dutch new right-wing party).

Unitization	
Unit 1	00.00-06.04
Unit 2	06.05-07.52
Unit 3	07.53-12.45
Unit 4	12.46-16.24
Unit 5	16.25-20.19

Themes & Focus					
	<i>International themes</i>		<i>National themes</i>		
Unit	European	International Relations	National	Dutch campaigns	Personal politics
1	Spitzenkandidat, European campaigns		Knowledge about EU in NL		Campaign of Timmermans

2				Opinions of Politicians/parties (GL and FVD)	
3	'Old' way of EU politics			Dutch campaigns (GL and FVD)	
4			Leaving the Euro zone	Political shift of VVD	Political shift of Eppink, political shift of Rutte
5	Euro zone, Euro crisis		Referendum for Nexit		
Total	5	0	3	3	3
Focus	(5)		(9)		

Introduction of presenter		What do they talk about?	Type
F4	We are going to talk about, always fun, the European elections. 10 percent of the VVD voters thinks that Frans Timmermans is their lead candidate. Three quarter of the Green Left voters knows who him but does not know the name of their own lead candidate. With Forum it is more or less the same. And just on the eve of the elections. I would say pleasant game! Here with me tonight, welcome to the Spitzenkandidat of Green Left, Bas Eickhouk, 20 percent of the voters knows you. And the European lead candidate for Forum for Democracy, Derk Jan Eppink. Gentlemen, those numbers are not that good, right? 20 percent knows you.	Statistics about knowledge of voters about European politics, the European elections are 'always fun'.	Stating statistics/polls, introducing the guests, provoking the guests. (A3, A1, A5)

3.6. Fragment 5

European Elections - 19 May 2019

In this fragment Diana Matroos, a Dutch television and radio journalist, interviews NRC newspaper European affairs correspondent Caroline de Gruyter and Professor of the Amsterdam University Claes de Vreese.

Unitization	
Unit 1	21.13-23.44
Unit 2	23.45-27.21
Unit 3	27.22-29.14
Unit 4	29.15-30.42
Unit 5	30.43-33.09
Unit 6	33.10-36.23

Themes & Focus					
	<i>International themes</i>		<i>National themes</i>		
Unit	European	International Relations	National	Dutch campaigns	Personal politics
1	Trust in the EU	BTP effect			
2			Populism, polarization in the Dutch debate, Nexit		
3	European extreme right wing parties, Real European debate				
4			Dutch electorate	Dutch campaigns (middle parties)	
5			Role of Dutch politicians in Europe		
6	European debate, European Parliament		Attitude/role of national politicians towards EU		
Total	5	1	6	1	0
Focus	(6)		(7)		

Introduction of presenter		What do they talk about?	Type
F5	On the eve of the European elections, there are many extremes in the debate: from a Nexit to a European super state. At least there is something to choose for coming Thursday. What are the biggest threats for Europe anno 2019? And what do the EU citizens want? With me are NRC columnist Caroline de Gruyter and professor of the Amsterdam university Claes de Vreese.	Describing the current debate	Stating topics of the current European debate, introducing the guests. (A4, A1)

3.7. Fragment 6

After the European elections - 26 May 2019

In this fragment Hugo Logtenberg, a Dutch television and newspaper journalist, talks about the results of the European elections with Ronald van Raak (member of SP), Olaf Stuger (MEP for PVV) and Matthijs Rooduijn (political sociologist of Amsterdam University).

Unitization	
Unit 1	01.00-05.57
Unit 2	05.58-08.31
Unit 3	08.32-12.47
Unit 4	12.48-14.37
Unit 5	14.38-17.19
Unit 6	17.20-19.26

Themes & Focus					
	<i>International themes</i>		<i>National themes</i>		
Unit	European	International Relations	National	Dutch campaigns	Personal politics

1			Results of elections in NL, election turnout, division in Dutch electorate	Dutch campaign (SP)	Frans Timmermans parody
2			Election turnout	Dutch campaign and party identity (SP)	
3			Results of elections in NL, Development of Dutch political parties (FVD, PVV)		Geert Wilders
4	European Extreme right wing parties (Front National, Lega)		Dutch political domain		
5			Election turnout, division in Dutch electorate		
6			Struggle to identify with EU politics	Dutch campaign (SP)	Frans Timmermans
Total	1	0	10	3	3
Focus	(1)		(16)		

Introduction of presenter		What do they talk about?	Type
F6	The European elections, opinion-makers were wrong again. PVDA (labour party), the party of Frans Timmermans, became the biggest.	Result of elections In the Netherlands	Stating recent events, introducing the guests. (A2, A1)

	<p>The SP and PVV, the most Eurosceptic parties will probably disappear from the parliament. How did this happen? We talk about this with SP Member of Parliament Ronald van Raak, MEP for PVV Olaf Stuger and political sociologist at the Amsterdam University Matthijs Rooduijn. Welcome to all of you. Mr van Raak, all four recent elections your party lost and every year this loss became bigger. What is going wrong?</p>		
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3.8. Guests

Analysis sheet guests *all fragments* (Circle one per number)

1. F1G1:	Dutch politician	MEP	scientist	Journalist
2. F2G1:	Dutch politician	MEP	scientist	Journalist
3. F2G2:	Dutch politician	MEP	scientist	Journalist
4. F3G1:	Dutch politician	MEP	scientist	Journalist
5. F3G2:	Dutch politician	MEP	scientist	Journalist
6. F4G1:	Dutch politician	MEP	scientist	Journalist
7. F4G2:	Dutch politician	MEP	scientist	Journalist
8. F5G1:	Dutch politician	MEP	scientist	Journalist
9. F5G2:	Dutch politician	MEP	scientist	Journalist
10. F6G1:	Dutch politician	MEP	scientist	Journalist
11. F6G2:	Dutch politician	MEP	scientist	Journalist
12. F6G3:	Dutch politician	MEP	scientist	Journalist

3.9. Word frequency

	Pauw			Buitenhof			Total
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	
European Parliament	1	6	0	13	5	3	28
SP	2	0	4	0	0	16	22
Timmermans	1	4	2	6	0	9	22
Climate	3	11	2	2	1	1	20
Crisis	2	0	1	13	1	2	19
European Elections	2	5	0	2	4	5	18
PVV	4	1	1	0	0	9	15
Turnout	0	5	0	0	0	6	11
GL	0	6	0	3	0	1	10
MEP	5	0	0	0	3	2	10
Spitzenkandidat	0	2	0	8	0	0	10
VVD	0	4	0	6	0	0	10
Nexit	3	0	0	2	3	1	9
FVD	1	0	1	3	1	2	8
Referendum	1	1	0	5	0	0	7
Migration	1	3	0	0	0	2	6
Safety	4	2	0	0	0	0	6
PVDA	0	1	0	1	0	3	5
Security	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
CDA	0	2	0	0	0	1	3
ALDE	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

Chapter 4. Analysis

The findings of the chapter above will be analysed in order to answer the central question of this research: 'How do the Dutch television programmes 'Pauw' and 'Buitenhof' present the European Elections of 2019? And how can this be linked to theories about political communication?' Since the rise of the talk show genre on Dutch television and the proven influence of these shows on the public opinion, this study tries to grasp the implications of this relatively new channel of political communication and the interrelationship between the actors in this field of society.

The results indicate that per fragment many European themes were discussed at the talk show tables, whereas when looking at all themes together a national focus was identified in most of the fragments. In-depth discussions were mainly found when talking about national themes. Besides, topics were identified and these results show that a wide variety of especially European related topics was found: 70 different European topics, against only 31 different national ones. In general, between 1 to 3 guests were invited at the talk shows tables, and half of the guests were Dutch politicians. In each fragment of the talk show Pauw, only Dutch politicians were invited. In Buitenhof a more variety of guests was found, such as Dutch MEP's, scientists and a journalist. Besides, the introduction of the talk show presenter was analysed. Giving an introduction about the guests invited was the most found way of introducing the fragment. Furthermore, the three words found most frequently were European Parliament (28 times), Timmermans (22 times) and SP (22 times). This brings us to another remarkable finding, namely the frequency of Frans Timmermans as a subject of discussion. In 6 different units, spread over 5 fragments he was identified as the central theme. Out of these 6 times, half of the time specifically was talked about the SP campaign clip where they personally mock Frans Timmermans by making a parody about him being a European elite. No other theme as Frans Timmermans was found in this frequency and at the same time this widespread over the different fragments. In general, a focus on national politics and politicians was found. After the election date it is remarkable that there was almost only attention for what the results mean for the Dutch political parties and barely for what the results mean in the European parliament and the wider European context. In order to understand these results it is important to discuss them and where necessary add nuances.

First the topics were identified while reading the transcripts. Here a wide variety of European related topics was found. This indicates that the discussions at the talk show tables were comprehensive, and guests and presenters were informed well. Looking at the themes, the

same is found here. When looking only at European and national themes, there were more European themes found. This could indicate a good understanding of European politics. The European themes were well represented in the fragments analysed. However, there were more categorical themes identified, and when comparing the European themes (European affairs and international relations) with the national themes (national affairs, Dutch campaigns, personal politics), the latter were found as the majority per fragment. These results tell us that at both talk shows they do talk about European themes, but when is looked at the overall main topic of each fragment it is turned out that the focus lays on national affairs. This means that, the European themes discussed were of secondary importance and more details next to the national themes and topics. This could be explained by the fact that both the audience and the guests are Dutch. Moreover, because of the entertaining character of talk shows, producers want to serve their public, which speaks Dutch and feels more connected with national affairs than European affairs. This is probably an explanation for the presence of a national focus even when the fragment is intended to be about the European elections. It could be assumed that national politics is considered more important for Dutch citizens by themselves and the talk show producers.

Going back to the analysis of themes, Frans Timmermans was the theme most frequently found, being present in 6 different units spread over 5 fragments. On the one hand, he was a so called 'hot topic' because he was candidate to be the new head of the European Commission. On the other hand because the SP made a parody about him, which was received as quite controversial by most of the public. These results show us that the focus on individuals in politics nowadays is very much present. Moreover, an interesting finding here is that during the fragments analysed they very much talk about these sensationalist, minor side stories of the European elections. It is remarkable that there is little attention for what the European elections themselves entail. As an example they do talk about Spitzenkandidaten and the campaigning of a single Dutch political party, but not about what their vote means to the future of the European Union and that it eventually will be the electable MEPs in the European parliament that choose the head of the European Commission. This seems not to be realized.

Besides this, there is a clear difference found when comparing the European and national themes. Namely, the European ones are big themes, such as security, privacy and climate. Themes that are less easy to grasp for the Dutch citizen. Whereas, the national themes are very much about things that Dutch citizens know and are familiar with. Above all, these national themes more apply to their daily lives. This makes is for both the guests and the producers of

talk shows easier to talk about national themes. Talk shows are also entertainment and therefore, it is important the audience is able to identify with the themes discussed. This finally explains why the focus was mostly national.

Inviting politicians to talk shows nowadays is a key element in mediated political communication. The results indicate that mostly Dutch politicians were invited to the analysed talk shows. First and foremost, this can be explained by that fact that both Pauw and Buitenhof are Dutch shows, so Dutch speaking politicians can contribute to the discussions. Though, a remarkable finding here is that when the talk show is about the European elections mainly national politicians are invited. It would seem more logical if politicians that are actually working in Brussels would be invited. When comparing the guests of Pauw and Buitenhof, at the latter a wider variety of guests was found. This given can be interpreted in different ways. As Buitenhof is a weekly talk show, it is subject to a more selected audience than Pauw, which is broadcasted every night. This could indicate that the viewers of Buitenhof have a more specific interest in politics, and therefore prefer a wider variety of guests in order to have a more in-depth discussion. On the contrary, inviting scientists at Pauw would possibly not meet the expectations of the viewers, which would result in Pauw losing viewers. Once again, the entertaining element of talk shows is underlined. This makes it very clear that it is not only about informing in this type of shows.

The invited guests were of the parties: D66, GL, VOLT, FVD, SP and PVV. Except for D66 and VOLT, these can be considered as wing parties. VOLT as being a new party, they are also be considered as 'newsworthy' and therefore, interesting to invite. Talk show producers naturally want interesting guests, and because of this new, controversial or wing party politicians are invited. In the case that only wing party politicians are invited, they will mostly talk about extreme and controversial topics. This can possibly result in an unreal image being spread, which causes a representation gap between the public and the politicians they see on television. Most people cannot identify with these rather extreme ideas since they have a more nuanced opinion and vote for more moderate parties. Since also D66 was invited two times, and some scientists and a journalist, Pauw and Buitenhof try to create a more truthful reflection of the political society during their talk shows and thus, are not only looking for sensationalist television. Though, one of the most important rules when making television, is that it should not be boring. This also applies for Pauw and Buitenhof, so they keep on inviting interesting and high-profile guests.

Besides this, the dimension of guests can be connected to the theory of mediatization, since politicians more often accept invitations for talk shows than in earlier times. For them it is just an easy way of reaching the electorate. Almost everything the electorate knows about politics and politicians is provided by the media. Political realities are produced and influenced by the media. They decide who they invite, what questions they ask and what they show to their audience.

When looked at the introduction of the presenter, the most frequent type found was giving an introduction about the guests that were invited. The second most found types of introduction were stating recent events and stating statistics. These, together with the other types identified, are usual ways for journalists to start a conversation or article. It could be considered interesting that by introducing the guests, the emphasis of the fragment directly lays on the person invited and that there is less attention on the topic of the discussion. In the case of this research that means less focus on the European elections. Nevertheless, some nuance needs to be added as in some cases it is necessary to introduce a guest, especially when this person is not that popular. This was mainly found in this research. When the presenter was introducing the guests, they were most of the time not that well known and therefore, it was necessary to do so. Furthermore, by stating a recent event or statistics it was found that the content of these introductions was mainly national. Only one time, in fragment 5 an introduction contained information about current European affairs. The rest of the introductions were about national elections and statistics concerning Dutch politics. The other types of introduction, such as posing a personal question or provoking the guest by having a sarcastic tone when talking about the European Union, perfectly fit in the talk show genre as they both aim for a sensationalist answer with a clear focus on the personal dimension. By connecting this finding to the theory of personalization of politics this can be explained easily.

The findings about word frequency tell us much about which topics were popular at the talk show tables of Pauw and Buitenhof. However, these findings need some nuances, as the word 'European Parliament' was by far mostly counted in fragment 4, where the only guests were MEP's themselves. The fact that they both work at the European Parliament has probably influenced the frequent use of this word. The same goes with the counting of the word 'SP', which was almost only found in the fragment 6, where a SP member is taking part in the discussion. At this moment the party had just lost all their seats in the European Parliament. So, considering these remarks, the word 'Timmermans' was found as the word most frequently found that was not directly influenced by the personality or function of the guests. This is an

interesting finding, as Frans Timmermans was nowhere invited as a guest and it was not intended to be the main subject of the fragments. In not a single description on the website of the fragments his name was referred to, but eventually it happened. Both the presenters and the guests mentioned Frans Timmermans. There are two reasons to clarify his popularity these election times. First of all, the SP had made a parody about European politics where they mock Frans Timmermans personally. The other reason is because he was campaigning as Spitzenkandidat to be the head of the new European commission. This finding illustrates that national politics plays an important role when talking about the European elections. However, Frans Timmermans was not the only Dutch Spitzenkandidat. Bas Eijckhout, guest in fragment 4 was also a candidate. How did he not get the same amount of attention? This can be clarified easily by the theory knowing that talk shows have an entertaining character. The story and the person need to be considered 'newsworthy', and apparently Bas Eijckhout did not have this quality.

Moreover, the focus on side stories and personal stories are more entertaining than just the elections itself. With this finding, the focus of journalists on the hype dimension of politicians is revealed. The dichotomy described about the work of politicians is also found back in the coverage of politics and politicians by journalists. Both journalists and politicians influence each other by acting in a certain way. Politicians changed their way of communication towards a more personal direction and journalists now act by mainly focussing on the 'front stage' side of the politicians. Journalists only give the attention to those who meet their requirements and politicians act according to this logic of the media because they know it is the easiest way of getting media attention. Since the journalists focus on these more sensationalist side stories of politicians, their real work of making policies loses attention. When this happens, citizens get used to realities constructed by the logic of media. This 'entertainment bias' was found back in most of the results of this research.

While analysing the results it is important to realize the limitations of this research. As stated earlier only a selected number of fragments was analysed. All the fragments were of the same year and about the same election year. Besides, a limited amount of data was available as there were a few Dutch talk show that covered the 2019 European Elections in depth. Next to this, some methodological limitations were identified earlier in this dissertation. Most important to realize are the limitation caused when conducting qualitative content analysis executed by one person only. It namely creates a bias in the selection of the results. For further research these limitations should be kept in mind and probably be addressed. Despite of the limitations, it is

believed that this research gives a good idea about the content of the talk shows Pauw and Buitenhof while covering the European Elections of 2019. A sufficient amount of time was used in order to fully fathom the data and therefore, the results are considered to be well thought out.

Chapter 5. Conclusions

In this research the coverage on the 2019 European elections by Dutch talk shows Pauw and Buitenhof was analysed. The Dutch media landscape has shifted more towards entertainment, with talk shows having quite a prominent place in it. Besides, the role of politicians has become more informal and personal which made them more willing to accept invitations to talk shows. Television is an easy way for politicians to reach a broad public, influence the electorate and show them their human and personal side. Political communication is described as a dynamic field of studies. Because of this, research objectives were to give a clear picture of the interrelationship between the talk show Pauw and Buitenhof and the political domain. More specifically, it tried to give a clear picture of how these two talk shows present the political event of the 2019 European Elections. It is believed the research objectives were achieved successfully, because after the analysis some clear conclusions could be drawn.

The presentation of the European elections of 2019 by Pauw and Buitenhof can be characterized by a focus on national politics, personal politics and entertainment. Looking at the results and the interpretations of the conducted analysis, it can be stated that despite the fact that a wide variety of words concerning European politics was found, the overall focus of the discussions at the talk show tables of Pauw and Buitenhof lays on national politics. Put differently, it can be said that when the discussion goes in depth, it is mainly about national politics and not about European. This is considered remarkable, as the intentions of all researched fragments were to discuss the upcoming European elections. This particular tendency of not really talking about Europe, perfectly rimes with the lack of interest in European politics found among citizens. Talk shows are first of all entertainment programmes and they produce what they believe their viewers like to see. Also, a focus on the person behind the politician was found in a frequent manner. Next to this, mostly national politicians were invited and as it is their job to talk about national politics, it was not surprising that the discussion mainly was about national issues too. It can be said that the theories about media and politics discussed in the reviewed literature were all found back in the analysis to some extent.

After all, the conclusion will be made that these infotainment talk shows do not prepare voters sufficiently in order to make a decision what to vote for at the European elections. People will remain to grope in the dark about what the European elections really entail. A recognizable face is missing and no one takes the responsibility to take care of this. National politicians take advantage of this empty space and use the European election time to promote their national

statements. It could be said this is one of the main problems of today's Europe. What is missing, is a constructive European story with a unified campaign. Nevertheless, as Pauw and Buitenhof at least had the intentions of covering the event of the 2019 European elections. Unfortunately, they only succeeded in doing this partially as they, together with their guests, could not resist the temptation of talking about national politics instead. Much room for improvement is seen, both for politicians, talk show producers and for the public. In the end television is also a manner of supply and demand. By changing the focus it does not mean that all national topics should be banned from talk shows, but a more proportional balance would be suggested, so that the electorate really learns something from watching infotainment programmes such as Pauw and Buitenhof.

Chapter 6. Recommendations

The research conducted has shown that the presentation of the European Elections in Dutch television talk shows has too little focus on Europe itself and therefore, the electorate is not informed well about the European elections by these programmes. Therefore, some recommendations are suggested in order to improve this.

First of all, the attitude of some national politicians seems to be neglecting when it comes to the European elections, as they tend to pull attentions towards themselves and their own national party. National politicians, especially from pro-European parties should be more aware of this in order to avoid this national bias when talking about European issues. In addition to this, European politicians should step more upfront during election time. When they give a face to Europe, people will feel more connected and be more interested in seeing them at talk shows tables.

Secondly, for talk show producers it is recommended to give less podium to national politicians during European election time. Shows identifying as infotainment programmes otherwise possibly descend to only being an entertainment programme. By inviting people that work in Brussels, they contribute to giving Europe a face. Moreover, it would contribute to their reliability as a infotainment programme.

Lastly, in order to substantiate the findings stated in the above chapters, further research is needed. Recommended is a different research focus, such as comparing different talk shows, shows from different countries and the coverage of European elections of different years. Also, a more in-depth visual analysis and an analysis to the symbiotic meanings of words is suggested. All these types of further research would contribute to a more complete image of how the presentation of European elections is presented in (Dutch) television talk shows.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Topics

European	International relations	National	Dutch campaigns	Personal politics
Day of Europe	Importance of Europe in IR	Dutch constitution	D66 campaign	Controversial declarations of Sophie in 't Veld
EU Constitutional law	Balkan war	Dutch democracy	EU campaigns of Dutch parties	personal action of Klaver
Finances of MEPs	EU-America relations	EU membership of NL	differences between D66 and GL	personal action of Jetten
Macron	(in)dependence of Europe	VVD	FVD campaign	personal question to van Lanschot
Christian democrats	unfair competition of China	popularity of EU in NL	PVV campaign	personal question to Wielinga
Social democrats	International trade	election turnout	SP campaign movie	political course/shift Eppink
Liberal Progressives	US-China trade war	Dutch provincial elections	VOLT campaign	Political course of Rutte
Customs union	taxation for multinationals	Dutch national elections	SP campaign	
Migration crisis	NAVO	populism	political course of SP	
Safety	Russia	Dutch electorate	differences between GL and FVD	
EU Economy	North Africa	responsibility of Dutch ministers for Europe	Identity of SP	

Social Justice	Middle East	Dutch politicians	political course of VVD	
European Police	EU-China relations	European debate in the Netherlands	SP campaign	
European Parliament	Trump	Results of elections in NL		
Dutch parties in Parliament		Dutch Eurosceptic parties		
Division of seats in Parliament		results of elections for PVV		
Spitzenkandidat		Media attention for extreme parties		
CO2 tax		PVV		
European import duties		importance of EU to citizens		
Privacy		SP		
consumer protection		Mark Rutte		
New European party: VOLT		Geert Wilders		
Kerosine tax		Frans Timmermans		
European democracy		PVDA		
European party campaigns		Childrens pardon		
VAT on flight tickets		Tata Steel		
Old EU politics		NRC		
unfair taxation		CU		
federal Europe		Nexit		
European army		referendum		
cybercrime		Henk Otten		

north-south division				
Euro crisis				
trust in EU				
EU extreme parties				
Council of European Union				
climate change				
Brexit				
Front National				
Lega				
Turkey deal				
European FBI				
MEP Frans Timmermans				
MEP Sophie in 't Veld				
political fragmentation				
Manfred Weber				
MEP Bas Eickhout				
agriculture				
German car industry				
Magrethe Vestager				
Migration deals				
The Greens				
The Commission				
The conservatives				
Juncker				
Schengen zone				
MEP Denk Jan Eppink				

ESM				
ECB				
European Superstate				
Le Pen				
Farage				
Orbán				
Salvini				
Bank Union				
MEP Ronals van Raak				
MEP Olaf Stuger				
LPF				
UKIP				
Montary policies				
(70)	(14)	(31)	(13)	(7)

Appendix 2. Themes

	Overview of all themes				
	European	International relations	National	Dutch campaigns	Personal politics
Fragment 1	Day of Europe	Europe as a powerful block	EU membership in Dutch constitution	Dutch campaign (D66)	Controversial declarations Dutch MEP
	Payments of MEP's	International position of EU	Nexit	Dutch campaigns (SP, PVV, FVD)	Timmermans parody
	Transnational cooperation	EU dependency on US	EU membership in Dutch constitution		
	Finances of MEP's	Independence of EU	Nexit		
	Safety		Europe feels far away		
	European cooperation		EU membership in Dutch constitution		
	European	International relations	National	Dutch campaigns	Personal politics
Fragment 2	European party families	Unfair competition of China	Popularity of European elections in NL	Differences between D66 and GL	Frans Timmermans
	Security	US-China trade war	election turnout		Action of Jetten
	migration		Dutch political parties in EP		
	Climate		Dutch government		
	CO2 tax		Tata steel factory		
	CO2 tax				

	European trade				
	European	International relations	National	Dutch campaigns	Personal politics
Fragment 3	New pan-European party		Dutch political situation	Dutch campaigns (FVD, PVV, SP)	Personal question to van Lanschot
	VOLT campaign			Dutch campaign (VOLT)	Frans Timmermans parody
	transnational problems				Personal question to Wielinga
	European elections				
Fragment 4	Spitzenkandidat		Knowledge about EU in NL	Opinions of Politicians/parties (GL and FVD)	Campaign of Timmermans
	European campaigns		Leaving the Euro zone	Dutch campaigns (GL and FVD)	Political shift of Eppink
	'Old' way of EU politics		Referendum for Nexit	Political shift of VVD	political shift of Rutte
	Euro zone				
	Euro crisis				
	European	International relations	National	Dutch campaigns	Personal politics
Fragment 5	Trust in the EU	BTP effect	Populism	Dutch campaigns (middle parties)	
	European extreme right wing parties		polarization in the Dutch debate		
	Real European debate		Nexit		
	European debate		Dutch electorate		
	European Parliament		Role of Dutch		

			politicians in Europe		
			Attitude/role of national politicians towards EU		
	European	International relations	National	Dutch campaigns	Personal politics
Fragment 6	European Extreme right wing parties (Front National, Lega)		Results of elections in NL	Dutch campaign (SP)	Frans Timmermans parody
			election turnout	Dutch campaign and party identity (SP)	Geert Wilders
			division in Dutch electorate	Dutch campaign (SP)	Frans Timmermans
			Election turnout		
			Results of elections in NL		
			Development of Dutch political parties (FVD, PVV)		
			Dutch political domain		
			Election turnout		
			division in Dutch electorate		
			Struggle to identify with EU politics		

Appendix 3. Transcripts

Fragment 1

Unit 1: 00.00 – 02.02

P: Today is the 9th of May. Does someone know which day that is? Eva, do you know?

J: Yes. I know now, after someone told me but I won't tell.

P: Ah no no no. It is the day of Europe.

J: Yes correct.

P: Did you really know that?

J: Yes, I did know that. And as we saw, on this day of Europe, all people hang out the European flag which is fantastic to see.

P: Yes, but it was a nice moment for D66 to kick-off their campaign for the European elections. So it has begun, Rob Jetten.

J: Yes, in exactly two weeks, at least in the Netherlands, we choose a new European parliament.

P: To be honest, I thought that it had already begun last Monday, by Sophie in 't Veld with her declarations and all. But that was not like that?

J: That was not the formal kick-off of the D66 campaign, that just took place during a We Love Europe event in Utrecht.

P: But, because of that there was much attention for Europe and as well for the most tricky point: They are all there for the money in Brussels and Strasbourg. That is what people remember.

J: Yes look, if you hear these amounts of payments of MEP's, which are quite something, I can understand the controversy around that.

P: And why didn't you or she just go to the press to just talk about it?

J: Well, We have.. Sophie has..., because *HP de Tijd* published an article about payments...

P: But in general, you get a daily rate of 320 euros when you are in Brussels, which also includes hotel stay and meals etc. But for Sophie, as you call her, that does not make sense, as she lives there and does not need a hotel but still gets the money. And of that *HP de Tijd* made

a calculation, which makes serious amounts of money. And then thinking of the long period she is already there, it involves ten thousands of Euros.

J: Well yes, that is exactly what I am saying: those are serious amounts of money that the MEP's get for their work. We, Sophie in 't Veld gave all the information to *HP de Tijd*. She also gave a statement by last Monday.

Then the conversation about this continues for a few minutes.

Unit 2: 04.43-07.54

P: All right, enough about it?

J: Well, we can also talk about the content of the European Elections.

P: Oke Lets do that. So, today it was the Day of Europe, with a kick-off in Utrecht. And you came there with the following movie. Let's watch a small fragment of it.

Rob Jetten talking in the movie: Only one thing is not in there: Europe. And that's strange, as we live already for 70 years in peace, safety and with unprecedented prosperity. All thanks to European cooperation. Because of that, I will introduce today, with my colleague Kees Verhoeven, a special proposal: An amendment to the constitution. To secure our membership, like 17 other member states did, in our constitution.

P: Why is this so important to include the membership in the constitution?

J: Yes, in our constitution our rights and duties are described, but also how our government and democracy functions. And Europe has become more important over the years. Actually, Europe is just as important as what we are doing in The Hague. Europe decides about monetary policies, customs, but also bigger choices such as how to cope with the crisis. Actually, Europe is just as important as what we are doing in The Hague or the work of the local authorities. So, when we include Europe into our constitution, everything that has something to do with our democracy will be in there.

P: But, the party that won the most during last national elections just said: we want to leave the union. And then you want to include it in the constitution?

J: Well, that is the choice we have in two weeks: do you choose for parties that want to leave or weaken the union, or do you choose for parties like D66 that favour a strong Europe. To include the membership in the constitution, a Nexit is not impossible, like PVV wants, but it will make it more difficult. At least it will not be that easy as it was in the UK. Like they throw all the achievements and rights at the dump. When it is in the constitution, and if the

Netherlands want to leave, that we have to think about it twice. With a decent plan. First the senate and the chamber of representatives have to vote about it, then there will be general elections and then that will both chambers will have to vote about it again.

P: So you more or less say, it does sounds nice to include it in the constitution, but don't you worry, it will never happen.

J: I hope the Nexit will never happen indeed.

P: Yes, but your amendment to the constitution neither.

J: Well, I am so too sure about that. 17 other EU member states already have it included.

P: But they do not vote about this.

J: Yes, but the idea behind it, if we want to organize our constitutional law in a good way, where the European Union forms an integrated whole with it, it does deserve a place in the constitution.

P: But as you just explained how it would affect a possible leaving process, politically this would not be doable.

J: Last year, another amendment which I proposed did get though the chambers, so I do not step away for the challenge. Also a reason why we want this amendment is to start a debate in the Netherlands about how we see Europe. And which parties do acknowledge that Europe is needed when talking about the big themes, such the safety of Europe, strengthening the economy, deal with the climate crisis. That it is agreed upon that for these themes transnational cooperation in needed. The Netherlands cannot deal with these alone. By including the EU-membership in the constitution this acknowledgement can be given.

Unit 3: 07.55-10.18

P: But, I believe, people that are against the EU are not automatically against Europe. And these people do understand that Europe needs to form a powerful block. Maybe only economically, against China and the US. But making it so definite by including it in the constitution, it stands so far away from the referenda we had before.

J: Well..

P: ...That was more about how do we feel about it and what do we think about it. Then, of course we also had your colleague Brinkhorst who said the light goes off in Europe, but anyway aside from that.

J: Yes but what we do with this amendment... And by the way we try to make the role of the chamber of representatives stronger in relation to the government when talking about important European decisions. But if the membership is included in the constitution, and at some day we would decide to dissolve it or parties would have plans to do so, then first national elections would be held. And then we can have a good talk about it and think about if we do have a plan for a Nexit or are we leaving without a plan; causing the same chaos as in the UK. And these national elections that come in between would then function as a referendum about Europe and our membership.

Then another person (Jan Swinkels) sitting at the table adds: And 83 percent of the people is in favour of Europe right? It is actually only the PVV and FVD that want to...

J:...Yes and 70 percent of the Dutch people...

P...And the SP...

Swinkels:...Yes they are critical.

J: Well, since this week they have more shifted towards the euro-sceptical side.

Swinkels: I think they do not really want to leave... It will be very dangerous, I believe.

J: Yes, but actually I have more respect for the PVV, who clearly state: We want to leave, vote for us, then I have for the SP who in reality are in favour of European cooperation but at the same time are very negative about Dutch MEP Frans Timmermans. Also, they do not tell a pro-European story when talking about the important themes such as climate and immigration. Actually the SP should be fair and tell they are an anti-European party.

P: Do you think this movie made about Frans Timmermans crosses the line of what is acceptable?

J: Well, I think it was missing the point. When you make a movie of 2 minutes where you mock another politician...

Swinkels: ...That is not okay.

J: Better tell your own story instead of making fun of another in such a personal way.

Unit 4: 10.19-12.35

P: Are these the moments you wish you were in your show?

Jinek: I am stressing out here, haha, I am joking. It is fascinating to sit on this side of the table now. And of course I know you, so I can follow your thoughts, and I see what is happening here. As guest, I think that the average Dutch person is a fair, hardworking, nice person that just want to be fine, that is susceptible for rational arguments. I think a fundamental problem is that people have the feeling they do not have any control about what is happening in Europe. This feeling is boosted by these stories of declarations and so. And I understand the idea behind including something in the constitution, but I think people want to have the feeling that they know what is going on with their money, by who and why. Not that it is happening somewhere far away where everything costs a lot of money and they do not have any overview of it. That is it.. and people are really sensible for reasonable arguments, but not behind my back where is it very expensive. I do not think an amendment to the constitution will take away this feeling.

J: That is fair, and yes it is true that 83 percent says we should be in the EU, and at the same time 70 percent says Europe should focus on the main challenges of this era, which includes safety, where you do not know how much to rely on Russia and NAVO. So I propose for an European Army and a European FBI. Another worry people have is the economy: do I have personal advantage of the economic welfare? In the last 10 years Europe spoke mostly about the free market, less about social justice. So that is what we should go for more in the coming years. Europe can also do less. Europe can have a smaller commission and MEP's get less money...

Jinek:...But can you assure me that, as a citizen, I have a clear overview about what is happening with my money and my interests. Can you show me that?

P:Not now

J: Yes apart from the fact that every MEP should reveal their finances, I hope in the coming years we will have more attention for this discussion. And that we, also here in the Netherlands, are fair and open about what we do. If we hear Rutte and minister Hoekstra at speeches in Berlin and Zurich we hear beautiful European ideas and stories, but when they are in the Netherlands in a television show or at the house of representatives they are not clear about Europe. And the lack of a fair story, about what is Europe all about, how we ensure the safety and prosperity, that is what we should be talking more about in the coming years.

Unit 5: 12.36-14.48

Swinkels: But the politician has to seduce the people, that is part of the profession right?

J: Yes for sure..

Swinkels: It is not a regular profession. And I think it is much easier to seduce citizens, by explaining the importance of the EU. When we do not have it anymore, and states are going to fight with each other, war can happen again before you realize.

P: Well, well, but the argument of war is not in the right place here and we hear it whether appropriate or not.

Swinkels: I do not agree. There is evidence that war can break out very easily. We should not underestimate.

P: But if you see what happened at the Balkan. At that time we already had an EU. So it is not a guarantee that everything will be fine. Even at all crucial moments of serious world problems, the EU responds way too late and way too indifferent.

J: Yes, the Balkan, I think is a very good example. At some point a horrible war broke out, also in Kosovo at a certain moment, and then we need Americans to solve our problems.

P: Yes, and Trump even stated they are not going to do so anymore. Someone needs to lead an army, and therefore we should find consent about it.

J: Exactly, and that is totally fair. Because I think, as Europe we should be able to take care of our own affairs. So when talking about safety, more intensive European cooperation is needed.

P: But then we would also need a common foreign policy. Someone needs to lead an army, and therefore we should find consent about this.

Jinek: This will cost more money right?

J: Well, for some terrains I am willing to invest more in Europe: climate, safety and social justice. And then, Europe can less intervene in cases about what bananas and cucumbers should look like. And more focus on these bigger themes.

Jinek: Yes that would be nice.

Mick: Such a European policy seems like a good idea to me. I believe that's very much needed with the crime nowadays.

J: Look, a few weeks ago with D66, we have proposed for a European FBI. Because terrorists do not stop at borders and the same goes for international criminals. In the Netherlands we

see gangs from Albania. And then there is too little cooperation between different national police forces. For these transnational issues let's work together in order to tackle those. This will also show that European cooperation means a better life for all of us.

Fragment 2

Unit 1: 00.00-01.54

P: Europe, because we are talking about the European elections, is it still a kind of 'corvee', as Hans van Baalen once called it?

K: Not for me.

J: Not for me either, but a thing we do see, some parties, and also Rutte said a month ago, as premier of this country; "those European Elections, I find them not that relevant". But D66, the pro-European party of the Netherlands, among our party members it is really alive and volunteers are very active for already a few weeks. So, definitely no 'corvee'.

P: The turnout is usually the lowest of all elections we have, so in that sense it is also an indication that it is not that much alive.

K: No, and I think that is very problematic. And I think among our parties is very much alive; we have more campaigners active now than we had during the provincial elections. But unfortunately, for many people the European elections feel too far away from them. Because of that they do not really care about it. But exactly right now it is really important what you will vote for coming Thursday. So I hope everyone will do so.

J: According to polls, it is predicted that the turnout will be much higher than five years ago, which is good news. But what I am worried about is that five years ago, people of the age till 30, only 18 percent voted. Which is similar to the turnout during the Brexit referendum and the American presidential elections.

P: And how is this situation now? Is it expected higher for this time?

J: Well, the last weeks I visited almost all university cities and during discussion events a high number of people attended. I think, because of Brexit, younger people realize their future lays in Europe and therefore they are more interested in the elections and probably more young people will go voting this time.

K: Yes, they really have to come voting this Thursday. It is because of Brexit and Trump, and the climate generation, many of them went out on the streets to demonstrate, and they really

want to see change on climate policies. I think because of them I am expecting a higher turnout.

P: Thursday we will know what the turnout will be?

K: Yes Thursday, and the final results we will know by Sunday.

Unit 2: 01.55-03.37

P: Now it is quite complicated. There are 16 parties that want to participate in these elections, there are 26 seats and eventually there are 751 seats in the European parliament. This puts the importance of the Dutch vote in perspective. And also, whether I vote for you or Mark Rutte, I mean the VVD, it does not make a difference as your vote will end up at the same European party.

J: Yes that's correct, The Netherlands has a number of seats based on the number of inhabitants. D66 is part of a progressive block, in which also Marcon will join after these elections. Next to the Christian democrats and the social democrats, likely we will become the king maker; the liberal progressives can make the difference.

P: You are already dreaming of this.

J: Yes, D66 is at the core of this fraction already for a long time, and the VVD is part of it but is at the same time the outsider. If we look at the votes in the EU parliament of the last few years, we see the VVD mostly votes the same as the Christian-democrats and not with the D66.

K: You should ask this question to the VVD coming Wednesday, I think...

P: ... Yes I will do so for sure, I think they will give the exact opposite answer.

J: The voting behaviour shows that in within the ALDE fraction, D66 pushes for European cooperation and the progressive subjects.

K: One thing that is very interesting is that for this European Elections; in earlier years you could bet the Christian-democrats, all CDA's and the social-democrats ,PVDA's of Europe, they together would decide what would happen in Europe. But these times are over now due to political fragmentation in the European political landscape. So now, these established parties should appeal to the liberals or the green parties in order to have get a majority in the parliament. And this will make it way more interesting, and also on the terrain of climate more results will be booked.

Unit 3: 03.38-5.55

P: About climate we will talk in a bit. Tonight, it was the evening of Frans Timmermans, earlier he was also at talk show M. And after that, he had a debate on television with Manfred Weber, who is a Spitzenkandidat from the Christian-democratic party.

J: nobody knows what that is, but they are candidate to become chair of the European Commission.

P: Yes, and Frans Timmermans in this case, he is sort of our 'Frans', because when he will get this position, people will be happy about that. We have chosen a fragment to watch of this debate.

fragment of debate between Frans Timmermans and Manfred Weber

P: Well, I do not know what this fragment tells us, as we cannot vote for Manfred Weber. So, this is a debate between a social-democrat and a Christian-democrat. For the Netherlands is it important Frans Timmermans will get this position?

K: No, I think the most important thing is we will get a progressive person on this position. Bas Eickhout is our Spitzenkandidat, there is another Dutch politician going for this position, and I think that in the end the possible majority is the most important. If we become dependent of the Christian-democrats, there will be no changes on agriculture, trade and also on climate: for example the German car industry nothing will change.

J: If a Dutch politician can be chair of the European Commission, of course you hope we as a country can get some advantages from that. But personally, we as liberals we have Magrethe Vestager, who is a Danish Commission member who during the past years did a lot of work to strengthen the European economy. As well she would be the first woman that will lead the European Commission, and Jesse just said, the social-democrats and Christian-democrats were mainly running the show for years. Now we are pretty sure, this will change after these elections. So, if we together with the liberals and the progressives, also with the party of Macron, we can form this third big block and really make a difference. So, who knows we will have a woman for the first time as the chair of the European commission.

Unit 4: 05.56-09.46

P: Your parties are very similar about some terrains, such as climate where we will talk about more in a bit. But what do you think is a big difference between your party and the party of Jesse Klaver?

J: When looking at a European level, the difference can be found in the field of and migration. Security is one of the biggest challenges for Europe in the coming years; people want security in the sense of safety and more social justice, but also safety in the sense of how to protect the European border and how to deal with illegal migration, how to divide refugees among Europe. Because of these, difficult decisions need to be made sometimes and also collaboration with countries in North Africa and the Middle East, which are at the heart of these illegal migration routes. And there we see a very clear difference between D66 and GL. Because they are against the migration deals, as the last party in the Netherlands.

P: The migration deal was also a reason why you did not join the government. Even though the congratulations are all around you, since you became father for the second time last week, and you are also celebrating the 30th anniversary of the party. But being on the side lines for 30 years is not everything, right?

K: Well, I am very happy how it goes right now. Climate is at top of the agenda and the political debate is about all the topics we think are important. Next time we will make it, I think. Especially because..

P: ...Are you willing to change your opinion on migration?

K: Actually, I am not willing to, and actually I found it very strange that it did not work out the last time. And also, that D66 and GL are diverted on this topic. Because, and I want to emphasize this once more, we are making a distinction between real refugees, and I refuse to close the border of south Europe for them, something the government wants to do, and people that should not be here, such as illegal labour migrants. We wanted to make agreements about this problem to send these people back to their country of origin. Our government wanted to make agreements with Libya. But we did not want to and still we do not want to send people back to that county.

J: But you called the plans of this government a moral boundary for GL, but what has happened in the last two years what illustrates the crossing of this moral boundary? I see we do not have rickety boats on the Mediterranean sea. Also, not every week thousands of peoples are drowning there anymore. We are making agreements with counties in order to take back disadvantaged migrants more easily and we even made an agreement with the CDA and PVV about the children's pardon. So, the moral boundary you have talked about before, and why you decide not to join, did not really occur. And this question will come up for the Greens in the European Parliament as well. Like we said before, the populists and nationalists are more present in the Parliament and then the question is: will the Greens take a

constructive stance in collaboration with the liberals and the Christian-democrats or do you keep on dreaming of the ideal world and will you stand on the side lines, together with the populists and nationalists.

K: No, we are in the game, you can see what Bas Eijckhout is getting done on the dossiers on climate. But to answer your question about what actually happened in the last few years: unfortunately still boats come to grief in the Mediterranean sea. The agreements that are needed in order to stop those illegal immigrants, the asylum seekers that are should not be here, that are criminal and we cannot deport. In that case too little is done. And in the last few years, luckily the deal with Libya was annulled. We should be very happy about that, in my opinion. I am very happy with it, and it is not thanks to this government...

J: But nevertheless, it is thanks to absence of the GL.

K: No, but that true as well. But luckily, in the end there was too little support in Europe.

Frits Huffnagel : It is just funny actually, we just saw a photo which said: "For change!", and you had a good question: what is the difference between these two parties. Well, one does take responsibility and the other one does not, even though he has won 10 seats.

Unit 5: 09.47-12.29

P: Now, let's talk about an important similarity: climate. CO2 fees for the industry: in favour?

J: Yes.

K: in favour, of course.

P: European?

J: preferably yes.

K: European and national.

P: European and national. You were kind of assaulted at a certain point, when you made a comment about Tata Steel, the old blast furnace... Oh no, that was you!

K: He was standing next to a coal power plant. Not every factory is Tata Steel.

J: In the Netherlands, we, you as well by the way, are fighting against coal power plants for years now. And a few months ago the government decided to close one in Amsterdam.

P: But such a factory like Tata Steel is just doing their job, and they think: do not be this strict to us, we are doing a good job.

K: I have visited them and... We have proposed a bill to introduce a CO2 fee. And as a result of that, employees of Tata Steel were startled by this. What consequences will have this for my job and my company. And when I visited them to talk about this, it was touched by something they said: "How you talk about my company, gives me the feeling I cannot be proud of the high quality steel we make". They are top of the bill worldwide. I had to apologize for that. And I am proud we have this company here, but we also talked about the importance of sustainability and there should be a CO2 duty. And when talking in more depth about this it is revealed that the biggest threat are not our green plans, but China can just dump their steel on the European Market. And this forms a big threat for Tata Steel, which we should better protect.

P: That's what it is all about, they would not care that much if their product would be a bit more expensive due to fees, but only if there is no unfair competition from China.

J: Yes, but let us go back first to this CO2 duty. Both we want to charge on the CO2 emissions, but what should be the right amount? Pretty soon, GL had proposed to put the height of such tax on 50 Euros, on top of the already existing CO2 duty. Many experts say this will drive the companies out of the country. We should be careful of polarization taking the high road in the discussion about climate. We should not set 50 euros as the goal, instead we should be striving for the reduction of CO2 emissions. And a tax could function as a tool to realize this. The trade unions and work councils tried to warn us for only focusing on one certain amount but try to develop an effective CO2 taxation.

Unit 6: 12.30 – 17.35

P: I want to go a step further, the final height and system will be discussed about more times in the future. What Mr. Klaver tries to say is that these rules should also apply to China.

K: Apart from the height of the fee, we face two main problems, which form a danger for Europe and you just spoke about safety. China is not an economy as we know it: the state is fully involved by sponsoring many companies. Because of this, Chinese companies do not have to pay for CO2 emissions and they receive so much money of the Chinese government that it is a matter of unfair competition. The height of the taxes will affect these companies. If China wants to sell products on the European market they should just pay the bills at the border.

P: What do they have to pay then?

K: The difference between what companies here do have to pay for CO2 taxes and what they in China do not have to pay. By doing this, a fair competition will be created.

P: But that is an import duty.

K: Exactly.

P: Is this a national matter?

K: No, that is why we are here today as well, to talk about the European Elections, This should be arranged on the European level.

P: Yes, and it is questionable whether a majority of the European parliament would back this.

K: Luckily there is a debate going on lately about the protection of European employees and interests. Like our prime minister said: "We should not be naïve about China". So I hope it will be more discussable in the future.

P: Doesn't it mean that it will become more expensive for consumers? Or the price of Tata Steel will rise, or the products from China will be more expensive.

J: Yes, and it is a very unwise proposal of GL. In the past Jesse Klaver was always inspired by the American president. But he should have stopped when a new president came.

P: Which one? Trump?

J: Trump has introduced import duties on Chinese products. And this has cost the American economy already 7.8 billion dollars. This kind of taxation made products such as washing machines, televisions and cars have become more expensive for the consumers. So China is not worried at all about the fact that we would introduce import fees. Peking's reaction would be: we would do the same for Dutch industry. ASML earns 11 billion with the export of chip machines, produced in Eindhoven exported to China. The Netherlands is the second biggest producer of food worldwide of which a big part ends up in China, including baby food.

K: Yes we know, the supermarkets there are empty.

J: What you propose is a sort of 'boomerang' policy: first we set a CO2 duty of 50 euros, which drives out the Dutch industry and then to compensate we will introduce import duties.

K: No that is not true.

P: Rob Jetten says it is escalating.

K: No, even apart from the CO2 duty I think we should do it. And yes prices will rise. But the idea that cheap products are for free, that we do not have to pay a price for that, is not true. You see this for example when people here in the Netherlands lose their job and jobs in general would disappear. So maybe for consumers it will be more expensive, but I do not only look at the consumers but also at the employees.

K: And then this about China: not that long ago I went there in order to get a better understanding of what is going on there. And I think China would understand and even respect if you are willing to set these kind tariffs. Not like...

J: This typical Trump language, like threaten someone to get respect.

K: No, I am threatening no one. Donald Trump is going into a battle like: we are better, we are bigger and we are going to put taxes on everything. If you listen carefully to what I say...

J: ...you are adding fuel on the fire by introducing import duties as a third block.

K: Like I am saying, it is all about CO2 emissions. That we have to look very carefully which products are bad for the environment and over which was not payed a fair price. And for these products a duty is imposed at the border. And it is strange that you want to impose a CO2 duty for companies in The Netherlands and Europe, and when I propose to do the same for Chinese companies, you react like it is totally not acceptable. And that is peculiar sir, it is old school.

P: Shortly please, looking at the time.

J: Well, trade is very important for our economy. We are an open economy and we make a lot of money thanks to that. Of course there are many problems: the Chinese companies are sponsored by the Chinese state, privacy is not always assured and so forth. What we should not do is standing back to back and like China and America making the trade wars worse by imposing tariff after tariff...

K: ...it is no trade war...

J: ...But as Europe, together with the progressive Trudeau, make sure we are on speaking terms again with America to make agreements about better trade, which respect to our climate, our privacy.

P: Agreements, but no import duties.

J: But not raising the price for consumers, with stupid import duties.

K: Mr. Jetten, by introducing import duties and actions to protect employees, does not mean directly there is a trade war, it is a sign of standing up for European people and in the end that is our job.

P: Thank you.

Fragment 3

Unit 1: 00.00-03.10

P: The latest polls give them two seats and they claim to be the first truly European party. It is about Volt and let's find out who Volt is. Reinier van Lanschot, you are lead candidate. It is a nice name and evokes questions. Are there any relations to the bank?

L: Yes, distant relatives. An ancestor set up the bank but I am not involved.

P: Okay. So it is not the financial backer of Volt.

L: No. That would make the campaign a lot easier. Now we finance our campaign with small contributions from lots of people. This costs a lot of energy to make this work.

P: What job do you do?

L: I used to work for Ahold, a major supermarket chain. Now I am a full-time volunteer for Volt and lead candidate.

P: Are you the driving force behind Volt in the Netherlands?

L: Certainly not on my own. There is a big group...

P: ...There is a few behind you.

L: Yes, that is great. Along with Laurens Dassens, Volt chairman, I decided in October to resign and work for Volt. And now there are more of us. They stopped studying, took unpaid leave. All to help ensure we get a better Europe.

P: We will talk later about what you want. What was the moment when you decided to resign your great job? Then you went into politics. What happened then?

L: I started to realise that today's problems are not being solved. And are going to be. For example, the climate crisis. I started to wonder why no one did anything. Because, we do have the answers. But they are not applied. It looks as if most people agree on what answers we should provide. Yet it does not happen. Then I met 3 young people: An Italian, German and a

Française. They shared that analysis and wanted to change things by founding the first pan-European party.

P: In which countries is that party represented?

L: We are active in all European countries and electable in 8.

P: Let us look at a movie from a German documentary made by ARTE.

L: Nice.

movie

P: Well, this looks good. That gives us an idea. You have your own party office which does not look that good.

L: Some people call it a disconsolate industrial estate.

P: Well, what would you call it?

L: It is the Volt head office. We are there every day working on the campaign.

Unit 2: 06.18-07.01

P: The most important thing about Volt is more Europe not less.

L: It is not about Europe, but about solving major problems. Which is only possible with more Europe. We need more European integration giving it strength and using majority decisions to decide on policy. For instance to stop climate change. To tax kerosene and an honest tax for tech companies. Some tech companies pay less tax then the pub on the corner. That is only possible if we make Europe stronger while making it more democratic. The European Union is not perfect and it needs reforming from within.

Unit 3: 07.02-07.43

P: You know there is a major counter movement. The largest party, of we look at the provincial elections, the FVD is diametrically opposed to you. PVV and other parties do not either. They not all want the same but all of them do not want more Europe. And one party stuck its neck out this week: The SP. Its campaign film was supposed to be funny, mocking Frans Timmermans. So in this case they called him Hans Brusselmans. Anyway, that inspired you to make your own film. Let us look at some similarities.

movie

Unit 4: 08.23-09.13

P: You are obviously eating an SP tomato, their symbol.

L: Yes, we made this today, in one day, with zero budget. It follows the script used by the SP. But we do have a substantive message.

Other guest sitting at the table (Johannes Sigmond, artist name Blaudzun): May I ask: What do you vote in the Netherlands?

L: In the past I voted D66, and from now on that will be Volt.

P: Always? You mean you will take part in national elections too?

L: Yes. Want to achieve European reform. And this can only be done if you are also active locally and nationally. In the end you want to influence people's lives. And that is best done positively if you are active at all levels of government.

Unit 5: 09.14-10.33

P: The elections are in two weeks on 23 May. Two seats? So you are all right.

L: We want to get as many seats as possible in all eight countries. If we go on like this we can achieve a lot more. In recent weeks we have had thousands of new members. Every day you see hundreds of people joining here too. People that want this positive message. It is a constructive story about how to improve Europe. And this answer to populism and going forward together, is very popular among voters.

P: Bibi, you are 17, you will be 18 in October. Imagine, you are number 4, so it will be hard. What will you do? You are in your last year now?

W: I am in my fifth year now. So, if we get 4 seats and I am elected I would have to move to Brussels.

P: Then you would not finish secondary school.

W: No, then I would stop.

P: But that is not the situation. Practically you will finish secondary school, and what then?

W: Hopefully go on to the national elections.

P: Okay. By then I am sure we will meet again.

L: We would love to come back and tell you more about Volt.

P: Thank you.

Fragment 4

Unit 1: 00.00-06.04

K: We are going to talk about, always fun, the European elections. 10 percent of the VVD voters thinks that Frans Timmermans is their lead candidate. Three quarter of the GL voters knows who him, but does not know the name of their own lead candidate. With FVD it is more or less the same. And just on the eve of the elections. I would say pleasant game! Here with me tonight, welcome to the Spitzenkandidat of GL, Bas Eickhouk, 20 percent of the voters knows you. And the European lead candidate for FVD, Derk Jan Eppink. Gentlemen, those numbers are not that good, right? 20 percent knows you.

E: yes, it can be improved.

K: Yes, you are in the Parliament for a while know. Frans Timmermans is quite known. I opened the newspaper (NRC) and we see: Timmermans on tour: campaigning with a lead candidate. Did you feel jealous?

E: Well, you think I could also have been me, but anyway.

K: Yes, you are also Spitzenkandidat.

E: I also did a tour in Europe with the Greens. Actually the same idea as we see here: visiting different countries and campaigning for the European Elections.

K: This picture is manipulated in the sense of it looks like there are many people standing behind him in the streets of Warsaw, but in reality it was only a small group of mostly party employees.

Ep: It is just like a commercial, it looks like many people, but I doubt if people in those countries know who Frans Timmermans is. Especially, when Dutch people think he is the leader of VVD, well there is still a lot of work to do for him.

K: Maybe it does not amaze you that much.

EP: Indeed, PVDA and VVD are so close to each other in the political spectrum, they both became left wing parties. We are the only real right-wing party left.

K: He said proudly. But Mr. Eickhout, Spitzenkandidat is that not a preposterous title because it is not what the elections are about. The European parliament and the council have nothing

to do with it. The ministers are going to do that themselves they said. So you actually are throwing dust in the voters eyes.

E: Not really. Firstly, spitzenkandidat just means lead candidate in German. Apparently, in European context we like to use German words. You hear it in every country now. I do not think we are misleading the voter, because in the end the parliament certainly chooses the chair of the European Commission. Like it is written in the treaty, the council proposes a candidate and then the parliament chooses.

K: They once did this experiment with Juncker, and then most EU leaders concluded it is better not to do this again. And if you were Frans Timmermans or from the Christians or conservatives you would have had chance, but you are the fifth party in Europe.

E: But, for the first time in history the social-democrats and Christian democrats will not have a majority anymore.

K: You already know that now?

E: Well, is very likely when looking at the polls. And I think that is a good thing. One major thing in Europe are those two parties, which caused limited options in the debate, jobs were divided between the two. And those times are over now. Every candidate to lead to Commission should have a substantive programme now. They have to negotiate about this with each other. And then it is very likely they will need the greens as well. And then we will demand for the climate.

K: How much chance that you will become the new Juncker?

E: The change is not that big.

K: As a physicist, give us a percentage.

E: I am chemist.

K: Still a technician. So, a percentage?

E: look, probably it would be below 10 percent. But mostly when two sides contend, we could be the third party that benefits.

K: Derk Jan Eppink, why are you no Spitzenkandidat?

Ep: Formally we are not yet in a fraction, so it is not possible.

E: But the one you want to join has one, right?

Ep: Yes that's right. But we are not in there. One of the problems is the CU will not let us join, they think we are too much to the right. So the fraction needs to vote, it will be FVD or CU, which we will see after the elections.

K: The voters do not know about this whole game. All those fractions and votes between them. But why do you have to be in those, for subsidies?

Ep: In the European parliament it is all about formation of power and we want to create a real opposition. Just like my opposite Bas Eickhout wants with the greens. We want to do that on the right wing. Now this opposition is too small and unorganized. We want to form a strong opposition. A parliament without one is not a real parliament. And now for the first time there is an opportunity for this kind of opposition.

Unit 2: 06.05-07.52

K: I will do a test with you. First question, yes or no: more and more Europeans are fed up with the old way of politics.

E: I agree.

Ep: Me too.

K: Second one. A Nexit is a good idea.

E: Disagree.

Ep: It is a good idea...

K: no, do you agree or disagree?

Ep: Agree.

K: It is ridiculous that you can fly from Eindhoven to Marseille for only a few tens.

E: Agree.

EP: No, I don't agree. I believe in a free market. People with lower wages should have the option to travel as well. We admit them to also have a nice holiday. The greens do not. Freedom for the people.

E: If you listen to the liberal movement you should stand for a fair market. And at this moment we do not pay taxes for kerosene, the same goes for the tickets. Which causes very unfair competition. Liberals should fight for more equality in this.

EP: Yes no, but...

E: Yes no?

EP: You are not the presenter, right?

E: I can ask questions as well.

EP: It should become fairer, but I also think flying should not be too expensive. It should be a right for everyone. Not only for Spitzenkandidaten who travel through Europe to campaign.

E: We are in favour of fair prizes, and well the polluter pays which makes flying more expensive. But we can invest that money in trains, which gives a good alternative.

EP: How much are your costs of the travels you made as Spitzenkandidat?

E: I take the airplane too, but also the train.

K: At Buitenhof there is no room for this kind of populism.

Unit 3: 07.53-12.45

K: What we will do is talk about the first statement: more and more Europeans are fed up with the old way of politics. You both agree with this. A sentence taken from your own election program. Something you say while being in the parliament for 10 years. You are the old politics.

E: Yes, but it does not mean I am a representative of the majority. Like I just said, we saw the majority for many years among the social democrats and the Christian democrats. They took away the oxygen from the European debate. I think now it is very important we see there are more possibilities. Parties that want change are rising in Europe. On the one hand we see populists, who do not want Europe at all, and on the other hand we see the greens who do want Europe but reformed in a more social and green way.

K: But what defines this old way of politics then? The collaboration between the social democrats and the Christian democrats?

E: The old politics is about the idea of Europe as an internal market and not much more than that. And we see the big businesses have profited from that a lot. The internal market thrives because of this, but taxes are all arranged on the national level and this causes lower taxes for businesses. Governments can react in two ways to this: they reduce their expenditures (like

we saw in southern Europe), or they put taxes on consumptions. And this problem should be solved. And we as GL believe a strong Europe is needed in order to fix this.

K: You do not have to present all of you election programme here. Is the old way of politics more of a cultural issue? What do you think?

EP: Politics is about power, not only about good intentions. Till now, only a hand full of persons were in charge of this power. We want to change the parliament in a real one where we can also stop things as being the opposition. The reason why I go to Brussels is to stop this ongoing stream of powers. To pull the emergency brake, with all of my weight. If Frans Timmermans would join me, we will come to a halt.

K: I am afraid he would not do that.

Ep: And that is why I think we must change these balances of power in politics. The interesting thing about these elections are is that it is possible now. Bas Eickhout from the Greens maybe will become spitzenkandidat. Before this would not even been thinkable.

K: Due to the fragmentation more and more small parties will come, able to block everything.

Ep: There will be fractions that are going to coordinate the voting behaviour. Right now, that is not happening, no one talks with nobody. When doing this the oppositions can block things in the parliament. If a new chair for the commission is proposed, then we together can say we are against. Conservative and Green fractions can do so, we can even do it together.

E: That would be possible yes. But one thing I find interesting: you say you want to form an opposition in the European Parliament, but if I read your election programme you want to leave the monetary union, Schengen, the customs union. You just want to leave. You only go to Brussels to blow it up. I would rather see a party which is in opposition and tries to make it a better and different Europe.

Ep: That is not true. We want a referendum about the EU membership.

E: But in your programme it says leave Schengen, the customs union...

Ep: We want power to go back to the countries again. Now we have a federal Europe, what you support. You want a European Army, which is strange, European taxes, European governments. We do not want that, and when it comes this far, we have to say, watch out the Greens want to trick you. Then we give them the choice by a referendum if they really want it like this.

E: This is a known trick: There is only one choice. Leave or only this type of Europe just described by Eppink. And that is not correct. Yes, there is the choice of leaving, but there is also the choice of staying in Europe, but then a reformed version of how we know it now. I do not know if you have read our program, but we do not talk about a European Army. We talk about making Europe stronger socially and tax wise.

K: Does that mean you are against a European army?

E: correct.

K: In any case you are against an army.

E: That is right. Moreover, when talking about defence we should talk more about cyber security, that is the future. It is an old-fashioned way of doing politics when talking about an army.

Unit 4: 12.46-16.24

K: About leaving Europe and the Euro. You did change your opinion about these topics over the last years. I quote you: "in the end the European integration has been the best that has ever happened in European history," you said in 2007. Since you left the VVD last year, you made up your mind.

Ep: That is not true, I already changed my opinion in 2010, when I wrote a book: Babel's tower is in Brussels. This book was very Eurosceptic, even Mark Rutte presented it back then in the European Parliament. He was no prime minister yet. From there we both took very different paths. Before Rutte was very critical but he became very pro-Europe. And I used to be more pro-Europe and due to the Euro crisis, I became more and more sceptical. I saw this crisis was used to build a federal Europe.

E: In 2014 you still were *Lijstduwer* for the VVD (a ceremonial position to show support/get attention for the party).

Ep: I have always been Eurosceptic.

K: So, you say the VVD has changed.

Ep: That is certain, they drifted to the left side of the political spectrum, on all fields. The Mark Rutte now is not the same anymore as he was in 2010.

K: But leaving the Euro zone, while keeping Brexit in mind, is it not irresponsible? Recently, also the prominent senator Henk Otten thought it was not.

Ep: No, he said only to leave after a referendum. Like we all said. The danger of this whole situation is that we will become the ATM of Europe, especially for the southern countries. This danger should be communicated to the citizens. There is a chance we have to pay billions or Euro's to the south in a transfer union, the money flows from north to south. We have to give a choice. After all that is democracy.

K: As a party you can just say, we want to leave. But you are not saying that, you want to leave but first want to present the idea to the citizens. But if we look at the percentages 70 percent of the Dutch citizens wants to stay. And after all we do not have a referendum anymore in the Netherlands. So, the whole idea is not realistic and an easy promise.

Ep: that is true, but it is not about a short-term plan. I am going to Brussels to give a face to this opposition and to collaborate with other parties that want the same. The withdrawal itself is a national issue, the European Parliament has nothing to with that.

K: now we have those typical election debates with the same one liner. I also want to see the real Derk Jan Eppink now. Great writer, wrote essays for many years, been around the European nomenclatures for many years. If the Netherlands, with such a big export economy, leaves the Euro zone. Then you take an unimaginable high risk economically, right?

Ep: no, that is not always the case. There are many European countries that are not in the Euro, for instance Swiss in the middle of Europe that is very rich and have their own currency.

K: Yes, but they also have a deal with Europe.

Ep: Within only a few years there will be an enormous euro crisis between the north and south of Europe. And do we then want to pay again? That is the question we should ask to the voter.

Unit 5: 16.25-20.19

K: Ok. Bas Eijckhout, how big is the financial risk we are taking in the Eurozone? We are warranted by the ESM, and indirectly by the ECB, who bought up all our debts.

E: Still there are some things that should be solved. Speaking of the banks, we are too big. When another crisis comes right now, once again we will have to put taxpayers' money in saving banks. That is a much bigger problem, so when talking about the Euro crisis is it not solved yet.

K: But do you think the Netherlands should pay for an incompetent and corrupt bank in Italy?

E: No.

K: But that will probably happen again.

E: But not if we solve this right now, before a new crisis, it would not be necessary to.

K: A quarter of Italian state debt in on the balance.

E: That is right, but before the Euro crisis, we did not have things figured out so well. And that is what made it worse. Then an emergency fund was established, which made it cost much more money in the end. Economically we let most of the work to the ECB, because politically we did not have the courage to take actions. The Euro, the internal market is what we have advantages of. There is lots of transportations from north to south and a lot of money is earned with this. This means we are in this economy together. And it is smarter to make sure those banks will pay more than leaving the Eurozone.

K: Let the banks pay for those amounts of money, Eppink?

Ep: The Netherlands in the Eurozone is forced to pay. Macron already made plans for huge funds for the Eurozone, to make common debts and things like that. The Netherlands will be an ATM together with Germany. And we will have to pay. Once you are in there you are stuck. And when including it in the constitution, it will be even worse: you will be chained to the Eurozone. And this is a dangerous situation and people should be warned for this.

E: Then you should not just abolish it.

K: But then you should not say: we are going to organize a referendum. Just say you want to leave.

Ep: That is not that easy, moreover there is no referendum anymore.

E: This is about what you want. What do you want?

Ep: I want, when it comes to that...

K: But Eppink, this view, it is wiggly, right? I hear your party leader Thierry Baudet speaking, which is ok, but either you leave or either you stay, but you say: maybe we leave when a referendum comes, while 70 percent of Dutch people will not vote in favour for.

Ep: You cannot know. Anything can still happen.

E: But how are you going to campaign? That is what it is about now.

Ep: you better just focus on your own campaign.

E: I will campaign against a Nexit.

Ep: When trouble comes with the Euro, people will see it is going to be very expensive, it's about hundreds of billions. Just as much as the expensive climate policy of him.

K: Then we will have a Greek crisis all over again. But it is a little bit too easy to say the banks will pay more and it is solved. The normal people will also have to pay.

E: But we are very honest in this. Indeed, we have to share more risks between the countries of the Eurozone.

Ep: there you go again. We have to pay for the less rich countries: it is a transfer union.

E: Now it is my time to tell my side of the story. When sharing the risks, the costs will be shared as well and therefore, the damage of a crisis will be much lower. It will just be expensive if everyone wants to solve this crisis by themselves.

K: When will the next crisis be there?

Ep: That is a matter of years, but it can happen very soon.

K: It is a matter of years, but it can happen very soon? The next financial crisis, when will it be?

E: It depends on the economic developments, but if we as a Europe are prepared in advance the costs will be less high. The costs will be higher if we continue with the current right-wing policies of austerities and not prepare together for a new crisis.

K: Gentlemen, I thank you.

Fragment 5

Unit 1: 21.13-23.44

M: On the eve of the European elections, there are many extremes in the debate: from a Nexit to a European super state. At least there is something to choose for coming Thursday. What are the biggest threats for Europe anno 2019? And what do the EU citizens want? With me are NRC columnist Caroline de Gruyter and professor of the Amsterdam university Claes de Vreese. Welcome. You are doing research on the public opinion. How content are the people of Europe about the EU?

V: They are very nuanced about Europe. If you ask them whether they think the union has a role in the peace and stability of the continent, they say yes. But when you ask about the current union and how it functions, then the trust is very low. In the Netherlands only 20 percent is satisfied with how the EU is now. There is an ambiguity: in the basis there is trust, but there is dissatisfaction about the current situation and how the union functions.

M: Miss de Gruyter, how do you explain this?

G: Someone once called it the BTP effect, Brexit, Trump, Putin effect. I think many EU citizens realize that they are happy about the fact they are in Europe. This does not mean they are happy with the EU. Those are two different things, and this explains the results of all those polls and researches. The world is turbulent these days and people are looking for protection. Many major powers are abounding Europe and they can easily use us. For the first time we are facing a real external threat, which should not be exaggerated of course. We need to have a reaction on this, and I think therefore people are very happy that they are living in Europe.

M: So that illustrates the dilemma we are in.

Unit 2: 23.45-27.21

If we look the consequences people connect to it. Nexit is named many times, also looking at the campaigns they talk about it all the time. What does the electorate think about this?

V: Well, it is strange that this topic is so popular, and it is not even what these coming elections are about. In ten countries we held polls and we found that 10 to 15 percent would be in favour of leaving the European Union. And in the Netherlands, it is 21 percent of the people that are in favour of an Nexit. This is something, but we should not pretend this is the biggest issue.

M: Well, even though all the chaos of Brexit apparently people still want it. So then 21 percent is might be more significant.

V: That is correct, one out of five is not nothing. But in a political debate there should be a balance. It also means 80 percent does not want to leave. But most important is that the European elections are not about this issue. It is ok to discuss about the future, but at the same time it is a matter of proportionality. There is so much attention for this issue, also by Dutch politicians and this is not fair to the voters.

M: Do you look at it the same way?

G: Yes, I totally agree with this. If we are not careful; a non-theme will become a theme. Research shows people are increasingly satisfied about Europe. Not about the way it functions, we are also not satisfied with the way our national government functions. Trust in national governments is often even lower than in the European union. To keep on exploiting an issue where most people believe, is pointless.

M: Do you think the populists get too much attention?

G: Yes, I think they get too much attention. Right now, we see a polarization in politics, where those who scream loud, with extreme issues, and sometimes revolutionaries are taking the stage. They take up a non-proportional space in the public debate.

V: In the Netherlands we see something strange. We asked many questions how people look at Europe and most answers were very nuanced. 80 percent of the people has mixed opinions and at some areas they think Europe is doing well and at some areas less. This group of 80 percent is served very poor. There has been left much space on the flanks where many of those politicians often with simple messages take part in these kinds of discussions, but actually this is not fair to the biggest group of the electorate. Most of them are somewhere in the middle and quite nuanced about Europe. So, it is not about yes or no.

Unit 3: 27.22-29.14

M: Extreme right-wing parties want to form a block in the parliament and yesterday they came together as well. In Europe we have seen a development of these kind of movements, including Le Pen, Farage, Orbán, Salvini, and FVD here in the Netherlands. We cannot deny this important tendency which needs attention.

G: That is correct. Most of these parties pose the right questions, but they give the wrong answers, in my opinion. Many of them were always in favour of leaving, but since Brexit and Putin they have become more cautious. Take Salvini for example, he is a child of the Erasmus generation and clearly is engaged in European politics. You could say what they do is dangerous for the rule of law and democracy, look at what happened in Austria yesterday, but now at the same time they say they do not want to leave. And they engage in European politics again. Now there is space for a debate, a space that we never had before which I believe is a good thing. Some people fear it, but for the first time we have political drama, a real debate on the European level. There are so many things going on in Europe, where people have an opinion about and where they should be informed better about. This debate can help with this.

Unit 4: 29.15-30.42

M: Is there a good idea/understanding of what the electorate wants for Europe?

V: The interesting thing is that the ideas are varied. This has also to do with the dissatisfaction there is about how the union functions, but about which direction to go instead people cannot agree. This is the reason why there are European elections, and I think this should get more attention. What are the different areas, what are the choices between political parties? And here we must make the conclusion, that during the last few elections, and possible also with the current one, too much podium space is given to the flank parties, while the electorate mainly lies in the middle.

M: Is it not the problem that most middle parties lack their own stories/identity? Is this not the real crux?

V: Looking at the long term in the Netherlands, where there used to be a lot of consensus about Europe, but at some point, more commotion came around the topic. At that point the central parties maybe gave too much space to the extreme parties, because their people were already divided about Europe. Probably because of that, the middle parties failed to have their own direction and story about this issue. While they should not be afraid to do so, because also in times of polarization, they know most of the electorate lays in the middle.

Unit 5: 30.43-33.09

M: What do you think of the attitude of politicians toward Europe? Before you said they should take a clearer stance in this issue.

G: We are all Europe. I know this may sound cliché, but the decisions are made in the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, which consists of our ministers. The power of the parliament is growing. Many issues are to be solved on the European level, so many things are happening in Brussels now. Europe is about compromises and our ministers go to Brussels to negotiate and take decisions, but when they come back, they blame the unelected bureaucrats in Brussels for taking all these decisions for us. They do not take their responsibility. In my opinion this is the biggest problem of Europe. There are many other things that go wrong, but these are not different then in our national and municipal governments. And here we never say let's break down the Netherlands. And the politicians let this happen too much. I have one nice example here about the Bank Union. We were very much against at the beginning, but eventually it was the only way to solve the Euro crisis. Two years later, a Eurobarometer showed the Bank Union is the most popular in our country.

So how has this happened, I thought. Our minister Dijsselbloem afterwards went to speak in places like libraries and talk show to tell this union is very good for the Netherlands. People knew about this, so a substantive debate was possible, and then people realized that it does make sense.

Unit 6: 33.10-36.23

M: Now I do want to ask minister Buma, sitting in the public, what do you think about the attitude of politicians when it comes to telling the European story?

B: Till coming Tuesday I think this is good. *Laughter* No I have some comments on what you just discussed. You talk about the problem there is so much attention for populism, but now you do the same: talking about populism and the other parties' opinions about this. That is exactly the type of debate of which you say it should not be held. I think we should not talk about the question yes or no, but it is what happens and what changes can be made for you as a citizen. And then I understand that people are worried about the future. Europe is important in this, but not on all areas. The discussion about Europe is interesting because it is about big and complicated things. For example, immigration, all those parties you just spoke about, do not want it on a European level. I do want that, just like climate change is a European issue, safety, China. So totally different things then when Europe started, economy. And if we acknowledge these issues, then we push the direction of the debate towards the question what is important for us what Europe should do. Populists are nothing new. There is the main question, what to do with Europe. This is what I want to answer.

G: That seems as an excellent idea. I believe you should start with that before Tuesday already.

V: Yes, and maybe involve some MEP's in that too.

M: Because that is lacking too much now.

V: Yes. In our research conducted in several countries, we see a tendency of national politicians to appear in the European debate just before the elections. Here it is the question who benefits from it. They are not electable for the European elections. It is important to realize what type of debate we want and who deserves space to talk in it. And I think the electorate would like to see sometimes a politician who is electable.

G: It is interesting that the European Parliament has become more powerful over the last years, and especially about these overarching issue Buma just spoke about, the MEP's are

informed about these developments. So, if you really want something you should be in the European Parliament and not politicians in our House of Representatives. MEP's input really matters. People are constantly speaking about a democratic deficit and we are losing power to the European Union, but as a citizen nowadays this is compensated in Brussels. It is important that national politicians start telling actual things are happening in Brussels.

M: Thank you to both of you for this conversation.

Fragment 6

Unit 1: 01.00-05.57

L: The European elections, opinion-makers were wrong again. PVDA (labour party), the party of Frans Timmermans, became the biggest. The SP and PVV, the most Eurosceptic parties will probably disappear from the parliament. How did this happen? We talk about this with SP MEP Ronald van Raak, MEP for PVV Olaf Stuger and political sociologist at the Amsterdam University Matthijs Rooduijn. Welcome to all of you. Mr van Raak, all four recent elections your party lost and every year this loss became bigger. What is going wrong?

Ra: Well, with these elections, we see Euro enthusiast parties won and Eurosceptic ones lost. Now we could say the Netherlands has become a huge enthusiast about Europe, I do not think so. We could also say that Euro critic parties it all messed up, also not very likely to me. To my opinion, something else is wrong. People that were critical became cynical about the EU and they did not come to vote.

L: We will talk about this, the specialist is with us, but first about your own party. After the huge losses after the provincial elections, your party leader said a totally different campaign will be held. We saw this: your party came with a movie where is made fun of Frans Timmermans in a satirical way. From all sides this was criticized. But as a reaction on that, you wrote the following: "The movie is a parody on the European elites, where Frans Timmermans is our representative. I do not want to fight any longer against this clique. I just want to abolish them. Down with the EU commission, down with Frans Timmermans." The result: Frans Timmermans gloriously won and the only one who leaves Brussels will probably be your own party.

Ra: Well, that is not even sure right now.

L: You are still doubting this?

Ra: Some exit polls say this, the others say that. But it will be exciting though. Frans Timmermans does have an incredibly good result. I saw many of these voters came from GL, D66 and CDA, less people from SP. They did very well, and we did less. Then it is important to think about reasons for this. And I think our campaigning did not have any effect on the results, because we, just like all other Eurosceptic parties, were not able to mobilize people to go vote. In comparison to the provincial elections, where there was also a low turnout, we see again half less of our people went to vote.

L: But since 1998 the turnout has not been this high as this year. In 30 years not that many people as now came to vote, only not your people. Is it not the problem that you are not able anymore to mobilize your constituency? Which is the essence of politics.

Ra: 40 percent of the people came to vote. Here we see that all the Euro critical parties, which are all very different from each other, were not able to mobilize their voters.

L: Can you limit it to your party?

Ra: A division in the electorate has developed. Euro enthusiast people are also enthusiastic about these elections. People that are angry about Europe do not see the sense of voting. This is a problem of the SP and other Euro critic parties. But I also see this as a problem of European politics and democracy. So many people do not want to involve and engage anymore.

L: I understand you want to talk about the broader picture, as it gives a sense of community. But especially your party used to be able to give an image to the protest vote. Apparently, they are also disappointed in you.

Ra: That is correct. We will make this analysis with our members. We will look at the official results tonight. But by not making this movie the turn out would not have been bigger. I think there is a structural problem with the European Democracy.

Unit 2: 05.58-08.31

L: Mr. Rooduijn, where did it go wrong with the SP?

Ro: A part of this analysis is correct. The low turnout has been a big problem.

L: But the turnout at the European elections has not been this high since years.

Ro: That is right, but for every election where there is a low turnout, it is even lower with Euro critic parties. These parties are hindered by this. Still many people did not go to vote,

only 40 percent came. I think in the case of SP this is one of the important reasons, but we should look at it from a bigger point of view. A big problem for the SP is that the themes that are on central in the public debate now are not of the interest of their voters. It is mostly cultural themes: identity, diversity.

L: We will look at that later, I want to go back to the SP once more. What went wrong especially with them?

Ro: Well, this. They were not able to promote their themes. SP wants to talk about inequality, social-economical redistribution, health care. This is difficult when the debate mostly is about identity. This is a core problem of the party. Besides I think their campaign has been too harsh. With the 'Hans Brusselmans' movie, they set a Eurosceptic and anti-establishment tone to the campaign. But this is not fitting them. They do not want to leave but are very critical on the EU institutions. The anti-establishment is in their DNA as well. In the 90s the party was rather populist, as the slogan at that time was: "Against. Vote SP," this is what made them great. Their symbol used to be a tomato, to throw at the elite. But over the years this has weakened: watered down, the tomato has become an abstract one and the slogan changed to: "Vote for. Vote SP". They let go of the anti-establishment rhetoric, but with this movie they caught up again on this. In general, this is not a bad thing. But the problem is it was a hard attack on another politician, who many leftish voters also accept.

Unit 3: 08.32-12.47

L: Anti-establishment, hard personal attacks, this easily leads us to the PVV. Mister Stuger, also your party lost the last three elections and now it is likely your party will disappear from the European Parliament. What is wrong with Geert Wilders?

S: Not much is wrong with him, in fact he is the man of the comeback.

L: This requires clarification.

S: Well, in politics it is about moments and it is not possible to always perform well. In some moments, you are a victim of dynamics. Due to the rise of FVD it has been a very difficult period for PVV. It is very difficult to explain to our voters we want to exit the EU, but that it is important they go vote for the European elections. And then there is Brexit. People see all the fuss after it. I always compare it to a divorce. When this is happening, people are afraid of doing the same, but after a divorce, people never say they regret it.

L: Well, the metaphor I leave to you. Geert Wilders is the comeback kid, but we could also say he is desperately out of shape. Thierry Baudet, your opponent talks about climate where you never even identified it. Is this not the problem?

S: Baudet did a really good job. But because his party does not have any political history it is easy to get followers. Because of this they are more free to do what they want, what they did very well. PVV stays with their own strong point. The biggest problem we face in the Netherlands is migration and dominant other cultures that oppress our own. I think it is good that we stuck to this. Sometimes you just fall victim to the dynamics of a new party that is even challenged by Rutte with even a one-to-one debate on television, which pushed many voters in those directions. And also, a PVDA commissioner that opts for the highest job in the EU has this effect.

L: There should not be a fundamental change in the party? You say it will all solve itself?

S: Two years ago, the PVDA complained they lost 80 percent of its electorate, something has to change. Well, nothing changed and look at the situation now.

L: According to you the electorate is that much volatile that every time it can be different.

S: Yes. At the SP they totally changed course and that did not give the intended results.

L: This with the side note that a change of leadership is not that easy. Mister Rooduijn, is this analysis correct?

Unit 4: 12.48-14.37

Ro: Partly yes. The rise of FVD affected the situation for PVV in a negative way. They did very well and got a lot of media attention. I think this is one of the important reasons why they are doing so well. Partly this is thanks to Baudet himself. But what we see all over Europe with this this type of parties (LPF, UKIP) they get a lot of media attentions and then they will get more votes. There is a very clear relation between these two things. But I think you should look at the party itself too. What we see in countries around us, parties with who you are together in the EU Parliament (Front National, Lega), they were very much renewed in the last years. Marine Le Pen moved away from the history of the father and gave the party a new imago. The same goes for the Italian Lega. These changed made gave them success again. The PVV on the other hand did not really renew their party. In some areas they have become a bit more radical, but no fundamental reforms. I think this is a problem for the party and the

reason why a new radical right party had the chance to position themselves in the political domain.

Unit 5: 14.38-17.19

L: Now I want to talk about this undertow both are referring to. Compared to the provincial elections only two months ago, so many people do not go vote. With the PVV 60 percent of the people that did go then stayed at home now. With the SP it is just a bit lower, 50 percent. What does this tell us?

Ro: From research we know that lower educated people, more often are less satisfied with politics and tend to show up less with elections. Then, secondly, we know that these people tend to vote more often for so called protest parties like SP and PVV. That means that with elections with traditionally low turnouts like the European elections, where it is always around 40 percent, these kinds of parties will suffer. And now we also saw this is true. The people that did not vote said they do not have trust in politics. Very often these are lower educated people.

L: Does this make it university elections?

Ra: Unfortunately, in this case yes. Looking at national elections, we are quite able to mobilize our voters, with provincial elections this is more difficult already, and with European elections it is even more difficult for Euro critical parties to do so. We are still awaiting the final results, but it seems the division of the electorate continues. EU enthusiasts that stand up and people who are angry became so cynical they do not want to vote anymore; this also will be a problem for European democracy.

L: How does this diversion manifest? Do these people speak up somewhere else? What are you afraid of?

Ra: This year we celebrate 100 years of universal suffrage and at the same time the cynicism is this big and so many people do not go to vote, then that is a crisis in our democracy. We as the SP should look at what we can do better, but it can also be an indication for further degradation of our democracy as there is a more fundamental problem.

Unit 6: 17.20-19.26

L: is it right that this problem is much bigger than some Euro critic parties?

S: For me this is an indication of the problem that people struggle to identify with the European Union in general. What is the EU doing? Timmermans is been busy with the theme

around plastic, but besides that there are no themes that are important on the European level. A few years ago, of course we had the migration crisis and after that this hideous Turkey Deal. Further than that it is very difficult for Dutch people to understand what the EU does for them.

L: Both of you like to point at Frans Timmermans and all the things he is doing wrong, but at the same time he is the big winner. Your party gets a lot of criticism on the leaders of the party, Ron Meijer and Lilian Marijnissen, who lost four times in a row now. Are both still in function this Christmas?

Ra: Yes of course.

L: Well, it is not that obvious.

Ra: As usual there is a lot of discussion within the party, but in all our party I did not meet a single person who is in favour of the neo-liberal Europe of Frans Timmermans. And this contrast is even more growing. He worked on the European constitution, to which we said 'no' and as State Secretary he pushed it through anyways and he implemented this as Commissioner. The nice effect of a movie like we made is the possibility to show how the real relations are. Next, there is the problem of cynic people who are not going to vote anymore. This is a serious problem for the SP, which needs serious solutions. I also want to warn it is deeper problem for of the European democracy. It should be a concern to all of us.

L: I thank you for being here.

Appendix 4. Student Ethics Form

European Studies Student Ethics Form**Your name:** Noortje Berendsen**Supervisor:** Mr. Nixon**Instructions/checklist**

Before completing this form you should read the APA Ethics Code

(<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>). If you are planning research with human subjects you should also look at the sample consent form available in the Final Project and Dissertation Guide.

- a. ☐ Read section 2 that your Supervisor will have to sign. Make sure that you cover all these issues in section 1.
- b. ☐ Complete sections 1 and, if you are using human subjects, section 2, of this form, and sign it.
- c. ☐ Ask your project Supervisor to read these sections (and the draft consent form if you have one) and sign the form.
- d. ☐ Always append this signed form as an appendix to your dissertation. This is a knock-out criterion; if not included the Final Project/Dissertation is awarded an NVD.

Section 1. Project Outline (to be completed by student)

- (i) **Title of Project:** European Elections in Dutch Talk Shows: A Content Analysis to the Coverage of the 2019 European Elections in 'Pauw' and 'Buitenhof'
- (ii) **Aims of project:** This dissertation aims to research the interrelationship between the actors in the field of political communication. More specifically, it analyses how the Dutch television talk shows 'Pauw' and 'Buitenhof' present the political event of the 2019 European elections. The purpose is to make sense of how the theories of political communication affect the Dutch television genre of infotainment talk shows.
- (iii) **Will you involve other people in your project – e.g. via formal or informal interviews, group discussions, questionnaires, internet surveys etc. (Note: if you are using data that has already been collected by another researcher – e.g. recordings or transcripts of conversations given to you by your Supervisor, you should answer 'NO' to this question.)**

NO

If no: you should now sign the statement below and return the form to your Supervisor. You have completed this form.

This project is not designed to include research with human subjects. I understand that I do not have ethical clearance to interview people (formally or informally) about the topic of my research, to carry out internet research (e.g. on chat rooms or discussion boards) or in any other way to use people as subjects in my research.

Student's signature _____ - date 6 January 2020

