Discursive crises in the political domain

Research into the applicability of theories of discourse analysis on the Dutch political debate on immigration

Master Thesis

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Enjoy reading,

Just Bär
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List of abbreviations

CDA: Christen Democratisch Appèl
CU: Christen Unie
D66: Democraten 66
GL: Groen Links
HoC: House of Commons
LPF: Lijst Pim Fortuyn
LURA: Lessen uit recente arbeidsmigratie
MEE: Middle and Eastern European
MP: Member of Parliament
PM: Prime Minister
PvdA: Partij van de Arbeid
PvdD: Partij voor de Dieren
PVV: Partij voor de Vrijheid
SGP: Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij
SP: Socialistische Partij
VVD: Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie
1. Introduction

1.1 Background
For the past decades, immigration and integration have been topics of heated debates within the Dutch political arena. Being an open society, the Netherlands is subject of an on-going influx of people. Many immigrants arrive with expectations of building a life within Dutch society – this demands from the political domain that it continuously assesses the framework of immigration and integration. In the last decade, a line of thought that is more restrictive of immigration has become prevalent in the political and public debate.

There are political actors that warn for the dangers of allowing certain immigrants into the Netherlands – they speak of the phenomena of immigration and integration as crises. Especially Muslim immigrants are considered to be a threat and some political actors have fuelled distrust towards them. Statements of this sort have become commonplace in the political and public debate.

Concomitantly, a voice that opposes these statements has arisen; politicians that use it emphasize the negative effects of a distrusting attitude. These different types of discourses compete within the political domain to effectuate policy changes that are in line with either line of thought.

1.2 Theoretical discussion
The perception of the role of language in social life has gradually changed in the academic world. ‘In the positivist tradition in the social sciences, language was seen as a means, as a neutral system of signs that described the world. With the coming of the post-positivist social sciences, however, language lost this neutral status and itself became problematized.’ (Hajer 1989; 44) After this linguistic turn, language is recognized as a medium; actors do not
only describe the world but *create* the world through language. This research builds on the works of that school of thought.

The academic field of work that has brought forth a massive amount of articles on the field of language studies is that of discourse analysis. In this field of research, language provides insufficient informative power. For a complete understanding of the function of language, it must be placed within its context structure to carry explanatory weight. That language matters has become a common assumption, upon which much research has been conducted.

Differences occur in the ways that meaning is attached to language and speech acts – many interpretations exist within the academic field of discourse analysis in this regard. The origin of this research stems from the perceived discrepancies between theories on the matters of immigration and integration within the political domain. A few of these theoretical differences are looked into and are further explored.

The issues that politicians want to put on the agenda are often communicated as being urgent problems; crises that call for thorough action. Such a crisis is constructed through a discursive practice – speech acts serve to show the urgency of an issue in order to mobilize a public. Paul ‘t Hart (1993) states that ‘language is the most important instrument of crisis management’ and that “[those] who are able to define what the crisis is all about also hold the key to defining the appropriate strategies for resolution”. (‘t Hart 1993:91) This would suggest that the politician that raises an issue might also be the one whose policy plans are adopted, indeed, he defined what the crisis was about. But “[c]rises are the domain of multiple realities and conflicting cognitions”, (‘t Hart 1993:99) and those who raise an issue do not automatically receive support for their cause.
Maarten Hajer has written on the topic of authority in crisis situations. Specifically, he has researched the reactions of figures of authority in the wake of the murder of Pim Fortuyn and of Theo van Gogh (Hajer & Uitermark 2007; Hajer & Versteeg 2009). Within politics, actors compete with the use of different discourses in order to influence policy on diverse topics. The tensions between the lines of thought make the debates into a dynamic field. Hajer and Uitermark (2007) speak of a ‘discursive struggle’ in which political actors engage to “actively influence the meaning of [an] event” (2007;13-14). Concretely, this influence can translate to desirable policy changes for the political actor that succeeds.

Hajer and Uitermark (2007) note how people look to authority for clarification and interpretation of events in times of crisis. Figures of authorities in their turn ‘are engaged in a power struggle to impose their view of reality onto others’ (Hajer and Uitermark, 2007). They state that in times of crisis, authorities must form alliances and communicate a coherent and unified account of the events to effectively terminate a crisis. By doing so, they consolidate their power, legitimate their authority and gain trust of constituents by showing they are capable of handling a crisis.

According to Colin Hay (1996), political actors can ‘construct a crisis’ in order to gain support to instigate changes in the political structure. Because the construction of crisis is a discursive practice, the method of inquiry hereinto is discourse analysis. If the theory of Hay is plausible, this research should yield results in which we encounter political actors constructing a crisis through discursive practice and consequently receiving support for their cause. Crisis is more than a condition of rupture and breakdown; it is a process of transformation. The construction of a crisis is a mechanism that aims to create momentum for (political) change. “The narrative of crisis constitutes an object as in need of decisive intervention, and a project through which that decisive intervention can be made.” (Hay
In texts and speech acts, subject positions are structured within the narrative to recruit the readers and addressees. ‘Media texts invite us as readers, active decoders and potential ‘interpellates’ to identify with a particular ‘preferred’ subject position. It is in this moment of identification that we recognise our ‘hailing’.’ (Hay 1996; 262). In the political domain, this process of convincing is always present in speech acts, differing in style and subtleness, in Hay’s view.

Van Dijk (2006) states that ‘there is a close relationship between discourse, ideology and politics, in the sense that politics is usually discursive as well as ideological, and ideologies are largely reproduced by text and talk’ (2006; 739).
He defines ideologies ‘as the basis of social representation of groups, which are any kind of socially shared mental representation’ (Van Dijk 2002). Parliamentary debates are especially interesting according to Van Dijk, as they ‘are the site where the various ideological forces in society (...) are confronting each other in the public sphere’ (Ibid.). In this research, excerpts of debates will be analysed on the presence of ideological context – “in its most straightforward guise [ideological analysis] involves detecting in text and talk the expression of (...) ideologically based opinions” (Ibid.). This research assesses whether political discourse indeed is eminently ideological discourse, in accordance with the teachings of Van Dijk.

Maarten Hajer (1989, 1993) employed the concept of discourse coalition in his articles on changing political discourse. The most basic definition is ‘a group of actors who share a social construct’ (Hajer 1993; 45). In this research, the concept is used to identify the instances where political actors affiliated with different parties employ similar repertoires. From an ideology-theoretical perspective, a discourse coalition may occur in the area in which differing discursive repertoires have ideological interfaces. ‘A new
discourse coalition is likely to be organised around a new uniting principal that appeals to different groups’ (Hajer 1989; 258). Political actors adopting the same argument indicates at consensus or agreement – or at the shared renunciation of a political opponent’s discourse. If the concept of discourse coalition is valid, this research would yield research in which we see different political actors adhering to the same discourse.

**1.3 Problem definition**

As a nation the Netherlands depends on its relations with other countries to assure both domestic and foreign socio-economic development. Healthy international relations are paramount to the nation’s stability and growth, but stable relations are not a given. The dynamics of international relations make them vulnerable to disturbances. This research focuses on a particular type of potential disturbance: elements of xenophobia in domestic political debates on immigration.

Xenophobia has been the topic of earlier academic research, and all authors concur that the phenomenon is negative for harmony and cohesion within communities (see for example Cisneros 2008; Dommering 2009; Flores 2003; Flückiger 2006;). Adopting this point of view, this research builds upon the presumption that the occurrence of xenophobia within political debates is negative on both a domestic level – as a high level of polarization can be divisive for a stable society –, and on an international level – as the political debate reflects the institutional power to cope with destabilization. A country that has highly polarized debates in the political domain would probably be a less trustworthy partner on an international level.

Polarization creates a state of conflict between groups in society. According to Carsten de Dreu (2009), conflicts can contribute to ‘learning capability, creativity, innovation, and the quality of
decision making’, provided that the conflict is ‘aimed at content, is medium intense, and the group climate is characterised by mutual trust, participation and cooperation’ (2009;132). Polarization annihilates these provisions and can aggravate tensions. With regard to the political debate, polarization can lead to tensions between political parties, and, extended to society, between groups in society. What type of discourse political actors employ is decisive for the characteristics of a debate.

Dommering (2009) elaborates upon the characteristics of the debate on migration and the responsibilities of the participants. He states that ‘the debate on migration is being polluted’ and proposes that the government might attempt ‘to create a “green book” with proper definitions for common terms [within the migration debate], as terminological pollution is an origin of prejudice and hostility’ (Dommering 2009; 209). This could be part of ‘a broader policy to educate all Dutch people (not just migrants) in proper democratic citizenship’ (ibid.). Schinkel (2008; 119) remarks that ‘content-related criticism on extremism is weak or lacking, in the Netherlands’ (Schinkel 2008; 119 in Dommering 2009), referring to the course of the Fitna-affair. He concludes that ‘the government was mostly concerned with damage control on the international stage’; after the movie release, substantive discussion was held (ibid.).

The case studies of this research can be located to the field of interplay between the political debates on immigration, ideological content of political discourse, elements of xenophobia and the response to discursive crises. This research looks into the occurrence of discursive crises within the political debate; and assesses whether, and if so, how political actors have responded to these crises. A particular type of xenophobia – Islamophobia – has become common to the Dutch political debate on immigration. Studies on integration have shed a light on the issues surrounding

Because of the potential consequences of discursive crises in political debates, research into the response to crises is necessary. Increased knowledge on the dynamics of discursive crises might be of use for political actors that encounter them in political debates. The display of xenophobia within the political debate may ultimately lead to discrimination of groups of people and nationalism, which are indicators of future conflict. The countries of former Yugoslavia and Rwanda both are examples of the horrendous consequences of nationalism and discrimination turning violent. To increase our knowledge and better our understanding of the complexity of politics and crises is to work on preventing escalation and safeguard stability within society. Research on potential spoiling mechanisms such as political crises is beneficial both to scientific knowledge on political discourse, and societal solidarity.

1.4 Aim of research and hypotheses
The aim of this research is to examine how disturbances in the international relations – discursive crises in the public debate – have been responded to. Three hypotheses are being tested to assess which theories hold in the political discursive domain. They are 1) Hay’s theory on the discursive construction of crisis; 2) the theory of Van Dijk on ideology in discourse; and 3) Hajer’s concept of
discourse coalition; of an orchestrated discursive practice that voices a unified response. This research applies these theories and assesses whether they hold in full or partially.

Main question
(1) How did Dutch political actors respond to discursive crises in the Dutch political debate on immigration, in three case studies?

Hypotheses:
(2) Politicians discursively construct a crisis to gain support for their political agenda.
(3) Ideology is the driving force behind political discourse on immigration.
(4) Politicians form alliances that fit the notion of Hajeer’s discourse coalition to advance their interest in the immigration debate.

1.5 Operationalization
To formulate an answer to these questions, an analytic framework serves to identify certain indicators in text and speech acts. The unit of analysis is written and spoken language within the political institutional setting of the political debate. As a further demarcation, three case studies in recent political history have been selected on the basis of their perceived relation with xenophobia. They shall be looked into in chronological order, so that a development over time might become apparent.

The variables that show a correlation between speech acts and xenophobia, are to be found within the language that political actors
employ in their address and response to fellow political actors within the Dutch political institutional setting of the House of Commons. This research looks into the use of discursive repertoire, or interpretative repertoires. The choice of certain words, rhetorical tools, display of knowledge, use of statistics and sentiments are the main variables to analyse in order to identify what repertoire a political actor is employing. The key variable in the analysis of discursive repertoires is polarization – to assess to what extent a political actor employs polarizing language is to learn whether his repertoire has xenophobic elements.

The datasets contain every relevant political debate within the institutional setting of the House of Commons, of the three political episodes up till the point in time where are no longer mentioned. This would suggest that a topic has seized to be an issue for the majority of political actors. The method of research is the study of academic literature and secondary sources. Secondary sources are the official transcripts of parliamentary debates held in the Dutch House of Commons. For some of these documents, there is data available in the form of video recordings of the live debates. Additional documents that were referred to in the parliamentary documents are considered to be primary sources as well.

Transcripts of parliamentary debates are to be found online on the official government websites. These transcripts were then bundled, categorized and ordered in chronological order. The computer program MAXQDA for qualitative research is an aid for labelling variables within datasets – it served to identify and categorize the variables, according to the constant comparative method (grounded theory). This method made apparent which political actors use the same discursive repertoires in which debates. Discourse analysis is employed after the identification of different repertoires, in order to assess their ideological elements, activities in language such as
constructing a crisis, or the appearance of a discourse coalition. These analyses lay the foundation for answering the hypotheses.

This research is driven by a postmodernist and poststructuralist approach. This school of thought rests upon the presumption that there is no one truth other than interpretation. The object of study – discourse -, and the method of research – discourse analysis – entirely depend on interpretation by the researcher. The result of the research is the researcher’s reading of how different discourses relate to each other. The poststructuralist aspect of this research is the fact that it relies on the deconstruction of language to yield results. In this research, the focus lies on different discourses that relate to immigration.

1.6 Relevance
As mentioned earlier, what is discussed in a political debate has great influence on society. Not only does it have a steering effect on public opinion, but also policies that come into being may directly affect the populace of a country. As the Netherlands has a parliamentary democracy, the political domain is to a great extent a reflection of society – political actors represent people in society. Thus, what is being said in the political domain is a measuring mechanism for public opinion. The development of a debate in the House of Commons may be regarded as a reflection of a discussion in the public sphere. An interesting feature of the political debate, and subject of this research, is the way that political actors react to discursive crises.

Further analysis of these debates may provide valuable information on how discursive crises are handled within the political domain. Much has been written on how a crisis comes into being through
discursive practice, but little research has been done into how such crises are subsequently approached. There appears to be a theoretical gap in analysis of political discourse. The three hypotheses all address different segments of political discourse; they address rhetorical techniques and the dynamics of gaining support. But as the three all appear to have some explanatory power, a combined theory might more appropriately cover a broader scope of analysis. Perhaps such an amalgamation might prove to be an adequate modus operandi for analysis of political discourse.

This research adds to previous studies on political discourse in relation to the debate on immigration and integration. As the Netherlands as a nation greatly depends on international partnerships for socio-economic stability and growth, a strict exclusionary stance on immigration might interfere with that – as the case study of the MEE-landers platform in particular has shown. As will be discussed in chapter 3, the Netherlands has many examples in recent political history that show the problems of politics of immigration and integration. In general, the Netherlands is very stable and economically strong. Since the last decade, failing immigration and integration have been mentioned as impediments to the nation’s strength. The political language that is associated with that stance is the topic of research in this thesis. This research aims to provide more insight into the consequences of discourse employment in the political domain and the developments in that field.

1.7 Structure
The thesis consists of nine chapters, including this introduction. Chapter 2 discusses the academic literature that has been brought forth by previous studies on this subject. Theoretical articles that explain concepts that this research works with are included, as well
as the theories that will be used for the analysis of the case studies. The second chapter provides the theoretical framework of this research. Chapter 3 then comprises of the methodological part of this thesis – it contains information on how the research has been conducted, what methods have been used and how data was collected. The following chapters are the case studies that this research looked into. Chapter 4 discusses the headscarf tax and chapter 5 is the case study of the Norway attacks discussion. The 6th chapter is the case study of the MEE-landers platform and in chapter 7 the three cases are compared with each other. In this chapter, I look into the inclusionary or exclusionary character of each discourse that has been identified in chapters 4, 5 and 6. Chapter 8 is the conclusion in which the main question and hypotheses will be addressed.
2. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, the concepts are explained that are relevant for this research. Discourse analysis of speech acts in a political setting requires a close inspection of what is being analysed, and what has to be looked for. The hypotheses are formulated in such a way that they assess the validity and applicability of the theories of Hay, Van Dijk and Hajer. First we look into the definition of discourse. We then move on to discuss the theories that underlie the hypotheses. Hay presumes that political actors construct a crisis to gain support for their cause; Van Dijk states that political discourse is inherently ideological; and Hajer claims that political actors may form discourse coalitions in order to advance their interests. Later, we review why language is relevant unit of analysis, and additional theories are mentioned that invigorate the theoretical foundation.

2.1 Discourse

Discourse analysis is backed up by a vast amount of data from previous studies. Many of these theories employ different terms but in fact are overlapping in their meaning and concepts. For instance, the nouns ‘(political) discourse’; ‘discursive repertoire’ and ‘interpretative repertoire’ are to a large extent interchangeable. This research employs the broad definition of discourse as formulated by Van Dijk.

“[Discourse] is a multidimensional social phenomenon. It is at the same tune a linguistic (...) object (...), an action (...), a form of social interaction (...), a social practice (...), a mental representation (...), an interactional of communicative event or activity (...), a cultural product (...) or even an economic commodity that is being sold and bought (...).”

(Van Dijk, 2002:67)
Van Dijk emphasizes the difficulty of formulating an all-encompassing definition of discourse. Discourse analysis lacks in scientific strength in that its dependence on the researcher's interpretation makes it subjective and biased. Yet discursive practice in essence is a subjective production in which an actor attaches meaning to an event. Discourse analysis will serve to analyse the content of the different speech acts and texts. The method of discourse analysis makes some presumptions with regard to identity, mind and reality.

"Identity/personality – There is an actor who has a range of defining features: a personality, a self or identity, and possibly a range of commonly available roles.

Mind – Within the actor are a variety of entities that are basic to the explanation of behaviour: attitudes, attributional schemata, category systems, memories, social representations and so on. (…)

Reality – The actor is construed as acting in some environment, the world, the situation, or context. This may consist of other people, social settings, or various physical objects and events."

(Potter, Edwards and Wetherell 1993)

This research examines the employment of interpretative repertoires by politicians. This term, which has been coined by Potter and Wetherell (1987), encompasses the 'relatively internally consistent, bounded language units' within a range of accounts of the same phenomenon (McKenzie, 2003; 2). Within the plural, versatile field of politics, multiple actors will develop different views of the same events and consequently will speak in a different manner about them; these are differing interpretative repertoires. This research makes an assessment of the Dutch political climate within a fixed period of time, by identifying and analysing the content of interpretative repertoires. To do so, it draws from previous studies in the fields of political and social sciences, crisis management, psychology and sociolinguistics.
The linguistic content of a repertoire consists of the issues that are addressed, the arguments that are propagated and the remarks that are made in relation to the subject. Hajer and Versteeg (2009) have argued that “[what] politicians say about a crisis (...) have a disproportionate effect on the public’s perception of that crisis”; thus “words are crucial” (Hajer & Versteeg 2009:2). However, not only what is said matters, who said it is equally as important. Authority plays a crucial role within the field of politics. Critical language study ‘analyses social interactions in a way which focuses upon their linguistic elements, and which sets out to show up their generally hidden determinants in the system of social relationships, as well as hidden effects they may have upon that system’ (Fairclough, 1989; 5). In this research, the analysis must provide insight into the different ideological backgrounds of particular repertoires.

Van Dijk notes that it is impossible to precisely define the domain of politics, as it has fuzzy boundaries: “The first observation that needs to be made about political discourse is that it is not a genre, but a class of genres defined by a social domain, namely that of politics. (...) [I] shall for simplicity’s sake assume that political discourse is the discourse of politicians. (...) Having thus limited the range of political discourse to the ’professional’ realm of the activities of politicians, the next observation is that such discourse is by the same token a form of institutional discourse. That is, only those discourses of politicians are considered that are produced in institutional settings, such as governments, parliaments or political parties. (...) [The] discourse must be produced by the speaker in her professional role of a politician and in an institutional setting.”

(Van Dijk, 2002; 19)

This definition of political discourse in my view is consistent with
the data demarcation to be bounded to the political debates in their institutional setting, thus excluding speech acts from other fora. Having elaborated upon the definition of discourse, we can now look into the different theories that stem from the analysis of discourse.

2.2 Discursive construction of crisis

A key concept of this research is ‘discursive crisis’. This term refers to “the discursive construction of a crisis” which “can (...) be seen as a process involving the mapping together of a great variety of disparate events unified through the identification of some common essence” (Hay, 1996:266). In his papers on political discourse Colin Hay argues that political actors may use discursive and textual strategies to construct a crisis. Any given event may be spun and twisted to provide it with a sense of urgency. A discursive crisis consists of getting the attention of a public, alerting them and mobilizing them to respond. The preferred response will be to support the actor that reported the crisis; to choose that figure to act on their behalf to solve the crisis.

There is a mechanism to the discursive construction of a crisis, according to Hay (1996:267). History is non-linear and multiple events take place simultaneously. It is common for the human mind to subconsciously fit events into frames. Such framing works as a reference point for later remembrance, and reduces the complexity of everyday life. Discursive construction of a crisis uses a similar framing mechanism to activate a particular cognitive frame in relation to certain events. “The specificity and complexity of each event is (...) denied, as an abstracted and simplified meta-narrative capable of accounting for every ‘symptom’, and capable of unambiguously attributing responsibility, is offered in its place” (Hay, 1996:267).

Those who want to construct a crisis selectively pick events that fit the ‘crisis-framing’; this is the process of “primary narration.”
resulting in the construction of a series of independent narratives which still reflect (albeit to varying degrees) the specificity of each ‘story’. The discursive construction of crisis, however, is the product of a process of secondary mediation, abstraction and meta-narration” (Hay, 1996:267). Through secondary mediation, ‘notions of direct responsibility, causality and agency are deleted (…); [the] direct agent is subsequently replaced by an abstraction’ (Hay, 1996:267). Prime examples are the problematizing of wearing a headscarf, or linking nuisance of youngsters to ethnicity or religion. Disparate events may be plaid in a frame of ‘symptoms’ and ‘proof of failing integration and troublesome immigration’. Such framing may serve as a tool for gaining political support. If more events are moulded to fit the crisis frame, then eventually a crisis may occur, as more people adopt it and view it as crisis.

The construction of a crisis is thus a very powerful mechanism, for it can activate or manipulate the interpretative repertoire of individuals. The impact of such framing is considerable, for “if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences” (Thomas and Thomas, 1929; p. 572). For an issue to be acknowledged by multiple actors as a legitimate problem that needs a solution, it needs to be posed as a problem. An example would be a politician stating that the influx of non-Western immigrants is a problem, for it may endanger the domestic economy on the long-term. Problematization is necessary for a politician; his instrument is language. That is why discourse analysis serves to identify processes of problematization in political speech.

2.3 Ideology in discourse
According to sociologist Teun van Dijk (2006), “[politics] is one of the social domains whose practices are virtually exclusively discursive; political cognition is by definition ideologically based; and political ideologies are largely reproduced by discourse” (Van Dijk, 2006). Moreover, van Dijk (2001) states that ‘controlling
discourse is a (...) major form of power’; all discursive practices are aimed at producing and reproducing power and dominance (Van Dijk, 2001). In a debate, verbal and written textual expressions are aimed at proclaiming one’s personal stance or that of the political party, or refuting that of the opponent. The political debate thus is an interactive practice in which dominance must be exerted over others, in order to show the validity of one’s standpoints. Van Dijk employs a multidisciplinary approach; he argues that ideology, discourse and politics are closely related and intertwined.

Ideological differences are indicated through polarization in political discourse, as Van Dijk posits that “underlying political ideologies are typically expressed in political discourse by emphasizing Our [sic] good things and Their [sic] bad things and de-emphasizing Our [sic] bad things and their good things” (Van Dijk 2006; 739). If Van Dijk’s theory is valid, politicians use discursive techniques that express their ideological stance to gain support and delegitimize the opponent’s views. In speech acts, polarization may be among these techniques.

2.4 Discourse coalition
Maarten Hajer (1989, 1993) employed the concept of discourse coalition in his articles on changing political discourse. The most basic definition is ‘a group of actors who share a social construct’ (Hajer 1993; 45). In this research, the concept is used to identify the instances where political actors affiliated with different parties employ similar repertoires. From an ideology-theoretical perspective, a discourse coalition may occur in the area in which differing discursive repertoires have ideological interfaces. ‘A new discourse coalition is likely to be organised around a new uniting principal that appeals to different groups’ (Hajer 1989;258). Political actors adopting the same arguments indicates at consensus or agreement – or at the shared renunciation of a political opponent’s discourse. If the concept of discourse coalition is valid,
This research would yield research in which we see different political actors adhering to the same discourse.

Dirk Jacobs (1998) states that ‘policy changes do not have to be the result of a genuine compromise on the argumentative level or the dominance of one specific type of reasoning, but can just as easily be the result of an ad hoc discourse coalition’. (Jacobs, 1998; 371) I follow Jacobs in his presumption that ‘no single ideology (...) controls the debate, but that we are (...) confronted with an ongoing struggle between different ideologies (both as political narratives and worldviews) which are articulated in various degrees in public statements’. (Jacobs, 1998; 354) The development of three debates is analysed; cases that commence with a discursive crisis.

2.5 Power of language
Discourse analysis reviews the content of a particular interpretative repertoire to develop a better understanding of it. However, ‘t Hart argues that an additional instrument is useful in power-critical analysis, which looks beyond the technicalities and official rhetoric: the research of the symbolic dimensions of official actions. Analysis of symbolism ‘exposes the ways in which official actors use powerful language and other symbolic tools to shape interpretations of events and achieve their ends.’ (‘t Hart 1993:85). In the discourse analytical section of this research, interpretative repertoires will be analysed on both their content and symbolism. Part of discourse analysis aims to examine the symbolical layer, the implicit ulterior motives and consequences of the employment of a certain language. It does so by deconstructing the repertoire and trying to lay bare its basic premises.

When for instance, we come across the following fragment: “It is an economic calculation for many people [Muslim immigrants] to come to the Netherlands. Penniless over there, welfare over here. (...) Is it then strange, that we wonder how much that leftist hobby
[reference to immigration] *is costing us, that we also make an economic calculation. If they do it, why don’t we then?*” [Original emphasis]. It is helpful to learn about the building blocks of a frame that produces such phrases. By deconstructing this example, we learn that 1) there is an ‘other’ (they) who are inherently different than us (we, us); 2) who come to the Netherlands solely for money; 3) which is a bad thing because it ‘is costing us’; 4) helping these people is a ‘leftist hobby’ – clearly an undesirable feature as well. Cisneros (2008) has explained how such portrayals are not free of risk, as ‘they inform society’s relationship to immigrants and they influence the direction of public policy on immigration’ (Cisneros, 2008; 591).

The linguistic deconstruction and analysis of an excerpt provides detailed insight into the way a framing is constructed, and thus into how a crisis may be constructed. It brings us to the type of research that ‘t Hart (1993) conducts. The basic premises teach about identity, values and actions: we learn who we are, who they are, what we stand for and how we protect our values. The linguistic deconstruction of the different repertoires provides a more complete overview.

### 2.6 Legitimization and polarization

Adopting the concept of Reyes (2011;781), legitimation ‘refers to the process by which speakers accredit or license a type of social behaviour’. According to Reyes, ‘it seems plausible that certain core structures of legitimation respond to cognitive structures that have been naturalized through time in our psyche, which we all share as society’ – e.g., the definitions of what is right and what is approved of are sociocultural products. Legitimization is particularly important in political discourse, a field that is foremost concerned with convincing interlocutors.

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1 Excerpt from Wilders’ address on 16 September 2009
Reyes identifies five different legitimization strategies: 1) through emotions; 2) through a hypothetical future; 3) though rationality; 4) voices of expertise; and 5) altruism (Reyes 2011;786). These strategies must legitimize the ideological position of the speaker, and must convince the addressee of the proposals the speaker makes. The first strategy consists of an appeal to emotions to influence the audience’s view. By making clear distinctions between right and wrong, or good and evil, a speaker can accomplish to represent certain social actors as opponents that should not be supported. The second strategy may for instance occur in the construction of a crisis; the addressee is wise to lend support to the speaker in order to prevent a crisis in the near future. Legitimization through an appeal to rationality is very powerful and omnipresent in politics. Acts of persuasion are invigorated by saying that lending support is rational, and opponents are discredited on the same basis. The fourth strategy stems from an appeal to authority, which must convince addressees, and finally the fifth strategy of altruism is to show that (or make it appear so) taking a certain course of action is helping those of lesser fortune.

Strategies of legitimization provide valuable information on the ideological background of a political actor. Moreover, the legitimization through a hypothetical future has interfaces with the construction of a crisis. Next to strategies of legitimization, the standpoints on topics that concern society are expressions of ideology.

Jacobs (1998) identified four major discourses in Dutch political debates on immigration and integration. He coded them by with labels of citizenship as posited by Castles (1994); ‘assimilationist exclusionary, assimilationist inclusionary, pluralist inclusionary and pluralist exclusionary’ (Jacobs 1998; 358). Just as the discourses that were identified in this research, ‘it is not impossible to see them being used alternatively by the same actors in shorts
episodes of discussion’ (Ibid.). In the study of Jacobs, the terms implied a favourable (inclusionary) or unfavourable (exclusionary) attitude towards immigration, and provided information about one’s position on integration; assimilationist places responsibility to integrate with the immigrant, whereas pluralist presumes a shared responsibility of both allochthone and society. This research limits its scope to the inclusionary and exclusionary character of discourses, as the assimilationist and pluralist are not well applicable to all cases. It tells us something about the ideological stance of the political actor, and thus is useful for answering hypothesis (3) on Van Dijk’s theory.

It was mentioned earlier how concerns and displeasure have been expressed in this respect. Politicians referred to the tone of the debate; often they spoke in terms of ‘moderation’, ‘caution’ and ‘decency’. They mentioned the dichotomous workings of polarisation and inflammatory language. According to psychologist Carsten de Dreu (2009) “[conflicts] can contribute to learning, creativity, innovativeness and quality of a decision making process.” This can happen only under certain conditions, but polarisation annuls these conditions. Within a discussion, people are positioned on opposing ends of a spectrum of ‘polarisation’. Central to the issues with polarization lies the clash between different views on what problems there are in the world, how these problems should be solved, and how we must interact with each other to come up with solutions. The democratic political debate is pre-eminently the domain where people with different worldviews come together to find solutions for issues; in doing so, they depend on other political actors for their success.

2.7 Dominance and authority in speech acts
Francesca D’Errico and Isabella Poggi (2010) have examined dominance signals in debates, and provided a method of qualitative analysis of dominance. They define dominance as “a dynamic
communicative act based on a relation, by means of which an individual exerts power or influence over another individual" (Poggi & D'Errico, 2010; 164). They found several strategies to show dominant: “aggressive ones [such as] imperiousness, judgement, invasion, norm violation and defiance (...); subtle ones like touchiness and victimhood (...); distancing ones of haughtiness and other ways (...) like irony and ridicule, easiness, carelessness and assertiveness” (Poggi & D'Errico, 2010; 173). The interpretative repertoires will be scrutinized on dominance signals. Their presence is an important property of interpretative repertoires, as asserting dominance over other actors is requisite in effectuating authority.

As it is a debate, it consists of multiple actors that engage in speech acts to achieve agreement. They engage in a dynamic verbal process of collaboration and contestation. Success depends on the ability to strike a balance between asserting dominance over the narrative of the opponents. This relates to displaying authority in a convincing fashion, which has been the subject of previous studies (see Boomgaarden & Vreese 2007; Van Dijk 2002,2006,2009; Hajer & Laws 2006; Hajer & Uitermark 2007; Hajer & Versteeg 2009; ’t Hart 1993; Laws & Hajer 2006).

Another level of analysis that is important for this thesis includes the research on symbolic expressions and ideological underpinnings of speech acts (’t Hart 1993), on signals of dominance in debates (Poggi & D'Errico 2010), and on the issue of legitimization in political speech acts (Van Dijk 2006b; Van Leeuwen & Wodak 1999; Reyes 2008, 2011; Rojo & Van Dijk 1996). These theories provide information on what could be called ‘tools’ of political discourse. They serve as additional support and means to gain insight into the hypotheses, which are explained below.

Having set out the working definitions of the concepts, it is now clear that in order to answer the hypotheses, we have to look for
particular elements in speech acts. The language in political debates will have to be analysed on the appearance of construction of crisis, on ideological background and on discourse coalitions by different political actors. Theories on legitimization, polarization, dominance, and authority in political speech provide guidance in identifying what repertoires are being employed by what political actor, and into their ideological backgrounds. The next chapter will address the means to do so; it describes methodological part of this research.
3. Context

The debates of the case studies are all embedded in a larger context of global migration and its consequences. The debate on immigration and integration has a long history, but space prohibits a too extensive oversight. However, it is necessary to provide information on the Dutch historical context of immigration and integration to understand the background to which the contemporary debates take place.

3.1 Historical context

In the wake of the Second World War, immigrant workers were brought in from abroad to European countries to help with the reconstruction. Seegers’ study (2007) on the transformation of the Dutch political debate on immigration and integration provides an extensive account of the historical context.

In the 1970’s, government policy on immigration was built on the assumption that labour migrants would eventually return to their native countries (Seegers, 2007:15). Integration was a matter of making migrant groups fit in Dutch society, not having them adapt to the new environment. Tolerance of the migrant’s cultural expression within Dutch society was propagated. During the 1980’s, the government gradually abandoned the assumption of remigration. With this awareness came a responsibility to make new policy; this marked the beginning of policymaking on the integration of migrants in the Netherlands. Preservation of identity was a main theme in the early development of integration policy; in general there was understanding for the difficulty of migrants caught between different cultures (Van Meeteren 2005; Duyvendak 2006). It is in this period of time that the Netherlands becomes defined as having a multicultural society.
The 1990’s bring about a shift in discourse about the multicultural society. ‘Early 1990’s there is a shift of focus in politics and policy from migrant groups to a focus on the individual’ (Seegers 2007:19); the concept of ‘citizenship’ is introduced. The term ‘minority policy’ is replaced with ‘integration policy’, putting an emphasis on a shared responsibility of host state and migrant. Previously the discourse was migrant-focused, with an emphasis on the struggles of the minority groups and an appeal to autochthones to sympathize with that; there was no room for their potential dissatisfaction (Seegers, 2007:17). Initial critique on the multicultural society commenced with politician Frits Bolkestein, who objected to the preservation of cultural identity in the process of integration. He argued that the religion of Islam was incompatible with essential liberal values. It would lead to an official national ‘minority debate’ being held (Seegers, 2007:18). Though Bolkestein had to endure much critique, his account would be the onset of a more critical perspective on immigration.

It is in this period that Van Leeuwen and Wodack (1999) ascertained that with regard to immigration, ‘European societies have begun to show signs of deteriorating human rights. (...) More-or-less subtle discrimination and everyday racism in housing, employment, health care, legislation and policing have become general practice.’ (Van Leeuwen & Wodack, 1999: 84) Dealing with integration is becoming a difficult struggle for the Netherlands.

Throughout the 1970’s, 80’s and 90’s the general view is that there is a shared responsibility to ensure an optimal integration of migrants into Dutch society, by creating socio-economic opportunity and exhibiting cultural sensitivity. The 2000’s would be the kick-off of a more negative perspective on multicultural society. In his article ‘The Multicultural Drama’, Paul Scheffer (2000) argues that ‘[the] current policy of loose admission and limited integration increases inequality and adds to a sense of estrangement in society’
Scheffer, 2000:5). He proposes that ‘the Netherlands should acquire more national awareness and be less indifferent towards the own society’ (Seegers, 2006:26).

Kundani (2012) identifies this changing perspective on immigration and integration a shift to a ‘new realism’ narrative (2012:18). This term was coined by sociologist Baukje Prins as an indication for the new discourse. According to Kundani, the Netherlands was a pioneer in the development of a values-identity narrative, which emphasized the incompatibility of certain different cultural groups. The concept of a multicultural society is considered to be impossible.

The political shift has had its effects on the tone of the debate as well, according to Seegers. “The tone of the political discourse before 2000 is positive: positive aspects of multicultural society are emphasized, dissatisfaction and problems are identified, but are put in perspective with the enriching aspect of cultural differences. (...) The tone after 2000 is harsh and more negative: politicians often speak in short, powerful, essentialist and sometimes even offensive terms and in dichotomies, problems and mistakes. [Multicultural society is negatively portrayed]” (Seegers, 2006:63).

Many events have taken place in the past decade that had their impact on the changed perspective on multiculturalism in society. The September 11 attacks in 2001 led to the conception of the Global War on Terror, in which many nations got involved, and which targeted militant Islamism in particular. It was also the prelude for a period in which anti-Islamic sentiments became more common in the field of Western politics. It sharpened the dichotomy between ‘Western’ and ‘Islamic’ civilization, with great consequences for immigration.

Today, special institutional attention goes out to immigrants from non-European and ‘Muslim’ countries. In this protectionist line of
thought, countries are regarded as being the same as the contingent religions that they encapsulate.

3.2 Government policy on immigration and integration
As some important events have taken place in the first decade of the new millennium, it is worthwhile to observe the government policies on immigration and integration of this period. Since 2001 up till this moment $^2$, six cabinets were in government, being in chronological order; Kok II (1998-2002), Balkenende I (2002-2003), Balkenende II (2003-2006), Balkenende III (2006-2007), Balkenende IV (2007-2010) and Rutte I (2010-2012). The current government of Rutte II has published its coalition accord early November 2012.

The Montesquie Instituut in The Hague has developed a graphic simulation of political attention, providing quantitative information on important themes in Dutch politics. “Since 2009, the team of Campus the Hague at the Montesquieu Institute studies political agendas in the Netherlands, other democratic countries, and the European Union in order to understand how problems are addressed over a long period of time.” $^3$

This tool allows us to review the change in political attention on several key topics, of which ‘Civil Rights and Liberties’, ‘International Affairs’, ‘Law and Crime’, and ‘Social Affairs’ are indicators that have interfaces with the topic of this research. These broad terms include policies on asylum, immigration, social and cultural integration. The dataset that analyses the coalition agreements are of interest to this research. It shows the development of political attention to key topics over a longer period of time. It is worthwhile to take a closer look into the political attention since the Kok II-cabinet. The graph (Graph 1) below shows the development of the aforementioned indicators.

$^2$ November 2012
$^3$ http://www.livinglab.pascaldeman.com/
From the data we gather that the topics combined are considered to be very important at the moment, as they add up to almost 40% of the political attention of the 2007 coalition agreement. Moreover, we see that there has been an increase in political attention in the new millennium for these topics. Compared to the first coalition agreements, we see a development of increased attention to these topics. A closer look to the last decade shows a fluctuating, but increasing, pattern in political attention.

The indicator of ‘Civil Rights’, which includes the indicators on immigration and integration have increased to the extent that they make up 14% of the political attention in the coalition agreement of 2007 (Graph 2-3), which was the largest relative amount on the total quantity of political attention, surpassing previously dominant topics as ‘Macroeconomics’, ‘Education’ and ‘Law and Crime’.


A brief discourse analysis of the sections with regard to immigration and integration in the coalition agreements, provide insight into the goals of the cabinets on that topic.

The cabinet of Kok II focussed on ‘maintaining a restrictive admission policy, in which the core notions of strict and just shall be guiding’ (Kok II, 1998). Balkenende I stresses the need for people to understand each other, in light of integration. They note that ‘differences in ethnic background, customs and habits burden the daily routine of living together, work and life’. Moreover, these differences ‘increasingly seem to correlate with differences in education, labour participation and involvement in crime’ (Balkenende I, 2002).

In this cabinet, a position is created for a Minister of Immigration and Integration. This coalition agreement also has the first mention of ‘recent commotion surrounding expressions of imams’, which is a careful but explicit denomination of Islam in Dutch society. At the time, politician Pim Fortuyn of LPF had actively campaigned against the religion. According to him, Islam was incompatible with Dutch core values, and a burden on integration and stability in society. Though critique of Islam was not new, the distinct style of Pim Fortuyn who brought it to the institutional setting of the political debate marked a new period of active Islam-criticism by political actors.

It is interesting that the Balkenende I coalition agreement states that ‘effective integration of groups of people is a long-term endeavour and requires mutual adjustment’ (Balkenende I, 2002; my emphasis). This is peculiar, because in later agreements, this apparent state of reciprocity and shared responsibility is no longer mentioned; the immigrant becomes responsible for integration.
The Balkenende II agreement is generally a continuation of the earlier coalition agreement. While this cabinet is in office, terrorist attacks in Madrid and London heighten a sense of insecurity in society, especially for Islamic terrorism. In 2004, a radical Muslim murdered film producer and columnist Theo van Gogh. Placed on his body was a letter containing a death threat to politician Ayaan Hirsi Ali. She was a controversial politician who actively sought for debate with Muslims, and was known for her outspoken criticism of radical Islam. In 2006, a conflict arose between the fraction of D66 and minister Rita Verdonk. Following an affair about the naturalisation of Hirsi Ali in 1995, Verdonk declared that the Dutch citizenship of Hirsi Ali had been wrongly appointed to her. A series of events took place, which ultimately led to the fall of the Balkenende II cabinet.

The Balkenende III cabinet was a transitional government, which adhered to the same coalition agreement. With Balkenende IV, a new coalition agreement was created. The policy on immigration and asylum was now described as having to be just and humanitarian, and effectively implemented. The basic premise for integration is that ‘we can understand, comprehend and tolerate’. The agreement mentions the need for ‘a Dutch imam training’.

The graphs do not yet contain information on the later cabinets. The Rutte I cabinet as well mentioned a ‘strict and just’ policy on asylum and migration. The agreement also contains the first mention of ‘an urgent need for reversal, control and reduction of immigration, considering societal problems’ (Rutte I, 2010). Moreover, it is intended to penalize illegal stay, making it punishable by law. It is also emphasized that migrants are responsible for their own integration into Dutch society. The agreement is also the first to contain the explicit mention of ‘burqa’, the head covering clothing of Muslim women. The cabinet states to create a general inhibition on face covering clothing. The
The most recent coalition agreement states that ‘the immigration policy is restrictive, just and aimed at integration’.

The implementation of coalition agreements is not always consistent with the promises and focus found in the content. But the brief analysis of coalition agreements of the last decade show an increase in political attention to topics that relate to immigration and integration. Policy outlines are increasing in number, and become more detailed in their description. It is often formulated in problematic terms; economic calculation is a driving force behind policy-making and Dutch society has a finite level of absorption of immigrants. In general, the text elements seem to point towards a development of a more restrictive stance towards immigration.

3.3 Case studies

Being an open society, the Netherlands is subject of an on-going influx of people. Many immigrants arrive with expectations of building a life within Dutch society – this demands from the political domain that it continuously assesses the framework of immigration and integration. In the last decade, a line of thought that is more restrictive of immigration has become prevalent in the political and public debate. There are political actors that warn for the dangers of allowing certain immigrants into the Netherlands – they speak of the phenomena of immigration and integration as crises. Especially Muslim immigrants are considered to be a threat and some political actors have fuelled distrust towards them. Statements of this sort have become commonplace in the political and public debate. Concomitantly, a voice that opposes these statements has arisen; politicians that use it emphasize the negative effects of a distrusting attitude. These different types of discourses compete within the political domain to effectuate policy changes that are in line with either line of thought.
This research will look into three episodes in recent political history: the headscarf tax in 2009; the Norway attacks discussion in 2011; and the issue of the platform for complaints about Middle- and Eastern European labour migrants in 2012. These cases share certain features that make them interesting for analysis in this research. They can be placed in a meta-narrative of immigration and integration, and more specifically to xenophobia in politics. Further elaborations on the three cases follow below.

3.3.1 Head rag tax

On 16 September 2009, PVV party leader Geert Wilders severely criticized the cabinet and concomitantly mentioned that he intended to propose a ‘kopvoddentaks’, a tax fee for people who wanted to wear forms of head covering clothes. When asked about what he was referring to, Wilders made clear that this tax should discourage Muslims to wear a niqab or burqa. As he specifically targeted one group of people, many other politicians attacked Wilders on his remarks. Though his address fits the recognizable PVV-style of debating, this particular provocative phrasing was unprecedented.

Wilders has become known as an anti-Islam politician that fiercely opposes the religion and has named it ‘a totalitarian, backward ideology’ on numerous occasions. Through discursive practice, the Islam has been portrayed as a dangerous religion as well, linking it to radicalism and terrorism, an association that is very stubborn. For example, previous attempts for a ban on the burqa were framed as being an act of counterterrorism. In his address to the House of Commons, Wilders warned for the dangers of Islam, and framed the tax on headgear as a security and cultural defense issue.

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4 Hand. II, 2009-2010, Ks 33229 nr. 2
5 Hand. II, 2005-2006, Ks 29754, nr. 1
Norway discussion

On 22 July 2011, Norway was the setting of a series of terrorist attacks, killing 77 people and injuring 151. In a manifesto the perpetrator Anders Behring Breivik states his appreciation of Dutch politician Geert Wilders and his party PVV; he sympathizes with their firm stance against ‘Islamization of Europe’. This led to turmoil within the Dutch political arena; a discussion arose in which politicians suggestively underscored the shared ideas on anti-immigration and anti-Islam of Breivik and most notably Geert Wilders and the Freedom Party (PVV). Prime-Minister Mark Rutte would later comment: “The Norwegians were still busy with bereavement, with the funerals and whatnot, and we here were already contemplating whether the bullet came from the left, or the right (...). To be honest, I found this debate to be very unpleasant and untimely”. The debate about the Norway attacks ended with the cabinet’s rejection of the request for a debate on xenophobia. The case was closed and no further assessment was made about the significance of the discussion itself.

The debate was the first in which Geert Wilders was directly attacked on his political conduct in reference to a violent act; a causal relation was suggested. He was explicitly asked to distance himself from the perpetrator, by whom Wilders was mentioned. The crux of the discussion was as follows: Wilders is known for his firm anti-Islamic stance and his remarks about left-wing politics; Breivik is a radicalized, violent amalgamation of these stances; the interface is the ideological aspect, the violence is what sets them apart. The issue was thus whether Wilders in some way bears responsibility? Topics centred on ‘the tone of the debate’ and touched upon issues of integration, immigration and multi-cultural society in general. It was MP Dibi that officially requested a debate on the topic of ‘making the feelings of anger and despair in the face of immigration and Islam negotiable, in the light of an apparent negligence to

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6 Transcript of press conference of 12-08-2011, Rutte
oppose xenophobia by European leaders'. The formulation shows that the topic of discussion was beforehand rather unclear, and this would mark any further progression. The proposal to hold a debate on xenophobia, with reference to the Norway attacks, was followed by indistinctness among many political actors about what the topic of this debate should have to be.

**3.3.1.1 MEE-landers platform**

The creation of a platform for complaints about Middle – and Eastern European (labour) migrants is embedded in a longer on-going discussion that has commenced in 2004. Back then, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment had a research conducted into the effects of labour migration from Middle – and Eastern European countries, which were to be admitted to the European Union per May 1, 2004. From this date onwards, numerous debates have been held on how to adapt to the influx of labour migration, and many reports have been written on the topic. As is the normal course with the issue of immigration, the political separation centres on the question of what the effects of labour migration are. The political actors that oppose it emphasize the negative effects (nuisance, displacement, costs), whereas the advocates of labour migration highlight the benefits and the nation’s responsibility to respect European treaties.

In the fall of 2011, a temporary commission ‘Lessons from recent labour migration’ assigned by the House of Commons presented a report on labour migration. The main conclusion was that labour migration, particularly from Middle and Eastern European countries has proven to be larger in volume than predicted, that the Netherlands have been unable to regulate this migration, and that there are negative side effects that need to be dealt with. This report discussed the consequences of increased labour migration.

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7 Hand. II, 2011-2012, Ks 29407 nr 1
8 Hand. II, 2011-2012, Ks 29407 nr 1
particularly from Eastern European countries and reviewed the restrictive migration policy of the Netherlands vis-à-vis certain countries (particularly Bulgaria and Romania).

The main conclusions were: 1) there is no risk of ‘brain drain’ in those countries from labour emigration; 2) the situation of some stay-at-home families of labour migrants is worrisome; 3) no large emigration is expected when the restrictive policies would be loosened; 4) Bulgaria and Romania make a plea for annulment of the restrictions based on the fact that they are proper EU member states. In November 2011, the results of this report were the topic of several debates in the House of Commons.

In a debate of December 13 on this topic, Ino van den Besselaar first mentioned the plans of the PVV to create a platform for people to file complaints about Middle and Eastern European labour migrants. On February 7, 2012 another debate was held in the House of Commons about the outcomes of the report. Again, PVV-representative Ino van den Besselaar was critically outspoken with regard to labour migration from Eastern Europe. He spoke of a ‘serious underestimation of the size of labour immigration’ and its consequences. Moreover, he criticized the report by stating that even though it mentioned nuisance of labour immigrants, it did so too lightly. As a reply, the PVV announced to launch a website the next day that would function as a platform for complaints about Middle and Eastern Europeans in the Netherlands.

On the 8th of February, a website was launched that would become known as the ‘MEE-landers-’, ‘Poles-’ or ‘PVV-platform’ (from now on: platform). It caused a stir and led to heated debates on immigration, discrimination, the PVV itself and the position of the Netherlands in international relations. The website was a one-way

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9 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr. 35 item 32
10 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr. 50 item 16
platform for complaints, and was aimed elicit only complaints about Middle- or Eastern European migrants. Each political party spoke out on the matter, and most of it was very negative towards the platform. The website is still online, and as a result the period of time that it was a topic of discussion is rather long-stretched compared to the other cases. The first remarks in the House of Commons about it were made on 21 December 2011 and the last occasion it was a head topic was 28 March 2012, more than three months.

4. Methodology

This chapter addresses the methodological part of the research. The method of grounded theory will be applied first in order to identify the different discursive repertoires. With coding processes, Grounded Theory organizes the data and makes it manageable. This method employs a constant comparative method to find relations between units of data. Though originally discovered by Glaser and Strauss (1968), this research follows Philip LaRossa’s ‘simplified’ version of Grounded Theory (LaRossa, 2005). The researcher can then move on to the discourse analytical part of the research. To analyse the interpretative repertoires, discourse analysis will be applied to the different interpretative repertoires.

4.1 Grounded Theory Method

Grounded Theory method (GTM) has been ascribed to Strauss and Glaser. In the 1960’s, they developed the constant comparative method while completing their book Awareness of Dying (1965), which would be the first application of grounded theory. In The
*Discovery of Grounded Theory* (1967), Glaser and Strauss further developed the theory. According to Glaser and Strauss, "some theories of our predecessors, because of their lack of grounding in data, do not fit, or do not work, or are not sufficiently understandable to be used and are therefore useless in research, theoretical advance and practical application" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

This research will employ the method of grounded theory (GTM) to identify the different discursive repertoires present in the case studies. It must be noted that this research has its theoretical founding in discourse analytical studies; not in grounded theory. Yet the constant comparative method of grounded theory proves to be a useful way to acquire insight into the differences between discursive practices of political figures. By distinguishing, comparing and combining elements of speech acts, GTM served to identify different discursive practices; what shall be called 'repertoires' in this research.

Ralph LaRossa points out that, "[although] their backgrounds may have been different, their collaboration grew out of their similar discomfort with the supremacy of theory testing in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s"; 'students were trained to confirm the ideas of early theorists, but were not being encouraged to generate theory themselves'. (LaRossa, 2005) The grounded theory method was a way to develop theory empirically, in a bottom-up approach. Through coding, conceptualization and categorization, the data will become organized and manageable for a researcher until it is 'theoretically saturated'.

Ralph LaRossa (2005) has proposed "a methodologically condensed but still comprehensive interpretation of GTM" (LaRossa, 2005). He notes that perhaps ‘simplifying GTM would allow them to be used to
greater effect’ (LaRossa, 2005). His lection of Grounded Theory rests on five principles, which should function as a guideline for research.

“These are (a) Language is central to social life. (...) (b) Words are the indicators upon which GTM-derived theories are formed. (...) (c) Coding and explanation are built upon a series of empirical and conceptual comparisons. (...) (d) [Theories] are sets of interrelated propositions, whereas propositions state how variables are related. (...) (e) There is a value in choosing one variable among the many variables that a grounded theoretical analysis may generate and making that variable central when engaged in theoretical writing. It will serve as the backbone of a researcher’s ‘story’.”

(LaRossa, 2005)

According to LaRossa, these principles encapsulate the coding procedures that a researcher must follow when applying grounded theoretical analysis. The backbone element of grounded theory is the procedure of ‘coding’, which consists of three interrelated phases: open coding, axial coding and selective coding.

The first phase of open coding consists of ‘breaking the data down into discrete parts, closely examining, comparing for similarities and differences and asking questions about the phenomena reflected in the data’ (Strauss and Corbin 1990/1998 in LaRossa 2005). It is an unrestricted way of analysing the data and categorizing it by providing conceptual labels to the indicators based on their respective differences and similarities. An indicator can be a word, sentence or fragment found in the material. A concept is the association a researcher connects to a particular indicator. The process consists of analysing indicators and comparing them to previous indicators. If they are similar, they can be placed under the same concept, if they differ, a new concept may be created. This is the constant comparative method, which Glaser and Straus would later develop into grounded theory. Open coding is completed when
the researcher achieves theoretical saturation; which is “when the main concern of the research can be accounted for, and further sampling fails to add significant value to the study through adding new categories or properties.” (Fernández, 2004)

The second phase, that of axial coding, a term coined in the Straussian approach, consists of “intense analysis done around one category [i.e. variable] at a time, in terms of paradigm items (conditions, consequences, and so forth)” (Strauss, 1987. In: LaRossa 2005).

“Although there is a parallel between Strauss’s axial coding and Glaser’s theoretical coding, there is a difference in the sequencing of the two. In Strauss’s (1987) version, axial coding is a phase that "becomes increasingly prominent during the normally lengthy period of open coding" (...) In Glaser’s (1978) version, theoretical coding takes place later in the analysis, after selective coding.”

(LaRossa, 2005: 847)

The third phase of selective coding, is related to the underlying storyline of the research. “[Selective] coding entails the identification of a core variable. The core variable is the one variable among all the variables generated during coding that, in addition to other qualities, is theoretically saturated and centrally relevant” (LaRossa 2005)

Summarizing, grounded theory consists of breaking texts up into units of analysis (words, sentences, fragments), which are then associated with concepts/categories, through the process of constant comparison. As more categories arise, these are also compared to one another, with more abstract categories as a result. The researcher then must identify a core category, around which the theory is organized.
4.1 Sensitizing concepts
Urquhart (2001) denotes two key beliefs of grounded theory: “(a) the researcher has to set aside theoretical ideas; and, (b) the concepts are developed through constant comparison.” (Urquhart, 2001. In: Fernández, 2003) They underline that a researcher must avoid preconceptions, and the results must be produced by the data itself. Avoiding preconceptions does not entail that a researcher is roaming in oblivion until he stumbles upon something potentially useful. Glaser and Strauss refer to the notion of sensitizing concepts as developed by Blumer (1954), with whom they share a similar discontent about the gap between the abstract level of dominant theories and the empirical world. According to Blumer, social theory ‘seemed in general not to be geared into its empirical world; was conspicuously defective in its guidance of research inquiry; and, benefited little from the vast and ever growing accumulation of “facts” that come from empirical observation and research inquiry’ (Blumer, 1954:4). To address these ‘three lines of deficiency’, he developed the notion of sensitizing concepts.

It is in contrast with a definitive concept, which “refers precisely to what is common to a class of objects, by the aid of a clear definition in terms of attributes or fixed bench marks” (Blumer 1954:7). A sensitizing concept “gives the user a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances”; it ‘suggests merely a direction along which to look’ (Blumer 1954:7).

4.2 Data collection
Academic literature for the theoretical framework was gathered from online databases provided by the libraries of Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen and Universiteit Utrecht. Sensitizing concepts (Blumer 1954) functioned as a guideline in the initial search for academic literature. The concepts that proved to be a guideline were ‘(critical) discourse analysis’ and ‘grounded theory method’. Further sensitizing concepts came up as I read the articles from the first search. Doing so gradually expanded my body of literature until it included a satisfactory amount of articles to form a basis for the
discourse analytical part of the research. The final body of literature included studies on grounded theory method – to support the identification of repertoires in debates –, discourse analysis – to espouse the basic theoretical framework –, and speech act theory – that provided particular signifiers to look for in speech acts. I posit that articles on theories of dominance, authority, plurality, polarisation and symbolic language can be viewed as subcategories of either discourse analysis and/or speech act theory. I suspended my search for articles after concluding that the latest results had too much overlap with previously found articles – for the sake of time management and brevity, the yielded body of literature was now definitively demarcated.

The next data search comprised of finding texts that contained speech acts of political actors. This quest was more straightforward, as the particular cases that I wanted to address could function as search queries. The terms ‘kopvoddentaks’, ‘Noorwegen-debat’ and ‘MOE-landers meldpunt’, and variations thereof, produced many results. Official parliamentary documents are available at the governmental online database of ‘Officiele Bekendmakingen’ \(^\text{11}\), whereas video material of the live debates can be found at the official website of the Dutch House of Commons in the section of ‘Vergaderingen; Debat Gemist’ \(^\text{12}\). Additionally, I crosschecked the official transcripts with the content of the website ‘Publitiek’ \(^\text{13}\), which provides a more visualized overview of parliamentary debates. As the unit of analysis was discourse, I strived to reconstruct the debates as accurately as they have occurred – the transcripts were not always as detailed as one might hope.

### 4.3 Data analysis

Having gathered the transcripts of debates from all three case studies, I ran the collected data through the software of MAXQDA, a

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\(^{11}\) See: [https://www.officielebekendmakingen.nl/](https://www.officielebekendmakingen.nl/)

\(^{12}\) See: [http://debatgemist.tweedekamer.nl/](http://debatgemist.tweedekamer.nl/)

\(^{13}\) See: [http://publitiek.nl/](http://publitiek.nl/)
computer program for qualitative data analysis. With this program I was able to conduct first analytical segment of the research; identifying different discourses through the method of grounded theory. The result was a comprehensive oversight of identified discursive repertoires that had been employed by different political actors throughout the debates. This body of data was then subjected to discourse analysis, in order to gain insight into the meaning and usage of every discourse. Next, analysis of the body of repertoires from all debates provided insight into how, to what end, political actors have employed different repertoires throughout debates.

4.4 Research limitations
This research is hampered by certain limitations, with regard to the academic literature, the data set and the in-depth analysis. To a great extent these limitations were both necessary and inescapable.

Academic literature on the key concepts that this research draws from is available in great abundance. Particularly discourse analysis, grounded theory method and speech act analysis have been subject of many previous studies. It is sheer impossible to include even a minor segment of the available articles and case studies. The choice of articles has therefore been guided by what Blumer (1954) calls sensitizing concepts. They “give the user a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances” and ‘suggests merely a direction along which to look’ (Blumer 1954:7). The sensitizing concepts that proved to be a guideline were ‘(critical) discourse analysis’ and ‘grounded theory method’. Subsequently, more sensitizing concepts were added through a form of snowball sampling. As previously mentioned, the search for academic literature was suspended when the articles no longer yielded enough new information. This decision was related to time-management.
The data set is limited in the sense that it focuses only on the official parliamentary debates. I have chosen to do so for several reasons. Similar to the considerations of Dirk Jacobs (1998), I decided against encapsulating the development of the three cases in their entirety. Doing so would oblige me to include speech acts from the public debate as well. The topics of the case studies have been addressed outside of official political debates as well. To reconstruct a comprehensive overview of employed repertoires from the public domain would be too time-consuming and difficult as speech acts are far more dispersed – political actors address issues on television, radio, in interviews, through social media, etc. I do however owe the ease of my search for texts on the case studies to the heightened media attention during the three episodes that I analysed. The terms that I used, as mentioned in 3.1, have become common indicators for the particular episodes precisely because the media has used these terms so often.
5. Case Kopvoddentaks

5.1 Repertoires

After analysis of the different speech acts, three distinctive repertoires stand out, of which two are prominently present throughout the debate. They are 1) the ‘Pro-tax’-repertoire, 2) the ‘Not related to content’-repertoire and 3) the ‘Anti-tax’ repertoire. The following section further analyses these repertoires. They are listed and analysed in chronological order, to display how the debate develops.\(^\text{14}\) Quotes have been carefully translated with sensitivity for the connotations and emphasis. For the sake of brevity, the original Dutch quotes are not included in this section.

5.1.1 Pro-tax-repertoire

The pro-tax repertoire started with the address of PVV party leader Geert Wilders on September 16, 2009. It is on this day, Prinsjesdag, that the reigning monarch addresses the Staten-Generaal. In the ‘Throne’s Speech’, the monarch indicates the main features of government policy for the upcoming parliamentary term. The Nation’s budget proposal is published on the same day. Afterwards, the House of Commons holds a debate on the matter. It was during Wilders’ address that the word ‘kopvoddentaks’ was mentioned for the first time. Subsequently, Rita Verdonk of the party Verdonk adopted this repertoire.

Wilders blames the cabinet for being permissive towards Islam and, in this address, incapable of telling, or reluctant to tell, what the costs are of an immigrant. Wilders’ address consisted of a sharp critique on the cabinet, especially with regard to their policy on immigration and integration. “Dit kabinet is vastgelopen. (...) Minister-

\(^{14}\) There is one exception. Rita Verdonk adopts the same argumentative style as Van Geel did before her; they both confront Wilders with his supposed denial of his own principles (selling them), but Verdonk concurs with Wilders’ plan – that is why she has been listed in the pro-tax repertoire.
The PVV has always been very critically outspoken about the Dutch immigration policy, which it perceives to be facilitating ‘the islamization of the Netherlands’. Negative sentiments return in many of the addresses by PVV-members, and many issues are linked to the supposed failure of multiculturalism, left-wing parties, mass-immigration and Islam. The rhetoric on mass-immigration aims to evoke an alarming message: ‘vigour is urgently needed to stop the Netherlands and its Dutch population from being overwhelmed by (Islamic) foreigners. Our core identity is at stake. We risk everything that is dear to us. We will lose our country to them.’ It is a message that must politically mobilize the recipient. The September 16th address was no exception:

“This cabinet enthusiastically facilitates the Islamization of the Netherlands. The floodgates are open in Europe. Soon, one out of five people in the EU will be a Muslim. (...) Now and then a person will die, someone will get raped once in a while and in time the country will be bankrupt, but that mustn’t spoil the fun. (...) If we have some patience, the Islamic utopia awaits us.”

The remarks are negative towards Muslims; they are portrayed as aggressive colonists. But members of the House of Commons have largely accepted that these are integral to the rhetoric of the PVV. However, the remarks about the headgear that followed were new.

“Chairman, there are taxes in the Netherlands. (...) So why do we not introduce a headscarf tax; a head rag tax, I would like to call it. Just get a license once a year, and immediately pay up. A thousand euros per year seems like a good amount, and then we can finally

\[15\] Hand. II, 2009-2010, Ks 33229 nr. 2
\[16\] Ibid.
gain from something, which has cost us so much already. I say: the polluter pays.”

While delivering this speech act, the House of Commons audibly became restless, especially when the word ‘kopvoddentaks’ was mentioned, a pejorative and dehumanizing reformulation of ‘hoofddoekjesbelasting’. 18 19 Cisneros (2008) noted how “the metaphor of immigrant as pollutant (...) reifies popular stereotypes of immigrants and strengthens institutional responses that deal with immigrants as threats to be contained and eliminated” (2008; 593). This type of discourse serves to activate an institutionalized response to pollution, which is to clean up.

Furthermore, it is suggested that up till now the presence of headscarves has ‘cost us so much’, even though the ‘so much’ is unspecified. However, that specification is of lesser importance; what matters is that the audience hears a negative message to instil the sense of crisis.

To understand the pro-tax repertoire, we must learn on what premises this line of thought is built upon. Examples are plentiful in the 16th September address:

“Many Dutchmen are annoyed by the pollution of public space by Islam”; “Let us make sure that the Netherlands will once again look like the Netherlands”; “It is time to reclaim our streets”; “Headscarves are a sign of oppression of women, (...) a symbol of an ideology that aims to colonize us.” 20

17 Ibid.
18 Fragment at 1.55 see http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KbsewZuvvko
19 The significance of the reformulation partially gets lost in translation to English. In Dutch, the word ‘hoofd’ signifies ‘head’ of a human being, and ‘kop’ only applies to animals. The translation of ‘vod’ to ‘rag’ does cover the negative meaning of the reformulation.
20 Hand. II, 2009-2010, Ks 33229 nr. 2
These phrases show what constitutes the worldview that the PVV in this instance is communicating to the audience. Some premises can be distilled from the address:

1) There is a Dutch identity with core values that need to be preserved;
2) Islam is not a religion, but a totalititarian, violent, expansionist ideology
3) Islam and permissive multiculturalism pose a threat to the Dutch identity;
4) Immigration is the external (Islamic) threat; integration is the internal threat
5) The threat is to be eliminated by ‘reducing’, ‘stopping’ and ‘fighting’ Islam; this entails a full stop on Muslim immigration and complete ‘assimilation’ of Muslims in the Netherlands
6) The immigrant bears responsibility for difficulties with immigration and integration

By portraying Islam as an imminent threat to the Dutch core values and, by extension, to the Dutch society entire, any stance that is not actively opposing Islam is thus collaborating with a power of evil. By this logic, cultural sensitivity and nuance are mechanisms of self-destruction.

Member of parliament Rita Verdonk agrees with Wilders’ plan to put a ban on headscarves and makes an inquiry what the gains of this tax will be used for. Wilders states that the money could be used ‘for example, [for] women’s shelters, where people that leave Islam [apostates], have to go to because they fear that it will cost their live.’ This reaction fits the repertoire of Wilders that is anti-Islam; a single phrase associates the faith of Islam with violence – murdering those who apostatize -, and those who oppose Islam with nonviolence - as saviours of apostates. The internal logic is that

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21 Hand. II, 2009-2010, Ks 33229 nr. 2
22 Ibid.
Islam is inherently violent: if you apostatise, then you have to go in hiding, there is no alternative.

Subsequently, Verdonk mentions that it is rather odd that Wilders thinks the headscarf is misogynist and oppressive of women, but when a license is bought, it ceases to be that. Wilders notes that it is always a sign of women’s oppression, but that he is trying to raise a threshold and discourage it. Verdonk concludes that his proposal is ‘semi-soft’, and that she had expected a ‘firmer proposal for the cabinet’; ‘this proposal is giving away power to Islam’. Wilders’ final reply to the sole Member of Parliament from a different party that was in favour of his plan was that ‘if Verdonk wanted to ban headscarves, she must propose that herself; this is the PVV proposal’.

The pro-tax repertoire is proposing a means to confine the Islamic threat by constraining the right to freedom of religious expression. However, the audience must accept such a constraint, for it is a minor sacrifice for a greater cause: the essence of Dutch society and its core values. The repertoire consists of phrases that divert from the right to religious expression issue. Rather, by adopting this view one is 1) protecting Dutch values; 2) purifying the streets; 3) opposing female oppression by Islam; and so on. Logically, supporting these good causes overshadow the impediment to Muslims. The pro-tax repertoire is thus very powerful, which is why a heated debate would develop from it.

5.1.2 Not related to content
The lifespan of this repertoire has been short-lived, only in the very beginning of Geert Wilder’s address to the House of Commons have some political figures employed this repertoire. Nevertheless, members of ChristenUnie, D66, the Socialist Party (SP), Labour Party (PvdA) and GroenLinks (GL) have used it. The content of this
reertoire comprises of ridiculing or ignoring the remarks of Wilders, and attempts to redirect to a different topic.

D66 party leader Alexander Pechtold turned to Wilders right before he commenced his term to address the House of Commons; "Mr. Wilders, you walked away last time. You presented seven motions of no confidence. Do you suddenly have regained trust in this cabinet?"23 Pechtold is reminding the audience of fellow politicians that Wilders is about to address that on previous occasions, Wilders has expressed his dissatisfaction with the cabinet by using the political tool of the no-confidence motion. By emphasizing how often Wilders has issued such a motion, this remark aims to discredit Wilders by undermining his credibility as a political figure. This speech act of Pechtold did not relate to the content of Wilders’ speech act; it had yet not taken place. Wilders responded: "Just wait for what I have to say"24, and then commenced his address.

During the speech act of Wilders, the first response came from SP-member Agnes Kant, which was a prime example of provocative ridicule; "It is too absurd to even react to, but I want to propose a different tax: a tax on peroxide in hair, because I find that to be a bit polluting as well."25 Kant was reacting to Wilders’ remarks in which he mentioned that ‘headgear is polluting the streets of the Netherlands’. Kant’s remark was aimed at Wilder’s physique, which is known for a particularly notable hair due. This speech act was an example of ridiculing one’s opponent, in order to show dominance. No political values of the party or speaker can be identified from it, other than that such a remark must show the disagreement. As for a reply, Wilders could suffice with a mere “You may propose that"26 and continued his address.

23 Hand. II, 2009-2010, Ks 33229 nr. 2
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
Later, Green Left party leader Femke Halsema interrupted: “I would like to ask a question about the petrol excise that you will lower with 1 billion [euros]”\(^{27}\). This utterance shows how Halsema decided not to react to the ‘kopvooddentaks’-fragment, but instead divert attention to a particular point in the PVV’s budget proposal. A similar reaction is that of member of Parliament Mariette Hamer: “You are very good at insulting women, but I would actually like to discuss something else, that is, the topic of today. What are you going to do to deal with the crisis [financial crisis]?”\(^{28}\) Hamer does not respond to the content of Wilders’ pro-tax repertoire but instead guides to a different topic. Both to Halsema and Hamer, Wilders replied that he will discuss their raised issues later on, when he speaks about the alternative budget proposal.

The aforementioned fragments have in common that neither of them discuss the content of the address deliver by Wilders. They belong to the same repertoire the common goal of these speech acts is to disregard what has been said. Easiness, ridicule and carelessness are considered forms of showing dominance (Poggi & D’Errico, 2010). However, all of them correspond in that Wilders did not have to respond from the content of the pro-tax repertoire. He did not have to defend or consider the content at all; the remarks of the ‘not related to content’ repertoire were absorbed and the address continued.

5.1.3 **Anti-tax repertoire**

The pro-tax repertoire as carried out by the PVV inevitably led to reactions due to its provocative formulations. Representatives of virtually every political party attacked the proposal and adopted the anti-tax repertoire. Members of CDA, CU, D66, GroenLinks, SP employed it.

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\(^{27}\) Hand. II, 2009-2010, Ks 33229 nr. 2  
\(^{28}\) Ibid.
MP Pechtold reacted first, attacking Wilders on the seriousness of his proposal:

"Is this a serious proposal or do we have to listen to an act of cabaret? (...) You bring up a proposal that actually is a series of insults for a people. You tell me that there you will not further develop this? You posit this; you provide no description. It is just a piece of cabaret, isn't it? (...) It is an embarrassment."  

Passingly, Pechtold makes cynical remarks about the fact that Wilders has earned taxpayers money during his political career, which aims to discredit Wilders’ anger about what he calls frivolous spending of tax earnings. Pechtold blames Wilders for randomly positing an ‘insulting’ tax that has not been passed. Furthermore, he refers to the occasion where the PVV-fraction abandoned a debate, and they squabble over the number of seats hold by their parties in parliament. The main point of Pechtold was that he considers Wilders’ tax proposal to be discriminatory and misguided, ‘an embarrassment’.

Member of SP, Agnes Kant, abandoned the ‘not related to content’ repertoire and employed the content related anti-tax repertoire. She tried to elicit a statement from Wilders that may unveil his proposal as discriminatory, by elaborating on the execution and consequences of the tax. She asked about yarmulkes, a Jewish type of headgear, and about non-Muslims on the countryside who wear a headscarf. Wilders replied that Kant is mocking about, and that his proposal concerns only the Islamic headscarf. Kant asked Wilders if the proposal includes a ‘headscarf police’ that checks whether a headscarf is worn out of Islamic belief or for a different reason. Lastly, she states that Wilders has not thought through his proposal.

29 Ibid.
and says it is 'ridiculous'.

At all times, Wilders spoke from a pro-tax repertoire that invoked the sense of urgency of a much needed tax to clean our streets, promote women’s rights and reduce Islam.

Arie Slob of the ChristenUnie said that Wilders was misusing the freedom that his party claims to stand for, by offending other members of Dutch society based on their physical features. Wilders notes that as the headscarf is a type of ‘unfreedom’, his proposal is a defense of freedom. He can talk from the pro-tax repertoire by re-adopting the ‘defenders of women and freedom’-rhetoric. He reacts to Slob that the essence of the headscarf is oppression;

“Once again, a headscarf is a sign, mr. Slob, of unfreedom. You should be on our side to fight that.”

Wilders is using the argument that places those he addresses on the spot; ‘if you are not fighting unfreedom, then you are permitting or promoting it’. However, as Wilders discussed the fact that he equates the religious connotation with oppression, Slob mentioned that he knows Christian women that wear headscarves, which he does not associate with oppression. Moreover, he blames Wilders for appealing to Judea-Christian values but not adhering to the respectful interaction it precludes.

“We are sick and tired of those headscarves in the Netherlands. We shall do whatever to reduce them. (...) This is a proposal to oppose those headscarves, which, once again, just pollute the environment in the Netherlands – it not only looks ridiculous, but it is also a sign of oppression of women.”

Slob is speaking from a point of view and tries to evoke a sense of

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30 Hand. II, 2009-2010, Ks 33229 nr. 2
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
33 The meaning of ‘het ziet er niet alleen niet uit’, slightly gets lost in translation. In Dutch ‘het ziet er niet uit’ refers to the fact that something looks silly, odd, stupid or ridiculous. If anything, it is a negative utterance about aesthetics, meant to bring a person down.
34 Hand. II, 2009-2010, Ks 33229 nr. 2
respectfulness in Wilders, by confronting him with his own remarks about Judea-Christian values. Yet the final remarks echo the offensive pro-tax repertoire: headscarves pollute, are oppressive, and so on.

Member of Parliament for CDA Jan van Geel starts with a reference to the occasion where the PVV-faction has abandoned a debate. A ridiculing remark, which Poggi and D’Errico acknowledge to be a sign of dominance (2010). “Do I understand correctly that mr. Wilders is selling his principles for 1000 [euro]? Is that the image that he is invoking? That is a very special thing to happen. Second, mr. Wilders, comes this. Care and respect in the public domain is important to all of us, but it starts – let’s be honest – with respect for each other.” Van Geel is confronting Wilders with what he perceives to be hypocrisy; opposing a phenomenon (headscarves) but accepting it when tax is paid. Moreover, he gives Wilders a reprimand for his lack of respect; a returning aspect of the anti-tax repertoire refers to respect. Wilders responded from the ‘defenders of freedom’-rhetoric; that way he places his proposal in a position that ‘promotes respect’ rather than being disrespectful. “This is [original emphasis] respect for each other, because, again, a headscarf is disrespectful, is anti-women, is a sign of imprisonment of women. According to us, this has no place in the Netherlands. You are right: you can propose a prohibition. That is more difficult; we have looked into that with the proposal for the burqa and niqab. Our route is to do it via a license system and paying up 1000 [euros] per year. You could spend that money on very good things, on women’s shelters and so on. So that will all be fine.”

Wilders manages to align his pro-tax repertoire with a pro-respect

35 Ibid.
36 The meaning of ‘en noem maar op’ slightly gets lost in translation; ‘and so on’ does not fully cover it. In Dutch, it is used to shorten a summary after naming some options. However, when only one thing is being mentioned before, it suggests that there are no alternatives (at least none that have been thought of beforehand). In this context, the latter option is rather likely, as Wilders has been put on the spot by Van Geel and later on by Verdonk.
37 Hand. II, 2009-2010, Ks 33229 nr. 2
rhetoric. However, the misguidedness of his proposal shows in his lack of new information density; the plan for women’s shelter is repeated, other alternatives remain unspecified, and Van Geel must be reassured by ‘so that will all be fine’.

Party leader of GroenLinks Femke Halsema at first ties the PVV tax proposal to religious persecution from the 1500s.\textsuperscript{38} Then she comes up with a different analogy, and compares the proposal of Wilders with the country of Iran and its ‘morality police’.\textsuperscript{39} Wilders, speaking from a different discourse, poses that that is the exact opposite of what he is trying to accomplish. From Halsema’s perspective, there is a similarity between forcing women to wear a headscarf, and forcing them to take it off. In contrast, Wilders says he wants to discourage wearing a headscarf, and mentions ‘Islamization’ of the street view in the Netherlands. He states that this is ‘un-Dutch and misogynist’, and that many people ‘are annoyed by that’. Their final remarks illustrate the incompatibility of their worldviews.

\textbf{Halsema:} “\textit{I believe the core of a civilized society must be that women are free to believe and make their own choices. You want to introduce a backward culture.”}

\textbf{Wilders:} “No, Islam is a backward culture and I want to fight that.”\textsuperscript{40}

Halsema confronts Wilders with her view that his proposal is an infringement on a very personal level, religious expression. She then points out that a similar infringement is taking place in Iran. Halsema’s issue is this point of state intervention in the personal domain. Wilders’ reacts that ‘the Netherlands is heading in the

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
direction of Iran’. He either is referring to the fact that headscarves are worn, that he considers to be not free, and thus the Netherlands is becoming less free. Or his point is more literal; then his issue is with the fact that headscarves are increasingly part of the public domain, as one might come across women with headscarves outside. The latter point returns in his next reply, when he considers the streetscape. His reasoning is that the Netherlands is becoming more ‘Islamic’, because headscarves are allowed. He also notes the ‘nuisance’ that ‘many people’ experience when they see headscarves. This neatly fits the alarming premises of the pro-tax repertoire that there are Dutch core values at stake; e.g. ‘if we (the Dutch) do not oppose them (anybody Islamic), then they will impose their un-Dutch and misogynist culture on us; they will colonize us; the Netherlands will become Islamic’.

Halsema’s last remark contains a direct reference to Wilders’ own rhetoric expression, that of the ‘backward culture’. This remark has become widespread ever since politician Pim Fortuyn used it for the Islam.41 Fortuyn was very critical about specifically Muslim immigration; according to him, the cultural background had an inhibitory effect on integration, thus being a costly burden to the state, to ‘us’. Halsema applied a term that Wilders uses for Islam to Wilders himself. However, the sole reply was to again reverse the term and speak from the pro-tax repertoire by stating that Islam is a backward culture. The address followed with a critique on the cabinet for supposedly ‘hiding’ the real statistics about the costs of immigration. This however, marks the end of headscarf tax remarks in this debate, as it is no longer mentioned or referred to.

The anti-tax repertoire and pro-tax repertoire are antagonistic worldviews. The pro-tax repertoire is derived from a worldview that

beholds the Netherlands as a cradle of modernity and tolerance: to allow for intolerance, in the form of Islam, to enter Dutch society is a form of self-destruction. What allows for this to happen is the permissive cultural relativism of multiculturalism. The anti-tax repertoire is employed by many of the parties that the PVV views as multiculturalist; the PvdA has been called ‘Party of the Arabs’ and CDA ‘Christians serve Allah’. These parties are less restrictive towards immigrants and do not make the distinction between Muslim immigrants and non-Muslims.

These parties adhere to a similar worldview in which:

1) The Netherlands is a free and open society;
2) Where migrants have a right to immigrate to and live;
3) Tolerance and mutual respect are core values;
4) Which is why cultural sensitivity is important to a certain degree;
5) And migrants have a right to express their cultural and religious identity
6) Both the immigrant and the host state bear responsibility for difficulties with immigration and integration

Basically, the greatest difference between the worldview of the pro-tax and that of the anti-tax, is the focus on the problems an excesses of immigration and integration. The pro-tax repertoire stems from the idea that the Netherlands is a modern and successful society and that there are immigrants from different countries that pose a threat. It externalizes some of the problems in the Netherlands to an outside source, by focussing on the incoming immigrants, rather than the recipient state. The view that brought forth the anti-tax repertoire reflects on the issues and acknowledges a responsibility of the host state as well. Furthermore, critique on the immigrant’s culture or religion conflicts with the values of tolerance and mutual respect.

All remarks have in common that they attack the pro-tax repertoire on its content. They mention the discriminatory aspects, the
troubles of implementation, the lack of respect towards particular groups in society and the similarities with the advocacy of unfreedom it supposedly opposes. The remarks must discredit the proposal, and the means of doing so is by questioning the thoroughness of the tax proposal; the anti-tax repertoire notes its lack of premeditation, its hypocrisy and its disrespect.

5.2 Analysis per party
Having mentioned the different speech acts of the two debates, it is now possible to summarize the different employed repertoires by each political party, in order to provide an overview. In the analysed debates, speech acts from representatives of CDA, CU, D66, GroenLinks, PvdA, PVV, SP and member Rita Verdonk have made contributions.

CDA
In the kopvoddentaks-case, the Christen Democratisch Appèl employed the anti-tax repertoire, as carried out by MP Van Geel. He states that Wilders is selling out on his principles – opposing headscarves but allowing them when money is paid. He then emphasizes that care and respect in the public domain follow from care and respect for each other, thus calling the kopvoddentaks proposal disrespectful.

CU
The reactions to the kopvoddentaks by members of the ChristenUnie all belonged to the anti-tax repertoire. According to MP Slob, with this proposal Wilders was misusing the freedom that the PVV is supposed to stand for. Slob and Wilders obviously have different interpretations of the connotations of the headscarf. Wilders is specifically targeting the Islamic headscarf that he considers to be a form of oppression. Slob on the other hand links the headscarf to freedom of religious expression. He recalls the
Judeo-Christian values, which the PVV is trying to protect, and states that a kopvoddentaks is squarely in conflict with them.

D66
The party members of D66 were actively involved in all the three discursive crises, and were very dominant in the debates. MP Pechtold ridiculed Wilders before he could deliver his address in the kopvoddentaks debate – he referred to an occasion where Wilders and his fraction walked out from a debate. After the proposal, Pechtold continued to show that he did not take Wilders seriously, calling his address a piece of cabaret and an embarrassment. Obviously the D66 adhered to the anti-tax repertoire.

GroenLinks
Members of GroenLinks have had significant input in all the three cases, and were critical of the PVV and to a lesser extent of the cabinet. The first response to the kopvoddentaks was initially ignoring the proposal – MP Halsema asked a question on a different topic; the not-related-to-topic repertoire that did not acknowledge the proposal. The next response however was very critical of Wilder’s kopvoddentaks. Her first comparison is with religious persecution, but then she equates the tax plan with the ‘morality police’, found in the very ‘backward culture’ that the PVV is saying to fight. Essentially GroenLinks was saying that the proposal of the PVV is hypocritical and unfree.

PvdA
Though MP Hamer only adopts the ‘not related to content’ repertoire in the kopvoddentaks case, the PvdA was against the tax proposal of Wilders. However, the speech act that PvdA provides is aiming to confront Wilders with a different topic, being the financial crisis rather than the proposal. Many other political actors had reacted to, and the PvdA most likely deemed it unnecessary to add to this discussion. Thus, MP Hamer tries to divert attention to a
more relevant topic – she deems the proposal unworthy of being discussed any longer.

**PVV**
The PVV has played a major role in starting two of the three discursive crises. In the kopvoddentaks case the employed repertoire must convince the public of the need for a tax on headscarves. This is necessary because the ‘islamization of the society’ must be halted. As Islam is ‘a misogynist, expansionist ideology out to colonize us’, a tax on headscarves would be a means of protecting the freedoms of Dutch society. This is why the PVV initiated the ‘pro-tax’ repertoire.

**SP**
The Socialist Party was one of the most active parties in all the first two cases. During the kopvoddentaks crisis, initially the ‘not related to content’ repertoire was adhered to by MP Kant, in order to ridicule Wilders on a personal level. She changed to the anti-tax repertoire soon after her first remark. Through her next speech act, Kant managed to evoke a response from Wilders that laid bare the discriminatory character of his proposal. Her repeated thorough examination aims to debunk the proposal as misguided and unworkable.

**Verdonk**
Member of Parliament Verdonk has only had input in the case of the kopvoddentaks – she was no longer part of the House of Commons in the two other cases. During the kopvoddentaks, she concurred with the tax proposal thus adhering to the pro-tax repertoire. However, she was critical of how such a proposal must be realised and called it a semi-soft idea that ‘gives away power to Islam’. Both Wilders and Verdonk speak from an anti-Islam frame, but Verdonk makes it apparent that she had expected a firmer proposal. Wilders replies that she might suggest a complete ban on headscarves.
Below is an oversight (Table 1) of the different repertoires that have been employed by each political party involved in the debate.

**Table 1**  
**Employment of repertoire by political party**

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<th>Pro tax</th>
<th>Not related to content</th>
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<td>Verdonk</td>
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The pro-tax repertoire first appears in the address of Wilders on behalf of the PVV. He criticizes the cabinet on their immigration and integration policy and proposes a tax on headscarves. It confronts the audience with the excesses of immigration and integration and paints a grim picture of the Netherlands if no action is undertaken. This mechanism is the construction of a discursive crisis that Colin Hay (1993) has analysed extensively. It consists of combining stories of separate events and frame them as ‘symptomatic’ of a larger narrative. In this pro-tax repertoire, the unease that some people may experience in encountering a different cultural or religious expression is magnified and applied to the Dutch public as a whole; singular events of murder or rape are framed as being symptomatic to a religion or culture and the remedy is to obstruct immigration.

Table 1 shows us that a majority of the political parties in this debate opposed the pro-tax repertoire by employing two different types of other repertoires. As the debate develops, we can see how initially parties that employed the ‘not related to content’ repertoire
switch to the ‘anti-tax’ repertoire. This might be explained by the lack of information density of the ‘not related to content’ repertoire. The fragments of this repertoire show that the message is merely to communicate disagreement in a non-constructive manner. Indeed, no arguments are provided as to why the speaker disagrees, which leads to a dead end of a discussion.

The ‘anti tax’ repertoire, on the other hand, confronts the ‘pro-tax’ repertoire with its premises and the consequences of its implementation. ‘Pro-tax’ blames ‘anti-tax’ of cultural relativism, permissiveness of excesses of integration and immigration, and destabilization of dominant domestic culture. Vice versa, the accusations of discrimination, racism, intolerance, and destabilization of societal cohesion are uttered. However, those politicians that opposed the tax on headscarves have laid bare some critical issues; there are elements in the basic principles and implementation of such a tax that are unconstitutional, discriminatory and therefore not executable. The PVV must have realized that their proposal cannot be put to practice. Thus, by passingly positing such an unrealistic proposal, the most likely reason to do so was to achieve agitation or media attention. MP Halsema suspects Wilders of seeking attention: “Let me say that meanwhile your address is becoming regrettably poor. A bit vulgar as well. The proposal is no good, and then you try to pull some trick with headscarves. The press probably has to be satisfied with that for a while.”

5.3 Response to the discursive crisis of the headscarf tax
PVV leader Geert Wilders states that the wearing of headscarves is problematic. The headscarf is ‘oppressive of women, misogynist, and a manifestation of intolerance’. This type of Islamic headgear is symptomatic to a greater threat: the emergence of Islam in Europe. Wilders places the phenomenon within a narrative of European countries being gradually overtaken by Islam. The religion of Islam is perceived to be an expansionist ideology. Due to continuing

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42 Hand. II, 2009-2010, Ks 33229 nr. 2
immigration, differences in birth rates and other factors, it is a matter of time before there are more Muslims than non-Muslims in Europe. For Dutch people the national identity is at stake. The discourse of Wilders contains alarming elements that must emphasize the urgency of the matter. Wilders highlights the role of social-democratic parties in facilitating the Islamization. Moreover, the sharp dichotomy between right and wrong equates inaction with being permissive of the wrongdoings of Islam – the narrative thus calls for mobilization of the addressees.

The narrative befits the theory of Hay’s discursive construction of crisis. Events are simplified and are ‘recruited as symptoms’ within the discourse of crisis (Hay 1996; 267). Muslim women that wear a scarf are stripped from active agency or voluntary choice, and are made into passive, oppressed victims of a misogynist ideology. The headscarf is made into the symbol of oppression; the event or act portrayed as a symptom of the larger meta-narrative of Islamization of European culture.

The responses to Wilders’ address are different, but all fit a larger counter narrative that opposes the pro-tax discourse, by virtue of its xenophobic elements. It is said to be ‘insulting’, ‘ridiculous’, ‘disrespectful’ – qualifications that discard the attacks on Islam. The pro-tax repertoire works on the assumptions that there are Dutch values that are under threat by Islamic culture, and that may be protected by opposing and thwarting Islam. The not-related-to-content repertoire comprises of remarks, verbal blanks that are fired at a person to signify that what has been said is not taken seriously; they exhibit disregard. However, they carry little informative power other than showing this disregard. Within the anti-tax repertoire, we see that politicians question the seriousness of the proposal, the troubling excesses of implementation, the discriminatory character and the disrespectful language of the advocate.
The proposal was no longer mentioned during the Algemene Beschouwingen of September 16th 2009. However, the day after Wilders made some final remarks with regard to his proposal:

“Our proposal to introduce a headscarf taxation, the so-called head rag tax, has been swept from the table by the cabinet. I must admit that I have heard no sensible argument other than some multicultural boasting from the prime minister. That means that this symbol of that women’s oppression, this symbol of the Islamic imperialism will continue to pollute our streets.”

It would be the final remark in the House of Commons on this topic.

The ‘kopvoddentaks’-proposal was met with much critique that firmly rejected the plans of Wilders beforehand. A majority of the politicians that reacted spoke from the anti-tax repertoire, thus it may be concluded that the ‘crisis’ has been solved. In fact, apart from discussions afterwards in the media, the word ‘kopvoddentaks’ has never been mentioned by the PVV in a debate. We may thus assess that they no longer consider it to be serious proposal, or never did, and thus the ‘discursive crisis’ has found no further breeding ground for development.

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43 Hand. II, 2009-2010, Ks 34219 nr. 3
6. Case Norway Attacks

6.1 Repertoires

The discussion about the Norway attacks took place over a longer period of time. Right after the attacks on July 22, politicians spoke out on the matter, but it was not until the 6th of September that the matter reached the House of Commons and thus the official debate. The House of Commons was on a summer recess, when the attacks took place. The link between Breivik and Wilders took a high rise after it had reached the media. Afterwards, there was no actual discussion. Rather, politicians issued different statements with their view or their party’s view on the matter; this happened in a dispersed way via various media. To provide a more complete analysis of the repertoires in the 6th September debate, the earlier remarks have to be considered as well. A brief chronology of remarks (See Annex 2) of the weeks after the attacks should provide extra information on the different points of view that return in the debate.

There is however a difference between the 6 September debate and speech acts made beforehand. All speech acts before that date were made in the media: via social media, in interviews, on radio, in televised talk shows. The topic of discussion then was whether there is a link between Wilders (his speech acts, his ideology, his politics) and Breivik (his radicalization, his ideology, his beliefs). Annex 2 provides an overview of some of the speech acts. They comprise of a ‘blame game’ type of discussion, with sharp remarks and vague dichotomies as ‘left vs. right’, ‘left vs. PVV/Wilders’, ‘moderates vs. provocateurs’. This discussion was not continued within the official debate, no politician made explicit remarks about a link between Wilders and Breivik. However, the debate that MP Dibi requested was undoubtedly hinting at this, given previous remarks of Dibi and his stance on the matter. For the sake of brevity, and because this
research focuses on the official debate, the analysis starts with the debate of 6th September 2011.

After analysis, four distinctively different repertoires may be distilled from the debate. These are the ‘pro-debate’ repertoire, the ‘anti-debate’ repertoire, the ‘condition: broader’ repertoire, and lastly the ‘condition: await cabinet’s response’ repertoire. They were found in debates that were held in the House of Commons on 6 and 13 September 2011, and the letter of cabinet that was published on that last date.

6.1.1 Pro-debate
The pro-debate repertoire contains speech acts that are unconditionally in favour of a debate on the theme of ‘xenophobia’. It is important to note that the two ‘conditional’ repertoires are partially overlapping with the pro-debate repertoire. They contain speech acts that favour a debate, but not on the terms or in the form that Dibi has shaped it. GroenLinks and the ChristenUnie have employed it.

The pro-debate repertoire was initiated by MP Tofik Dibi and then expanded by different speech acts. “This summer in Norway an unimaginable bloodbath has been caused by a man that wanted to violently oppose the outcomes of immigration and the advent of Islam. The feelings of despair and anger of Anders Behring Breivik are present in the whole of Europe, definitely in the Netherlands as well, and must be made open for debate. This is all the more true today when, as Eurocommissioner Malmström states, less and less European leaders seem willing to resist to xenophobia. I therefore request a debate with our Prime-Minister and Mister Donner of Foreign Affairs.”

It is clear that Dibi follows a different line of arguing than those that have called Breivik a crazy person or a twisted idiot. Dibi is in no

44 Hand. II, 2010-2011, nr. 102 item 8
way defending the deeds of the perpetrator of the Norway attacks, but by framing his motives as ‘feelings of despair and anger’ that come from ‘wanting to violently oppose Islam and the outcomes of immigration’, he humanizes the actions and places them in a broader context. Attacks that were carried by one individual on two different locations in Norway are placed in a meta-narrative immigration and Islam that now concerns the whole continent of Europe. By placing Breivik’s actions in this meta-narrative, it is inevitable to leave out Wilders and the PVV in the Netherlands, for they do have an outspoken and clear voice on these topics. If the goal of this repertoire is to link Wilders to Breivik, then it has succeeded. Dibi has thus ‘defined what the crisis is all about’ (‘t Hart 1993:91).

The premises that can be derived from this speech act construct a logical link:

1. There are voices in society and politics that oppose (Islamic) immigration
2. Politicians that say this are considered xenophobic, racist, discriminatory
3. People in society that agree with them, do so out of ignorance and fear; they follow the politicians because they feel unrepresented in politics

Thus far, the worldview that this repertoire communicates safe observations that can be verified in the outside world. Indeed, there are people who oppose (Islamic) immigration, they are considered by some to be xenophobic and ignorant, and for a large time they have been underrepresented in politics. But the premises that led to the conclusion establishing a link between Wilders and Breivik are unfounded.

4. Wilders’ PVV represents this voice in the Netherlands
5. Anders Breivik puts his actions in a meta-narrative of immigration and integration, and refers to Wilders in his manifesto; Ergo:
6. Wilders bears responsibility for Breivik (radicalization? ideology? actions?)
A trick of rhetoric is put to work to associate Wilders with xenophobia, xenophobia with Breivik, and thus Breivik with Wilders. Because Wilders and Breivik share interfaces of ideology, this does not imply that they interact, and certainly does not establish a link of causality. Wilders and Breivik have never met, but Breivik states to admire Wilders. This referral was reason for some politicians to talk of a link. However, as the only link is ideological, and Breivik knows Wilders only from his expressions, the terrain on which the link had to be established was in this area. Thus, politicians that had an interest in constructing a discursive crisis, spoke off the impact of words and the power of speech.

MP Ortega-Martijn of ChristenUnie concurred with Dibi’s construction of the crisis and stated that ‘[he] thought it was very brave of [Dibi] to open up this topic for debate’. Calling the speech act of Dibi ‘brave’ may have impact on the politicians that would follow to react, for now, opposing this repertoire means opposing bravery. Subsequently, he requested for a letter of the cabinet before the debate would take place.

6.1.2 Anti-debate

The anti-debate repertoire comprises all speech acts that did not want a debate on xenophobia, due to different reasons. The PVV and VVD employed this repertoire. After the letter of the cabinet, the CDA joined in on this repertoire. First to start the repertoire was MP Van Klaveren of the PVV: “First I want to congratulate m r. Dibi with the fact that his fraction now seems to be complete, this in contrast with the moment on which we commemorated the people from Oslo. Apart from that I want to declare that we [PVV] see no reason for the ridiculous debate. Should it proceed, then we shall not be present.”

For the PVV to oppose a debate on this theme was to be expected. The link between Wilders and Breivik repeatedly was topic of discussion in the media for the past weeks. However, a prevalent

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45 Hand. II, 2010-2011, nr. 102 item 8
46 Ibid.
line of thought had become that Wilders and Breivik differ in that Wilders swears to a democratic way of advancing his interests, whereas Breivik chose path of violence. In an official statement, Wilders explained how “[the PVV] fight[s] in a democratic and nonviolent manner against further Islamization of our society and will continue doing that. The preservation of our freedom and safety is our only goal.” Clearly the means of the PVV is to advance their interests within the institution of democracy. However, for MP Van Klaveren to declare that the PVV will not attend a debate is very undemocratic and is diametrically opposed to the official statement.

The other political party employing the anti-debate repertoire is the VVD, in the form of MP Van Miltenburg. “What has happened in Norway this summer, is really terrible. My fraction has said that directly after the attacks. She [VVD-fraction] has declared her support for the population of Norway and the survivors that continue their lives after this. But to hold a debate on xenophobia in the Netherlands due to this dreadful event, overreaches the matter in our view. (…) We feel no need for a debate.”

An interesting aspect of this fragment is that MP Van Miltenburg starts by repeating that the VVD has expressed their support for the people of Norway. Apparently she felt that if she did not explicitly mention this act of sympathy, people may think otherwise after hearing what she has to say next. It shows that the debate has been framed in such a manner, that those who would oppose a debate are thought to be not rejecting (or not enough) the acts of violence. Van Miltenburg relocalizes the attacks on Norwegian territory, and articulates that, even though the attacks were significant and terrible, their significance cannot be transposed and be applied to the Dutch situation.

48 Hand. II, 2010-2011, nr. 102 item 8
6.1.3 **Condition: await cabinet's response**

One of the four repertoires suggested waiting for the cabinet to respond on this issue. The cabinet’s response was in the form of a letter that belonged to the anti-debate repertoire. This repertoire was used only in the 6th September debate. It is marked by carefulness and hesitance; politicians that use it do not outspokenly support nor oppose Dibi’s request. Representatives of CDA, D66 and SGP employed it.

In his ‘pro-debate’ speech act, MP Ortega-Martijn of ChristenUnie as well stated that he wanted to receive a letter from the cabinet. Yet his remark does not fit this fourth repertoire, as he wholeheartedly supports the request from MP Dibi, contrary to the speakers that decide not to support before a response from the cabinet. MP Sterk explains that the CDA fraction has its doubts about the background of the debate as well, and urges for a letter from the cabinet before making any further decisions. Representative of SGP Van der Staaij concurred with Sterk and added no further arguments, so we can regard the two speech acts as identical in meaning. Another speech act that was present in the ‘condition: broader’ repertoire is found in this repertoire. D66 representative Schouw said that the debate should be both broader, and ‘that an analysis from the government is needed as well’.

Characteristics of the ‘condition: await cabinet’s response’ repertoire is the lack of decisiveness that the politicians that employ it display. Based on these speech acts, no course of action can be determined; there will be neither support nor opposition of the debate because of this repertoire. This repertoire transposes the responsibility of decision-making to the cabinet.

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49 *Hand. II, 2010-2011, nr. 105 item 8*

50 Ibid.
The letter of the cabinet stated that Breivik’s violent transition of anti-Islam and extremist ideologies was a new element, but also stressed that ‘there are no concrete indicator signs that there is a breeding ground in the Netherlands for a similar violent transition’. In reference to Dibi’s remarks about ‘feelings of anger and despair’ and his linking to xenophobia, the letter states that ‘the perception that the actions of Breivik are more or less an outcome of broader prevalent ideas and feelings is not shared by the cabinet.’

The cabinet adds a technical story of the institutions that monitor racism, discrimination, and radicalization. Moreover, they underline that ‘the events in Norway are no reason for the development of additional policies in the field of resilience and cohesion’. The cabinet thus traces the attacks back to the specific location of Norway and disconnects it from the Dutch context accordingly. The meta-narrative of racism, discrimination and xenophobia is touched upon, but the view of the cabinet is that the responsible Dutch institutions are aware of the risks, adequately prepared and ever vigilant. The letter expresses trust in institutions that must prevent a violent translation of existing sentiments, and the cohesion and resilience of society. A debate on the matter is thus considered to be unnecessary.

After the letter of the cabinet, the PVV and CDA repeated their stance. The VVD switched to employing the anti-debate repertoire as well. Van Miltenburg stated that Dibi’s repetition of his request appear to be an act of politicizing over the back of the victims of Norway. The VVD thus holds on to its stance and now explicitly blames GroenLinks for politicizing on the situation. It shows that the VVD was hesitant to speak out on the matter. The first remarks were carefully formulated, the VVD even in a way made an excuse for taking in their position; they emphasized that they had shown

51 Hand. II, 2010-2011, Ks 29754 nr 206
52 Hand. II, 2010-2011, nr. 105 item 8
empathy, but don’t support a debate. After the cabinet’s response, however, the VVD was encouraged to speak out and advocate their stance from a moral high ground. Not only was their view on the matter in line with what the cabinet stated, they also can blame GroenLinks for continuing its effort to request a debate. It is remarkable that apparently MP van Miltenburg had ‘a suspicion’ that GL was politicizing over the attacks, but did not speak of this in the first speech act.

MP van Klaveren of the PVV added a remark that accused GroenLinks’ proposal to be in bad taste. “Last week we already declared that we see no reason for holding a debate. We think it is ridiculous. We also think, in addition to what the VVD-fraction has said, that it is in rather bad taste to politicize on the fact that a large human drama has occurred in Norway.” In the first statement, PVV announced, or threatened, that ‘it will not be present at a debate about xenophobia’. This meaningful fragment is discarded after the letter of the cabinet has been published. The PVV was now assured that the likeliness of a debate was severely decreased.

The CDA switched from the ‘condition: await cabinet response’ repertoire, and employed the anti-debate repertoire as well, and stated that “[the] discussion behind these microphones show how complicated the matter is. As for us, the letter is clear. (...) [A] special debate seems futile to us.” In the first statement, made by MP Sterk of the CDA, the doubts of CDA with regard to the background of the debate were expressed. A response letter from the cabinet was needed, and after that was published, the CDA adopted that view.

All the speech acts in the anti-debate repertoire have in common that they oppose having a debate about xenophobia. They do so on

53 Ibid.
54 Hand. II, 2010-2011, nr. 102 item 8
different terms. The PVV is not interested in having a debate, for it directly concerns their party; they were accused of being xenophobic and a debate about the topic may end up being a debate about the PVV. The VVD sees no reason for a debate, for despite the horrible attack; it would be an exaggeration to hold a debate in the Dutch House of Commons that was instigated by an event outside Dutch territories. By re-localizing the Norway attacks, they may validly argue that it had no real significance for Dutch society in order for it to be topic of an official debate. The CDA, having at first set the condition that they want to await the cabinet’s response, switched to employing the anti-debate repertoire. They argued that, as the cabinet had responded it would not support a debate, and because of the complexity, they as well would not support a debate.

6.1.4 Condition: broader
The majority of parties that were present during the first debate were in favour of having it, on the condition that its topic would be broadened. Members of D66, PvdA, PvdD, SGP and SP delivered speech acts that fit this repertoire. The first to use it was MP Van Dam of PvdA, in reply to PVV-member Van Klaveren: “I doubted whether this debate should be held, but now that I have heard mr. Van Klaveren, I actually know it for certain. It is good to hold a certain debate, but I want to have it broader than mr. Dibi has proposed. No matter how horrible it is that social-democratic youth in Norway have been victimized by a terrorist, and despite the existing need for me as well to talk about that, I think it is better to broaden the debate and say: it now is ten years after September 11 [2001], a period that started with a horrible attack on thousands of people in New York and Washington. That was the preamble, the prologue of ten years of debate about Islam, multicultural society, and integration. (...) I would support a debate that is as broad, wherein we view where we are at the moment and what the debate has brought us.”

55 H Hand. II, 2010-2011, nr. 102 item 8
Opposite to the stance of VVD, that re-localizes the events to Norway, the PvdA speech act further abstracts the topic of debate, by placing it in a global context. The terms on which the debate should then be held are rather elusive: a debate on ‘Islam, multicultural society and integration’ should provide the politicians with information on ‘where we are’. It is clear the MP Van Dam places the Norway attacks, but also the discussion that must be held, in a global meta-narrative. The fact that a discussion is much needed, according to Van Dam, shows that something must be changed within that global context; he discursively constructs a crisis (Hay, 1996). Yet the topic of discussion is the debate that Dibi requests from the House of Commons, and the narrative of Van Dam is mentioned no more.

MP Schouw of D66 addresses the request of Dibi next: “Xenophobia is a multiple-headed monster that can now and then emerge in a horrible fashion. The fraction of D66 deems it wise to make a good analysis of what happens and to also view what the recommendations are. We want to ask that analysis from the government as well, so we can – I agree with colleague Van Dam on that – broaden the debate en hold it more accurately.”

This speech act explicitly notes agreement with the earlier speaker that suggested broadening the debate. It refers to the Norway attacks as ‘xenophobia emerging in a horrible fashion’, which is a particular abstraction that identifies the attacks solely, or primarily as xenophobia. Yet as becomes evident throughout the other speech acts in this repertoire, the concept of xenophobia is too vague to debate about.

MP Karabalut of SP mentions this: “I find it a rather difficult question as well. You can see it now. Mr. Dibi justly calls xenophobia, discrimination, racism and the broader development in society an important subject, which should be discussed, but here the tendency is to link these topics together. I want to support mr. Dibi, but concur with all the previous speakers that stated the debate should be made broader.
According to me, we have the good habit of making topics as racism, discrimination and xenophobia open for debate. I think it is right to do so quickly.” Karabalut mentions the vagueness that MP Dibi’s request comprises, and she distills from it that some difficult topics must be made open for debate. However, after personally stating that the discussion might become unclear, no suggestion is made of what should be done instead.

MP Thiem of the PvdD concurs with Karabalut in her reaction. “The doubts that were mentioned were shared by the PvdD-fraction as well. I concur with the words of mrs. Karabalut. Furthermore, I would like to say that I find highly inappropriate, the suggestive remark of the PVV-fraction in direction of colleagues that weren’t able to attend the commemoration, as if they’d sympathize less and find the drama less horrible.” 56 The remarks of Thiem add nothing to the content of the repertoire; she concurs with every speaker that employed this repertoire before her. However, she makes an interesting remark about the speech act of PVV member Van Klaveren; she gives him a reprimand for making an unfbefitting remark. This is a prime example of how crisis, and in this particular case a discussion about crisis, is “the domain of multiple realities and conflicting cognitions” (‘t Hart 1993;99). Blame is a political tool to exert dominance; in this case moral superiority over the other.

The last to add to the discussion is SGP-party leader Van der Staaij, who shares the doubts of previous speakers: “I feel that the debate may easily become too narrow or too broad. It is too narrow when we only speak of Norway. (...) I concur with the CDA-fraction.” 57 Van der Staaij, as well as MP Thieme, adds nothing new to the content of the repertoire. He provides a different formulation for the same doubts. However, it is interesting to see that where others suggested

56 Hand. II, 2010-2011, nr. 102 item 8
57 Ibid.
a broader debate, Van der Staaij objects that it may again become too broad. Clearly the politicians from the ‘condition: broader’ repertoire agree that they will not support a debate in the form of Dibi’s request, but none of them provide any specific alternative. Obviously, the speech acts that make up this repertoire are characterised by haziness and uncertainty. What they share is their common agreement that they all disagree with the request.

6.2 Analysis per party

CDA
In the debate about a discussion on the Norway attacks, the CDA first wanted to await a response from the cabinet. After a response letter from the cabinet on the issue, CDA adopted the stance and opposed to a debate. According to MP Sterk, CDA had its doubts about the background of how such a debate would have to be held. The letter from the cabinet was paramount for the stance of CDA. The party was the only political actor that switched positions and fully adopted the cabinet’s stance, abandoning their previous repertoire; a debate on the matter would now be ‘futile’.

CU
In the discussion about the Norway attacks, MP for CU Ortega-Martijn is the first to respond to Dibi’s request for a debate on xenophobia. She praised Dibi for his courage to bring up this topic, and supported the debate. Concomitantly, she said that the CU wished to receive a response from the cabinet beforehand, but she spoke from a pro-debate repertoire. After the cabinet’s letter, the CU still supported a debate because it was ‘time to speak openly about this subject’.

D66
MP Dibi’s request to hold a debate on xenophobia was supported by D66 on the condition that the debate takes place in a broader context, and that Dibi clarifies the content and topics more
specifically. After the cabinet’s response, MP Schouw of D66 still supported the request of Dibi but emphasized that the terms on which the debate should be held needed to be clearer.

GroenLinks
The discussion on xenophobia was initiated by MP Dibi of GroenLinks, who ‘wanted to make the feelings of anger and despair in the face of immigration and Islam’ and the ‘apparent negligence of European leaders to oppose xenophobia’ a topic of debate. The member of GroenLinks framed the Norway attacks as an act of xenophobia, thus equating xenophobia with potential violence. In the time between the attacks and his request, a heated discussion of accusations had unfolded outside of the House of Commons. Suggestions were made about ideological links between perpetrator Anders Breivik and PVV-leader Geert Wilders. The discussion must be placed in this context, for it explains the carefulness with which Dibi formulates By placing Breivik’s deeds in a meta-narrative of xenophobia and fear of Islam, it was logical for people to arrive at the PVV in the Netherlands. After his second request did not find enough support to hold a debate on the matter, Dibi commented that the politicians should not create a new taboo. The pro-debate repertoire was not adopted by enough political actors for the debate to take place.

PvdA
In the second case the PvdA supported the proposal of Dibi for a debate on xenophobia but posited the condition that it should be held in a broader context. MP Van Dam specifically reacted to PVV member Van Klaveren, saying that his reaction had caused Van Dam to be convinced of the necessity for a debate. However, he wants to place the debate in a far broader context of the ‘post 9-11’ environment. For Van Dam, the Norway attacks must be seen in that meta-narrative as well. After the cabinet’s response, the PvdA again
supported the request but still asked Dibi to put it in a broader context.

_PvdD_

With regard to the request of MP Dibi for a debate on xenophobia, MP Thieme did contribute to the discussion. She said that the PvdD share the doubts that other political parties said to have about the content of the debate. Moreover, Thieme gave a reprimand to PVV member Van Klaveren for making a remark that suggested that the GroenLinks fraction did not sympathize enough with the victims of the Norway attacks, as they were not complete during the commemoration in the House of Commons. Thieme thus shows dominance over the PVV by taking in a position of a moral high ground; she calls his remark highly inappropriate.

_PVV_

With regard to the debate on xenophobia made by MP Dibi, the PVV declared not to want a debate on that matter, for they believed it was ‘ridiculous’. MP Van Klaveren who made that remark did not further clarify why it was ridiculous to hold a debate on xenophobia, but he did state that the fraction would not attend a debate if it were to take place. It is likely that the PVV wished not for a debate on the matter, because they have had to absorb much critique in the wake of the Norway attacks, and MP Dibi was implicitly rekindling that discussion.

_SGP_

MP Van der Staaij on the other hand did make a speech act in reaction to MP Dibi’s debate request in the second case. According to the leader of SGP, there was a risk of the debate becoming too narrow or too broad, and thus wanted to await the response of the cabinet at first.

_SP_

6-83
MP Karabalut responded on behalf of the SP to the debate request of MP Dibi. She adhered to the ‘condition: broader’ repertoire, saying that it is right to discuss sensitive topics such as racism, xenophobia and racism, but that she feels the request of Dibi is too specific. The SP adhered to the same repertoire in response to Dibi’s second request.

Table 2  
**Reertoire by political party, 6 September (X) and 13 September (Y)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Pro-debate</th>
<th>Anti-debate</th>
<th>Broader</th>
<th>Cabinet’s response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDA</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>CU</td>
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<td>D66</td>
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<tr>
<td>GroenLinks</td>
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<tr>
<td>PvdA</td>
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<tr>
<td>PvdD(^{58})</td>
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<tr>
<td>PVV</td>
<td>XY</td>
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<tr>
<td>SGP(^{59})</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP</td>
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<tr>
<td>VVD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cabinet (Balkenende IV/ CDA-PvdA-CU)</td>
<td>Y</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 provides a comprehensive oversight of the repertoire employment during the ‘Norway’ crisis. Note that all parties that have XY in the same section held on to their stance; we can derive that only CDA has switched positions to the ‘anti-debate’ repertoire after the cabinet had published their response. The majority of parties that was present at the 6\(^{th}\) September debate employed the repertoire that would support a debate under the condition that the

\(^{58}\) No PvdD input in 13 September 2011 debate, thus no Y  
\(^{59}\) No SGP input in 13 September 2011 debate, thus no Y
topic would be broader. The analysis of this repertoire shows that this stance primarily obscured the discussion; it was unclear whether parties were aligned or not. Some speech acts were a plea for a broader debate, similar warned for too broad a debate, while at the same time agreeing with others. All in all, the repertoire was the most adopted but the least effective; in the end the request for a debate received no support, and no ‘broader’ debate would take place.

The ‘pro-debate’ repertoire as adopted by GroenLinks and ChristenUnie was thus futile in advancing any political interests. Similar to the ‘condition: broader’ repertoire, the ‘pro-debate’ repertoire was plagued with vagueness. These two repertoires bear great similarities in that all speakers that adopted it mentioned the perceived importance of holding a debate. However, none of them was able to eloquently articulate what exactly was to be discussed in the debate; was it ‘xenophobia’ or ‘feelings of despair and anger’ or ‘global developments of the past decade’?

6.3 Response to discursive crisis of xenophobia
The Norway attacks brought about a new wave of criticism on right-wing extremism and anti-Islam discourse. The anti-xenophobia discourse emanated from a cosmopolitan, humanist narrative. From this perspective, mutual respect, dignity, and cultural sensitivity are basic principles of human interaction. After the attacks, perpetrator Anders Breivik became the face of a violent translation of xenophobia - thus providing an opportunity for opponents to (re-)construct a crisis by confronting ‘xenophobes’ with the violent outcomes of their ways. The basic premise is that xenophobia is a slippery slope that ultimately leads to violence.

Tofik Dibi of GroenLinks requested a debate on the topic of xenophobia. As for the discursive construction of crisis, Dibi places the attacks in a larger meta-narrative of ‘an increase of xenophobia
across European countries'. The attacks were a result of a man driven by despair and anger in the face of Islamic immigration. The attacks are abstracted from their geographical setting; it was no incident, but an outcome of an on-going larger process of growing xenophobia. The perpetrator is partially being detached from agency in this meta-narrative. It is foremost the prevalence and increment of xenophobic discourse that drives people to violent actions.

Dibi’s account of emerging xenophobia placed in the light of the Norway attacks construct a link between xenophobic discourse and violence. The absence of consensus was what made Dibi’s requests strand. It is an example of how a politician has failed to ‘make others conceive of a situation in his preferred way’ (Hajer & Uitermark 2007;2). As Hajer and Uitermark explain, ‘authoritative actors engage in a discursive struggle to actively influence the meaning of an event’ (2007). In light of the discursive struggle, two remarks are to be made about the repertoires in the ‘Norway’ discussion. First, it may be possible that the colleague politicians of MP Dibi did not regard him to be an authoritative actor. For example, the insulting remarks of PVV-member Van Klaveren suggest just that. Second, Dibi obviously did not succeed in ‘making his fellow politicians conceive of the situation in his preferred way’. The last remark applies to everybody that employed the ‘condition: broader’ repertoire. The formulation of Dibi’s request was incomplete and unclear, according to them.

The repertoires in the ‘Norway’-discussions proof how difficult such a struggle can be, and how lost actors can get in the discursive struggle. The meta-narratives in which speakers try to embed the topic of discussion, add to the unclarity. The speech act of the PvdA is the epitome of how to construct a meta-narrative, of how to construct a crisis (Hay, 1996). The topic of xenophobia is elusive and complex; there are no clearly demarcated concepts which to
work with, and on which terms a comprehensive debate may be held. Dibi’s formulation on itself was prone to inviting indistinctness and unclarity; he speaks of ‘feelings of despair and anger that must be made open for debate’ and ‘less willingness in Europe to resist to xenophobia’. These are none whatsoever clear terms, which are needed as a guideline for a debate. PvdA-representative Van Dam notes how he would support a debate that as broad to comprise global developments of ‘Islam, multicultural society and integration’. This meta-narrative places the Norway attacks and the debate in a global context; consequently the Dutch perspective is drastically reduced with such a scope.

The ‘Norway’ crisis was about the discussed link between Wilders and Breivik, about their ideologies and other similarities. The request of Tofik Dibi for a debate about xenophobia may be viewed as a minor episode in the aftermath of an expired discussion; most has been said in the media right after the attacks. This may have played a role in the decision of the cabinet to not hold a debate; the topic has lost its direct urgency; the events had not taken place on Dutch territory nor did they have any direct impact on Dutch society; competent institutions that monitor for risks are in place. As a result, we may conclude that the ‘Norway’ discussion ended due to: 1) the perceived loss of urgency; 2) the negligence to reopen the discussion; 3) the lack of eloquently articulated terms on which to hold the debate; 4) the dispersed perspectives on what to discuss.
7. Case Platform MEE-landers

7.1 Repertoires

There are fewer repertoires in this debate compared to the previous case studies. Moreover, this discursive crisis took place in a stretched timespan of many months, and did not develop along similar lines as the previous cases. It started off with the announcement of the intention to launch a platform, and arguments in favour of doing so – this is the ‘pro-platform’ repertoire. What followed were three different opposing repertoires – all a form of ‘anti-platform’ repertoire. One is critical of the initiators of the platform, being the PVV; the other criticizes the passive stance of the cabinet and in particular the Prime Minister in this case. They are identified as the ‘anti-platform; initiators’ and the ‘anti-platform; cabinet’ repertoire. Another repertoire is against the platform because of the damaging effects it may have – both to the Dutch economy, as well as to the international position of the nation; it is identified as the ‘anti-platform; damage repertoire’.

7.1.1 ‘Pro-Platform’ repertoire

MP Van den Besselaar of the PVV announced the plans for the platform in a debate on 13 December 2011, and gave an extensive explanation on the 21st of December. The first mention of a platform was on the 13th of December: “To give a helping hand to the people that experience nuisance and displacement because of MEE-landers, the PVV shall create on 1 January 2012 a Platform MEElanders. Citizens can then file their complaints about nuisance and displacement on the PVV’s website. The results will be handed to the Minister early 2013.”60 This remark was made passingly during a debate, and at the time no participant of the debate made further inquiries. In two sentences, this speech act positions the PVV as a watchful trouble-shooter of the Dutch people, a vigorous opponent of societal issues. The

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60 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr. 35 item 32
formulation suggests that there are many people that experience nuisance and displacement because of ‘MEElanders’ who have been left out in the cold by politics.

“Since 1 May 2007 there is free traffic of labourers between the Netherlands and eight member states from Middle and Eastern Europe. Right from the beginning, PVV was one of the few parties that opposed the opening up of the labour market for Poles and other MEE-landers [English: MEE]. Looking at all the problems that accompany the mass arrival of in particular the Poles, that stance has proven to be justified. Think of all sorts of nuisance, displacement on the labour market and integration- and housing problems. Those problems may not grow larger. (…) [The] PVV has announced to open a platform MEE-landers to map out the nuisance- and displacement problems and to provide a platform for citizens’ complaints.” 61 The motives for the platform are mentioned later on;

“[An] estimated 350.000 MEElanders work in the Netherlands now. Opposed to that are over 700.000 unemployed Dutchmen; let’s call it the domestic offer. According to the PVV, as long as there are still unemployed in the Netherlands standing on the side, there is no need for more labour migrants.” 62

The ‘pro-platform’ repertoire thus positions itself as sticking up for the unemployed Dutchmen. It is an act of patriotism and wise economic calculation to prevent labour migrants to come to the Netherlands. It is in conflict with the policies that the Netherlands agreed to on a European level, but the PVV is squarely against interference from ‘Europe’ or ‘Brussel’. Some underlying premises can be drawn up:

1) The Netherlands is a sovereign, strong nation

2) In order to stay economically strong, all constituents must contribute, through work; domestic workers stimulate domestic economy

61 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr. 39 item 8
62 Ibid.
3) Labour migrants are bad; people experience nuisance and displacement; they take money out of the economy
4) Preventing them from working here is a remedy
5) Interference of ‘Europe’ is an intrusion on Dutch sovereignty and blocks the remedy

The PVV constructs an argument that suggests that the Dutch unemployed cannot work, because of labour migrants come to work here.

Socialist Party leader Roemer wards off the opposing remarks that follow, by stating that the message of the PVV is one that the SP has propagated for a long time; that there is a negative side to labour migration that needs to be countered through regulation of the European labour market. About the website he says that ‘people may dislike it, but it is of great importance. (...) However you do not help the discussion by treating everybody alike [labour force from MEE-landen], it is almost discriminatory.’ Roemer’s speech act has a dual aim; it discredits the other political parties by confronting them with the necessity of the platform – which they might have prevented, if they had paid attention to the Socialist Party’s earlier warnings about labour migration--; but his speech act then denounces the discriminatory character of the manner in which the PVV has set up this initiative. Roemer thus is not supporting the platform as such, but he deemed it necessary to give the other parties a reprimand.

7.1.2 ‘Anti-Platform; cabinet’ repertoire

The responses of other political parties to the introduction of the platform were diverse but unanimously negatively outspoken. Yet the majority of responses did not address the source of the platform, but rather were critical of the Dutch prime-minister for not explicitly denouncing the initiative. MP Schouw of D66 opened this repertoire in a debate of 14 February 2012 – a week after the

63 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr 53 item 3
launch of the website – when stated he had a moral and economic objection to the stance of the Prime Minister. First, by not publicly denouncing the platform, the Prime Minister was fostering intolerance, according to Schouw. Second, the permissive stance could endanger the relationship with Poland – a country that has great economic value for the Netherlands, as Schouw emphasizes. He asked Prime Minister Rutte to distance himself from the platform and inquired whether the economy has suffered from it. Rutte replied that he believed it was clear that the website was an initiative of the PVV, not of the Dutch government; “The stance of the Netherlands is clear; concerning the Eastern-European issue it is in line with the report of the temporary commission Lessons from recent labour migration [LURA]. (...) The general conclusion of this LURA-commission (...) is, - I dictate this respectfully – that the Netherlands have been unable to manage the influx of labour migration from Middle- and Eastern Europe.” MP Schouw then replied that the Prime Minister seems to condone the website of the PVV, at the cost of tolerance.

Member of Parliament Pechtold (D66) remarks: “When it comes to Islam, the Prime Minister comments, but now he does not. What is the interpretation of the role of the Prime Minister to signify when something abject is taking place in society and that he distances himself from it?” Rutte replies by stating that he agrees with Pechtold, and thus evades providing an answer. MP for CDA Van Hijum rephrases the question and asks the Prime Minister ‘why [he] has not been more assertive from the start onwards on the cabinet’s stance on the theme of labour migration, when it causes commotion within the nation and abroad’. “Does the Prime Minister understand

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64 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr 53 item 3
65 Ibid.
66 Hand. II, 2011-2012, Ks 32680 nr. 4
67 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr 53 item 3
68 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr 53 item 3
that a platform, which a certain light is shed upon, also evokes the sense of being cornered for people that work hard and abide to the rules; and that it raises questions abroad if the Netherlands is still a trustworthy associate?" The PM’s reply is that he will address these questions when the other countries ask them, and that ten ambassadors from Eastern Europe have requested a conversation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs sofar.

Once more, Rutte evades the question, which causes MP Sap to continue along a firmer line: “From the heart: how weak of you!” When he took office, this Prime Minister promised to be the Prime Minister of all the people in the Netherlands, that he would be there when it was necessary. Where is he now? (...) Is he [the Prime Minister] really going to let him be the hostage of the PVV, with the reputation of the Netherlands and his own credibility at stake?” Rutte states that this analysis is ‘fundamentally wrong’ and leaves it at that.

Labour Party leader Cohen adds that Rutte is condoning the initiative by looking away and not explicitly distancing himself and the cabinet from the PVV’s action. Rutte repeats that the Dutch government has nothing to do with the website, because it is not their initiative. MP Slob rephrases the question and confronts Rutte with his task as Prime Minister to advance peace within society. However, Rutte says that he does not believe the website of one party will provoke a division between groups in society.

In the 29th February 2012 debate, the continuation of the debate on the report of LURA, more politicians urged for the cabinet to

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69 Ibid.
70 Lost in translation ‘Wat een slap gedoe!’ – Sap addresses the lingering and indecisive stance of the Prime Minister
71 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr 53 item 3
72 Ibid.
explicitly distance itself from the platform. MP Koser Kaya of D66 states that ‘the only way to protect the open economy is for the cabinet to distance itself from the Polen platform’.\textsuperscript{73} MP for CDA Van Hijum notes that when the cabinet would not respond to the outrage of the European Council, they would severely limit their capacity on the international stage.\textsuperscript{74} However, Van Hijum adds that he understands the position of the government, and that they need not respond to everything that is said or done in the House of Commons; what the government does need to do, is to clarify what it stands for and what its own policy is.

MP Hamer of the Labour Party notes how the public opinion has been rather dominated by the issue of the debate on the platform, and concurs with Van Hijum on the question how the cabinet has dealt with the issue on a European level; she then once more urges for explicit distancing of the platform.\textsuperscript{75} Minister Kamp of Social Affairs and Employment responds that he has been very clear on the matter on a European level - that the platform does not represent the Dutch government policy – but he refrains from further qualifications as ‘the government should not comment on initiatives of political parties’.\textsuperscript{76}

MP for GroenLinks Klaver makes an observation and repeats the previous question: “If I understand it correctly, in the conversations with his colleagues – especially with his colleague from Romania – the concerns about the manner in which their constituents are treated and approached in the Netherlands, have not been taken away. Is it thus not time for the government to renounce the platform more explicitly?”\textsuperscript{77} Minister Kamp responds in the same

\textsuperscript{73} Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr. 57 item 11
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{75} Hand II, 2011-2012, nr. 57 item 11
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.
manner as before, by emphasizing that he makes no comments on the initiatives of other political parties.

The cabinet is criticized further in a debate of March 6, when Labour Party MP Van Dam confronts Prime Minister Rutte with the content of an interview that Chairman of the European Parliament Martin Schulz has given a few days earlier. "On February 14 the Prime Minister was asked here, in the House of Commons, to react on the platform of the PVV for nuisance of Middle- and Eastern Europeans. [He] said: I will not respond to that, and I will not do that abroad, before ambassadors, colleagues or other European politicians. Yet what amazes us? Last Friday [newspaper] NRC Handelsblad publishes an interview with (...) Martin Schulz. He mentions a conversation that he had with our Prime Minister (...) in which he had expressed himself openly on the matter, and that he stated: I disagree, I do not agree with the content and not with the form. Mr. Schulz also stated that the Prime Minister renounced the platform. [Is this true], yes or no?" Rutte responds by saying that the outline of that conversation is incorrect, and that he only stated that the website is not from the Dutch government; "I my choose own words. I have just chosen them, and I have nothing to add to them."

MP Sap of GroenLinks continues along the same line by stating that, the initial lack of response to the platform was bad enough, but ‘now we have a Prime Minister that has spoken with the Chairman of the European Parliament and had a different interpretation of what has been said’. She then stresses that an opportunity presents itself to strengthen the Dutch position in international commerce, by renouncing the platform.

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78 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr. 59 item 3
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid.
In late March, Hero Brinkman left the PVV fraction – in part because of internal disagreement about the platform – and the cabinet lost its majority in the House of Commons. Following his departure, more requests for a response of the cabinet were made; MP Pechtold of D66 filed a motion in which ‘The House of Commons (...) expresses as her opinion that because of the platform a whole group of people is unnecessarily excluded’. This motion passed on the 27th of March with the support of SP, PvdD, PvdA, GroenLinks, D66, ChristenUnie, CDA and member Brinkman. The SGP did not support the motion because of the ‘defamatory character’, similar to the platform it was opposing. Following the vote, MP Pechtold made a request for a written response of the cabinet. The day after, Prime Minister Rutte replied that ‘this motion is about a platform of a political party with a fraction in the House of Commons (PVV) and is not directed to the cabinet’; he then refers to the response of February 15 2012. In doing so, Prime Minister Rutte again did not honour the request of his colleagues and did not respond to the matter. Following this letter, Minister of Foreign Affairs Uri Rosenthal held a meeting on the 5th of April to discuss this response with the chairmen of the commissions of Foreign Affairs, European Affairs, and Immigration and Asylum.

On May 2nd, the results of this meeting were presented and discussed in the House of Commons. During this meeting, representatives of Middle and Eastern European countries were present at the invitation of Pechtold. He was the first to address the House of Commons in this meeting, directing his first remarks to his invitees, saying that he hopes for ‘a fruitful outcome for [their] countries as well as for the Netherlands’. Pechtold stated that the platform was no longer the issue, but the refusal of the cabinet to renounce it was.

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81 Hand. II, 2011-2012, Ks 33209 nr. 2
82 Ibid.
83 Hand. II 2011-2012: Ks 29407 nr. 143
“The Dutch government, the Prime Minister, has made it into politics. His broken political compass is the reason we are here. (...) I wish not to identify with this abject website. To everything that does not concern Israel, I would say to PVV: get out.”

Bontes of PVV then ask Pechtold what gives him the right to say ‘get out’ to a political party that inventories problems within a nation. Pechtold replies that the PVV has unequivocally chosen to have nothing to do with the governments’ foreign policies, except with regard to issues that concern Israel. He then states that the government should have thought about the reputational damage that the platform would bring about, and the economical damage that could follow from that. Pechtold calls the cabinet’s inaction an embarrassment and repeats that the cabinet must renounce the initiative.”

Pechtold’s anger is directed at the cabinet, and Prime Minister Rutte in particular. Timmermans of PvdA stated that the platform formed an impediment to ‘the largest political event of [his] generation; to end European division’. He gives an historic example about how Poland has helped free the Netherlands in World War II, and recalls how Middle and Eastern European nations have struggled during the time of the Iron Curtain. He then acknowledges that the open border policies of the EU have their negative side effects, but then mentions that “[the] stigmatization of people by calling to file complaints about those people because they come from countries that have had to fight for their freedom for far longer than us, is something that we reject.” Timmermans positions the issue in a frame of protection of hard-earned freedom – something that the platform of PVV is interfering with. By not renouncing the platform of the Party for the Freedom,

84 Hand. II, 2011-2012, Ks 29407 nr. 148
85 Ibid.
86 Hand. II, 2011-2012, Ks 29407 nr. 148
the cabinet is effectively supporting an initiative that counters freedom. He analyses that “[the] anger is in particular directed at the silence of the Dutch government, the ducking of the Prime Minister, (...) and repeatedly refusing to take a stance about something that very many people, fellow Europeans and peers on this continent, hurts them to the core of their soul.” The speech act now has linked the platform to an issue of freedom and acknowledging the grief it causes. MP Ormel of CDA in a similar way states that we must support ‘our European brothers and sisters’. The ‘anti-platform; cabinet’ repertoire returned in every debate and was employed by the majority of the political parties within the House of Commons.

7.1.3 ‘Anti-Platform; Initiators’ repertoire
The speech acts in these repertoires are critical of the PVV and the platform itself – this was prevalent mostly outside of the House of Commons. However, some remarks that have been made during debates fit this repertoire. Both MP Van Dam of the PvdA and Koser Kaya of D66 attack Van den Besselaar, who speaks on behalf of the PVV, on the stance of PVV. When Van den Besselaar mentions that ‘the PVV has been squarely against opening up the borders from the start’, MP Van Dam responds that Van den Besselaar is trying to rewrite history. “He said that PVV always voted against the free traffic of workers from, for example Poland. That is unlikely, because PVV did not exist during that voting. Mr. Wilders was still a member of the fraction of VVD and I presume that Mr. Van den Besselaar knows what he [Wilders] has voted – he agreed to it.”
Van Dam is referring to the motion of February 3, 2004 by members Vissers and Bruls about adhering to quotes to regulate the foreseen flow of labour immigrants from Middle and Eastern European countries. Van den Besselaar is then forced to correct this, by explaining that after the VVD, from the founding of ‘Group Wilders’

87 Ibid.
88 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr. 39 item 8
89 Hand. II, 2003-2004, Ks 29407, nr. 2
onwards Wilders ‘took in a different position’ and ‘a new wind was blowing’. Even though Van Dam confronts his colleague with a minor error in his speech, it still serves to exert dominancy over Van den Besselaar.

Koser Kaya takes advantage of the reply of Van den Besselaar by responding to the fact that Wilders took in a different position.

“Mr. Wilders had at that time said ‘yes’ against his principles (...) or he made a switch, which may lead one to say that ‘a deal is a deal’ is not cast in iron for him.” (...) “But is the PVV not that party that advertises with: a deal is a deal, we said this, so we must do this?”

MP Koser Kaya tries to elicit a certain response from Van den Besselaar; her aim is to discredit Wilders as a politician by identifying him as untrustworthy, because he changed his point of view overtime.

On the 29th of February 2012 the debate on the topic of labour migration continued. MP Ulenbelt of the SP states that the platform is ‘a misguided action that leads to nowhere and only feeds sentiments’.

7.1.4 ‘Anti-Platform; damage’ repertoire

Many remarks of politicians opposing the platform refer to the harm that the website does to the reputation of the Netherlands. This is related to the economic setback the nation may suffer when the relations with Middle and Eastern European countries would deteriorate. Among them were political parties D66 and GroenLinks, which were joined during voting by the Socialist Party, PvdD, PvdA, ChristenUnie, CDA and member Brinkman. A remark of MP Schouw during the 14th February 2012 debate, directed at Prime Minister Rutte denotes: “The conservative hobby of bullying foreigners will cost us dearly. (...) A Polish labour migrant (...) yields at least €24.000. All Polish labour migrants yield 1.8 bn. The Netherlands

90 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr. 39 item 8
91 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr. 57 item 11
export more to Poland and the Czech Republic than to Russia and China. (...) Unfortunately the conservative hobbies of this cabinet overshadow the economic interest."  

This speech acts frames the economic gains of labour migration to be at stake if the government fails to respond appropriately to the platform.

Many politicians from different political parties continue to urge the cabinet to take a stand against the website. In the 29th February debate, MP Klaver of GroenLinks expresses his hope that ‘the platform that the condoning partner [gedoogpartner] has created will be no impediment to further European cooperation’.

MP Schouw has made a request in a debate of March 13 2012 to receive a letter from the cabinet on the upcoming resolution in the European Parliament about discriminatory websites. The letter, dated 15 March 2012, emphasized the fact that the website was an initiative of one political party, and that it does not express the stance of the government, nor is it in line with its policies. One week later MP Schouw of D66 once more confronted the cabinet with its failure to address the outrage that the website has caused; “The cabinet continues to claim that nobody is angry at the Netherlands.” He then made a request for another letter from the cabinet on this matter.

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92 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr. 53 item 3
93 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr. 57 item 11
94 Hand. II, 2011-2012, nr. 65 item 9
7.2 Analysis per party

In the debate about the MEE-landers platform, representatives of CDA, CU, D66, GroenLinks, PvdA, PvdD, PVV, SGP, SP, VVD and member Hero Brinkman made contributions. An analysis of their speech acts are listed below.

**CDA**

During the platform crisis, CDA was critical of the cabinet. In different debates MP Van Hijum calls upon Prime Minister Rutte to respond more assertively in order to safeguard the nation’s international position. The CDA is concerned that the lack of response might endanger the trust in the Netherlands as ‘a trustworthy associate’. MP Ormel speaks from a similar frame and evokes a sense of European unity that needs to be protected – the Netherlands should support ‘our European brothers and sisters’. For the CDA, unity and harmony seem to be principles that the members try to adhere to in their politics.

**CU**

During the platform-episode, the ChristenUnie had no significant input in the discussion. MP Slob adhered to the repertoire that had critique on the cabinet for its silence. He evoked a frame that put Prime Minister Rutte on the spot; his duty is to advance peace and cohesion within society - thus if he would not renounce the website, which already has caused outrage, then he would be forsaking his duties. However, Rutte’s reply was that he did not believe that the website was divisive. The CU had no further remarks on this topic.

**D66**

The first party to adhere to the ‘anti-platform, representatives employed the cabinet’ repertoire and were very critical of Prime Minister Rutte in particular. According to MP Schouw, Rutte was fostering intolerance but not explicitly renouncing the initiative.
Moreover, D66 stated that this lack of response could endanger the relationship with Middle and Eastern European countries. Pechtold confronts Rutte with the fact that he has responded in previous cases that were related to Islam, but now comes short. MP Koser Kaya places the cabinet’s inaction in a different perspective and states that not renouncing the platform is bad for the open economy. At the invitation of D66 did representatives of MEE-landen attend the May 2 debate. Pechtold opened this debate by directing his first words to these representatives, thus putting their presence on the forefront. Moreover, he says that the topic is no longer the platform, but ‘the refusal of the cabinet to renounce it’. In this speech act, he is severely criticizing the cabinet and Prime Minister for endangering the role of the Netherlands in the world.

GroenLinks
The party criticized the MEE-landers platform, but the anger about it was directed at the Prime Minister. According to MP Sap, Rutte was the Prime Minister of all people in the Netherlands, but he was nowhere to be found now. His inaction endangered the reputation of the nation and his own credibility. Rutte’s reply was that her analysis was fundamentally wrong. In a later debate, MP Klaver confronts Minister Kamp of Social Affairs and Employment with the concerns the MEE-landen have with regard to the treatment of their constituents. Furthermore he said to hope that the platform will form no impediment to future European cooperation. In yet another debate, MP Sap confronted Rutte with his different interpretation of a conversation he has had with Chairman of the European Parliament Martin Schulz. According to some media, Rutte has renounced the platform in this conversation, but denied this in the debates. In this case GroenLinks has adopted both the ‘anti-platform; cabinet’ and ‘anti-platform: damage’ repertoire.

Partij van de Arbeid
The PvdA criticized the cabinet for the lack of response to the platform MEE-landers. According to MP Cohen, Rutte is condoning the initiative if he keeps looking away from it. In a different debate MP Hamer concurs with MP Van Hijum of PvdA that the cabinet needs to be clear on its stance with regard to the platform. In the March 6 debate, it was MP Van Dam that confronted Rutte with the conversation with Schulz that has appeared in some media. Rutte stated to be unpleasantly surprised with the speech act of Van Dam who was inferring that either Rutte or Schulz would be lying about the content of that conversation. Finally, MP Timmermans makes a contribution to a debate in which he speaks from a frame that regards the platform to be an impediment to ending European division. He also explains why people are more outraged about the silence of the cabinet than the about the initiative itself. The PvdA has employed both a ‘anti-platform; cabinet’ and ‘damage’ repertoire.

Partij voor de Dieren
During the platform MEE-landers crisis, the PvdD again made no speech acts on the matter. However, they did vote in favour of the motion Pechtold that renounced the initiative.

PVV
The MEE-landers platform was an initiative that the PVV set up in order to address the negative effects of labour migration from Middle and Eastern European countries. More specifically, the initiative itself was not meant to address it, but it encouraged people to file complaints that would be bundled and given to the cabinet early 2013. The website was set up in a way that only people that only complaints could be filed, but it remains unclear how or whether these would be verified. There was a counter that showed the quantity of complaints that had already been filed.

SGP
SGP was the only party in the opposition to refrain from voting for the motion Pechtold in the platform case. Even though they were against it, MP Van der Staaij said that the motion was of a similar character as the platform it was renouncing.

**SP**

In the case of the MEE-landers platform, the SP only delivered one speech act. MP Roemer stated that even though the SP disagrees on the methods of the PVV, they managed to raise attention on the matter. Roemer formulated his speech acts as if it were a reprimand to the parliament as a whole. He said that the SP has tried to put the excesses and issues surrounding labour migration from Middle and Eastern European countries on the political agenda for a long time. His speech act was quite dual: he did not side with the initiative of the PVV, but he said that the issue it brings up needs to be addressed.

**VVD**

The VVD did not make many speech acts throughout the three different discursive crises. No speech act was made in the debate where Wilders mentioned his kopvoddentaks idea. To Dibi's request for a debate after the Norway attacks, MP Van Miltenburg replied that such a debate ‘overreaches the matter at hand’ according to VVD. The second request was met with a harsher tone; Van Miltenburg said that ‘she could not conclude otherwise than that Dibi was politicizing over the back of the victims of Norway’. The VVD has thus consequently adhered to the anti-debate repertoire with regard to the xenophobia debate request. Again no speech acts were made in the platform case. The party being part of the coalition rather than the opposition may explain the lack of speech acts by such a large party.

*Brinkman*
When MP Brinkman left the PVV fraction, he stayed on as an independent Member of Parliament, thus creating the ‘party’ Brinkman. His departure took place during the ‘MEE-landers platform’ crisis, and it gave an impulse to the situation as a whole. MP Pechtold of D66 explicitly mentioned that he filed the motion to renounce the platform at the House of Commons because of Brinkman’s departure. Brinkman himself made no speech acts during that final debate in which the motion was filed, but he did vote in favour of it. We may assess that even though Brinkman as a member of parliament made no speech acts of significance during the platform crisis, his departure did create momentum for the motion of Pechtold to find fertile breeding ground, and thus for the parliamentary renunciation of the platform.

As the debates were held over a long period of time, table 3 will provide insight in how the crisis has unfolded for the sake of clarity.

<table>
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<th>Table 3</th>
<th>Chronological overview debates</th>
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<td>November 2011</td>
<td>Results LURA report discussed in House of Commons</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 13, 2011</td>
<td>First mention ‘Platform MEE-landers’</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 7, 2012</td>
<td>Debate LURA report results</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 8, 2012</td>
<td>Launch Platform MEE-landers website</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 14, 2012</td>
<td>Mention of platform in debate/ critique on cabinet</td>
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<td>February 29, 2012</td>
<td>Mention of platform in debate/ critique on cabinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 6, 2012</td>
<td>Mention of platform in debate/ critique on cabinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 15, 2012</td>
<td>Letter Rutte: Initiative of political party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 20, 2012</td>
<td>Brinkman leaves PVV/ Motion Pechtold renunciation platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 27, 2012</td>
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<td>Response Rutte: ‘Platform is political party’s initiative’</td>
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<td>April 5, 2012</td>
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</table>
The chronology shows how the attention is directed at the cabinet and the Prime Minister. It is particularly interesting that the initiators of the platform were seldom addressed directly. The launch of the website that served as a platform for filing complaints about Middle and Eastern Europeans did cause a stir within the political domain. However, there was a remarkable response to this matter that many political parties followed. Instead of aiming their outrage towards the initiating party PVV, the parties focused their discontent on the cabinet and in particular Prime Minister Rutte.

A majority in the House of Commons was discontent with the way that the cabinet failed to explicitly renounce the launch of the website. This repertoire was almost always used in combination with the ‘anti-platform; damage’ repertoire. It comprised of speech acts that addressed the alleged reputational damage the platform caused, and the economic setback the Netherlands might suffer from it. Moreover, the platform was said to be discriminatory, which was mentioned as a reprimand towards the PVV in the ‘initiators’ repertoire, and as harmful for the tolerant image of the Dutch nation in the ‘damage’ repertoire. Table 4 provides an overview of which political parties adhered to which repertoire. As described before, the same political parties have used multiple repertoires.

| Table 4 Repertoire by political party (X = speech acts; M = vote for Motion Pechtold) |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Pro-platform | Anti: Cabinet | Anti: Initiators | Anti: Damage |
| CDA           | X              | M               |
| CU            |                | M               |
| D66           | X              | X M             |
The discursive crisis of the Polen platform is introduced in the same manner as Hay (1996) denotes the construction of a crisis. The specificity and complexity of labour migration is denied, and nuisance and displacement are framed as symptoms of a metanarrative, which is ‘the nation’s inability to regulate labour migration from Middle and Eastern European countries’. (Hay, 1996:267) Even though the government is said to have structurally failed to address the issue, and thus bears responsibility, the ‘Platform MEE-landers’-website targets one particular group of people that will have to absorb this first blow.

The PVV has worked on constructing the secondary mediation of the crisis – that is the meta-narrative of failing labour migration – in the House of Commons and in the media, and trusts upon the Dutch constituents for the primary narration – that is by delivering a collective body of complaints. (Hay, 1996:267) The website of PVV has the form of a one-way platform; people can file their complaints, there is no room for objecting to the website itself – this explains several counteractions that were carried out by non-political actors.

A Dutch-Polish rapper set up a website that asked for positive stories

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95 SGP was against the platform, but refrained from voting for the motion of Pechtold which – according to SGP – was of the same character as the platform

96 The cabinet was against the platform because of the harmful aspects for the international position of the Netherlands – it would not give any qualifications.
about Middle and Eastern Europeans; somebody launched a platform for complaints about members of PVV; and a Polish TV host initiated a spam wave on the MEE-landers website.

Both Van Dam and Koser Kaya employ irony and ridicule in their speech acts to exert dominance over Van den Besselaar. (Poggi & D’Errico, 2010; 173) It is bad for a politician to be portrayed as being untrustworthy, and altering one’s stance over time might be considered as a sign of precariousness. The repertoire that directed speech acts to the initiators of the platform – being the PVV – included remarks that were moral judgments. Such speech acts serve to place the speaker on a moral high ground compared to the person (or political party) he is addressing.

The repertoires combined serve to convince the public of the following:

- The platform itself is a) discriminatory; b) an impediment to freedom of fellow Europeans;
- The lack of response of the cabinet is a) harmful for the reputation and thus for the international position of the Netherlands; b) harmful for the trade position of the Netherlands and thus for the economy; c) a sign of mismanagement
- The PVV a) forms an impediment to the freedom of fellow Europeans; b) is inherently discriminatory for initiating a platform

It is particularly interesting that the case of the platform MEE-landers sparked many heated debates that did not address the initiative itself, but foremost the lack of response from the cabinet. The 'anti-platform; cabinet' repertoire was present and dominant in most of the debates, and rose in prominence as time progressed and more parties became angered by the cabinet's way of handling the crisis. The discursive crisis of the platform was not solved per se. The website is still active and open for complaints about Middle and Eastern European labour migrants. However, the majority of political parties have turned their back towards the initiative and have delivered numerous speech acts that renounce the platform. It shows that the crisis within the House of Commons was never acknowledged as a crisis per se – it was merely frowned upon and judged. More prominently discussed was a derivative of the crisis; the silence of the cabinet and lack of response or strong action from the Prime Minister was made the primary issue.

It would be plausible to say that the discursive crisis of the platform was not ignored but deflected from, by the majority of the political parties. Rather than acknowledging the initiative and its initiators, politicians directed what they had to say to the cabinet – thus not ignoring the issue, but ignoring the initiators. The reasons for this response are difficult to assess. In the 2 May debate, MP Timmermans of PvdA suggests that the anger of 'MEE-landers' is not aimed at the PVV, 'because they expect nothing else from that party'. If this is the case, then perhaps some politicians in the House of Commons are similarly suffering from 'PVV-fatigue', which leads to them no longer addressing the party – they expect no change in the hardliner attitude. If this is the case, it might explain why so many politicians direct their outrage to the cabinet.

Even though Prime Minister Rutte has responded in a consistent manner, his reputation has suffered the most during this episode. He has constantly been subjected to severe critique. Effectively,
some politicians have framed the lack of response to be symptomatic to a failing cabinet as a whole. For these actors, the discursive of the crisis needed not to be solved, for it served their interest to advance their political goals. To them, the platform provided a new opportunity to criticize the cabinet. The motion of Pechtold was the high point of this venture; after it was adopted, the issue gradually faded into the background. Therefore, in this analysis the Pechtold motion is considered to be the epilogue of the platform episode.
7.3 Response to the discursive crisis of the MEE-landers platform

In the case of the platform for complaints about Middle and Eastern Europeans, there is a twofold occurrence of the construction of crisis via discourse conform the theory of Colin Hay. First, members of the PVV discursively construct a crisis related to labour immigration. It is said that complaints remain untreated about nuisance and displacement by labour migrants from Middle- and Eastern European countries, and that people are desperate for help. The PVV explains that it will step up for the Dutch citizens in need, and will create an online platform where people can file more complaints about the said labour migrants. An interesting aspect of this case is that the process of construction is continuous, rather than completed and visible in excerpts. The PVV calls upon society to provide them with the examples of nuisance. These are the ‘symptoms’ of the meta-narrative of failing MEE-immigration.

The response by other political actors to the launch of the platform was primarily negative – better yet, it was constructed as yet another crisis. Rejecting the website on its discriminatory premises was a core criticism, followed by addressing the potential reputational and economical damage. The critique on the PVV placed their actions in a longer string of events that led to a negative image of the Netherlands on the international stage. The construction of a crisis thus provides no guarantee of gaining support for a cause. In this case, the attempt of the PVV backfired in the institutional setting of the political domain. Though the platform did receive many complaints, and could be regarded as gaining support in the public realm, the initiative was denounced by the majority of the House of Commons.

The different standpoints towards the initiative may well be regarded to be a clash of ideologies. The PVV portrays the initiative to be a helpful tool to map problems of labour migrants in order to comprehend the scale and urgency of the problems. The issue is
rhetorically enlarged, by stating that many complaints are not filed because institutions inadequately address the issue. The ideological standpoint is that immigration is problematic as it forms a socio-economic burden on society and creates more problems. Juxtaposed to this position is the idea that the society can benefit from immigration. Proponents claim that skilled labour migrants actually contribute to economic development. A prime example is MP Schouw who cites a report about the yield of labour migrants.

Another example in this case of the ideology in political discourse is the discussion about the national image being harmed. Some political actors spoke of the harm that the platform may cause in the long run due to disturbed international relations. It is interesting to note that of both supporters and opponents of the platform, many make an economic calculation. Whereas the PVV speaks of economic damage due to labour migration problems, others fear economic damage due to disturbed relations. At the most basic level, this is due to a different insight of how the state must function and what priorities come along with that stance. The platform stems from a point of view in which the nation should be strong and independent – near autarkic - and thus perceives labour migration as impeding and weakening of the nation’s strength. In terms of foreign affairs, it means that domestic issues come before attending to international business.

Opposed to this view is the idea that the nation is weak when it disregards its interdependency with other countries. Strong and stable international relations make a nation powerful. Labour migration then becomes a source of strength and economic progress for the nation – to file complaints about one group of people is to delegitimize the hospitality of the host nation, which then might lose face on the international stage. Problems with labour migration should thus be approached with great care, so as to ensure friendly
international relations. This case shows that political discourse is eminently ideological, conform the theory of Van Dijk.

It is on this last point that the case displays a form of the discourse coalition. Many political actors joined hands in their univocal critique on the platform. The theory of Maarten Hajer seems to mention the occurrence of a discourse coalition in a positive cooperation in order to achieve a goal – for instance, create a policy. The unity of denunciation does however fit the definition as well.

In the strict definition ‘a new discourse coalition [was] organised around a new uniting principal that appeals to different groups’ (Hajer 1989:258). His theory thus seems to apply in the case about the MEE-landers platform.
8. Concluding remarks

8.1 Employment of different repertoires

This thesis looks into the manner in which three different discursive crises in the political domain have unfolded. The theoretical framework that this research employs, assumes that in a debate political actors deliver speech acts that belong to a particular interpretative repertoire. The collection of arguments and ways in which a politician gets them across determine the repertoire to which it belongs. In all the cases, a crisis is discursively constructed in the first repertoire. Certain topics were brought about in such a manner that it caused outrage with other political actors. The responses to the first repertoire belong to different repertoires themselves. This thesis looks into three different cases and aims to make assessments of how different crises were handled. Table 6 provides an overview of discourse employment per party in each case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Headscarf tax</th>
<th>Norway discussion</th>
<th>MEE-landers platform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDA</td>
<td>Anti-tax</td>
<td>Anti-debate</td>
<td>Anti-platform: C and D&lt;sup&gt;100&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CU</td>
<td>Anti-tax</td>
<td>Pro-debate and CR</td>
<td>Pro-Motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D66</td>
<td>NRTC&lt;sup&gt;101&lt;/sup&gt; and Anti-tax</td>
<td>Broader</td>
<td>Anti-platform: C and Pro-Motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GroenLinks</td>
<td>NRTC and Anti-tax</td>
<td>Pro-debate</td>
<td>Anti-platform: C, I&lt;sup&gt;102&lt;/sup&gt; and Pro-Motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PvdA</td>
<td>NRTC and Anti-tax</td>
<td>Broader</td>
<td>Pro-Motion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>100</sup> CR = Cabinet (speech acts directed at cabinet); D = damage
<sup>101</sup> NRTC – Not related to content
<sup>102</sup> I = Initiators (speech acts directed at initiators)
In the case comparison, the similarities are prominently present. The debates about the headscarf tax, the Norway attacks and the MEE-landers platform were all related to xenophobia. All cases consist of a majority of repertoires that oppose the PVV and its political agenda. In every opposing repertoire we see an attempt to either discredit the party for allegedly being xenophobic and discriminatory.

The most important difference between all the cases is the way in which the discursive crises have been handled. The headscarf tax case of 2009 was dealt with within the timespan of one debate, the quickest of all cases. The first responses were ridiculing the idea, but then more serious reactions followed that attacked the proposal based on the content. The majority of the political parties delivered speech acts that were very critical of the PVV as a party. Political actors aimed to lay bare the misguided, unworkable and discriminatory character of the proposal. The pejorative term that Wilders used to describe his tax for headscarves seemed to have added to the outrage that it sparked by his fellow politicians. The term kopvoddentaks was no longer used by the PVV on later occasions.
GroenLinks representative Tofik Dibi constructed the issue on xenophobia as a crisis. However, due to his vague description of what the debate should be about, the request found not enough support to be granted. Exemplary for the lack of clarity is how even the parties that wanted to support Dibi’s request asked for further specification of the terms and conditions. Even though the issues that he mentions are obviously very important, generally the political actors fail to find a way to do address them. This is why the debate about xenophobia did not take place, and the crisis was never handled.

The MEE-landers platform crisis took place throughout many debates over the longest period of time compared to the other two cases. The most interesting feature of this episode in Dutch political history was that those who opposed the platform were far more critical of the cabinet than of the initiators. The silence of the ministers and Prime Minister caused great outrage amongst the political parties, which criticized the cabinet for damaging the reputation of the Netherlands.

Analyses of the three cases show that the discursive crises have been handled in very different manners. The kopvoddentaks proposal was annulled within one debate by an overwhelming amount of critique from almost every political party other than PVV. The debate about xenophobia never had passage due to the vague terms and conditions about how the debate should take place. The most recent episode of the platform crisis endured for the longest and had the most impact in the political domain. In many debates the platform was brought up and in every one of them the cabinet was criticized for not renouncing it. This switch of aim is particularly interesting.

As Hay (1993) made clear, a crisis is constructed through a discursive practice – for instance a multitude of speech acts – to
convince the public of the crisis at hand. In all three cases, the initial crisis as constructed by one party (respectively PVV, GroenLinks, and PVV). However, the construction of a crisis by one party became an opportunity for the next political actor to turn that construction of crisis into the new crisis. This complex mechanism seemed to be playing a role in all three cases, as will be shown next.

The kopvoddentaks was the effort of political party PVV to show to the public that Islamic headscarves are problematic. They did so by stating that the Islam is for example, ‘aiming to colonize the Netherlands’, ‘misogynistic’, ‘threatening Judeo-Christian values’. The headscarf then is ‘a symbol of oppression of women’, which needs to be thwarted. Knowing that a total ban is unconstitutional, a tax on headscarves must discourage it. The proposal is framed as a measure to ‘counter Islamization’ and ‘protect Dutch values’. This is the crisis that the tax must deal with.

The responses to the announcement of the proposal however reframed the matter and put the proposal in the middle of the crisis; the kopvoddentaks became the crisis in the speech acts of opponents. A tax on headscarves would be ‘discriminatory’, ‘not executable’, ‘misguided’ and ‘intolerant’. The crisis at hand was not the ‘advance of Islam and supposed oppression of women’; it was ‘intolerance and discrimination’ that needed to be countered.

In the next case, MP Tofik Dibi delivers a speech act in which he links the Norway attacks to ‘anger and despair due to the outcomes of immigration and the advent of Islam’. He then speaks of xenophobia and the apparent unwillingness of European leaders to counter it. From the start, it is unclear what Dibi wants to discuss – he speaks of xenophobic sentiments and anger and despair, and clearly he sees the Norway attacks as a violent off-spin of the aforementioned. He presses on the issue of xenophobia and requests to hold a debate on that matter.
His request is not reframed to another crisis, but Dibi receives mixed signals from various political actors. PVV refuses to hold a debate on that matter and even mentions to never attend a debate on that matter, because it the fraction ‘sees no reason for the ridiculous debate’. This might be explained by the criticism that the party had to absorb in the wake of the Norway attacks. The fierce reaction caused MP Van Dam of PvdA to support the request in reference to the remarks of MP Van Klaveren. However, he – as many other political parties – wishes to broaden the topic of the debate. His suggestion is however even less clear, because he wanted ‘to view where we are at the moment and what the debate has brought us’ in a ‘post 9-11 environment’. Other than PVV, all political actors either support or do not support the request because of the same reasons; they do not understand what the debate should be about. The ‘Norway attacks debate’ crisis was not solved per se, but evaporated because nobody was able to eloquently formulate the terms and conditions of the envisioned debate.

The MEE-landers platform was similar to the kopvoddentaks debate in that both crises were constructed by PVV. The MEE-landers platform was announced in the fall of 2011 as a response to perceived negative effects of labour migration, particularly from Middle and Eastern European countries. The PVV created a website that served as a platform for complaints (for instance of nuisance or displacement) about people from these countries. The party stated that nuisance and displacement are common complaints about these labour migrants, but that the issue is much larger than the figures show because not all complaints are filed. This stance shows distrust towards the statistics that are available on these topics. Moreover, with the website of PVV the party shows that it is close to the ‘commoners’ in society – they frame it as if the PVV is the voice of those who were previously unheard. The website itself is a one-way input system that invites people to file complaints.
A consistent wave of critique by all political parties was the consequence of the MEE-landers platform. The website was launched despite earlier critique, which led to reactions from the international community as well. This international aspect of the case made the MEE-landers platform more pressing for the government than the other two cases. The initiative, which is still active, had led to a threat of sanctions by representatives of Middle and Eastern European countries, and the European Parliament renounced the website as well. Perhaps it was because of the international outrage, that the political parties within the House of Commons directed their anger not at the PVV but at the cabinet. Because of the attention of the international community, all eyes were on the cabinet and Prime Minister Rutte in particular. What was expected from them was an explicit renunciation of the MEE-landers platform. Instead, the cabinet consequently stated that this initiative is of one political party and that it is not the stance of the government. As such, they refrained from renouncing the platform, which came across as a lack of determination and firmness.

Having identified the different discursive repertoires and having them compared with each other, we are now able to look into the hypotheses and answer the main question.

**Main question**

(1) *How did Dutch political actors respond to discursive crises in the Dutch political debate on immigration, in three case studies?*

**Hypotheses:**

(2) *Politicians discursively construct a crisis to gain support for their political agenda.*
(3) *Ideology is the driving force behind political discourse on immigration.*

(4) *Politicians form alliances that fit the notion of Hajer’s discourse coalition to advance their interest in the immigration debate.*

8.1.1 “How did Dutch political actors respond to discursive crises in the Dutch political debate on immigration, in three case studies?”

The analysis of the case studies has led to the identification of eleven separate repertoires in three case studies, of which three consisted of the discursive construction of a crisis. As we have seen, all case studies commenced with the discursive construction of a crisis. What follows is an analysis of these discursive crises using the framework of Colin Hay and his concepts of primary and secondary narration.

**Headscarf tax**

In the first case, Geert Wilders addresses the House of Commons in a lively depiction of his view of Dutch society. According to Wilders, the streets are ‘polluted’; foreign languages are spoken on the streets and people with headscarves; immigrants are exploiting the Dutch beneficiary system and rape and murder occasionally take place. The primary narration consists of examples that are recognizable for Dutch constituents – one is bound to come across someone with a headscarf in the public domain. Yet the secondary narration turns these encounters into a negative event – the headscarf apparently is misogynist and oppressive. Moreover, it is a sign of Islamization of Europe: headscarves are an infringement on Judeo-Christian values and condoning them would be facilitating a process in which the nation loses its Dutch identity.

The counter narrative of the headscarf tax was adhered to by many political actors and consisted of a message of tolerance and
emphasis on freedom of religious expression. Speech acts from the anti tax repertoire opposed the idea that headscarves were a misogynist tool of oppression. Furthermore, the narrative of Islamization was replaced with the view that Dutch society bears responsibility to help immigrants and protect their rights to freedom of religion.

Norway discussion
Tofik Dibi of GroenLinks requested for a debate on xenophobia in the House of Commons. In his address to the House of Commons, he linked the attacks in Norway to feelings of anger and despair. The primary narration was that Dibi perceived the attacks to be an attempt to thwart the outcomes of immigration and advent of Islam. As such, all occasions where people felt uncertainty or fear in encounters with immigration are linked together. His speech act partially delegitimizes feelings of anger and despair, as he connects them to xenophobia. The secondary narration, or meta-narrative, is that Dibi places these occasions to the abstract phenomenon of xenophobia.

The counter narrative of this discursive crisis was rather straightforward; political actors that opposed the debate did so on the grounds that in their perception xenophobia was not a growing problem. As a result, they saw no reason to hold a debate on the matter. Some politicians stated that establishing a link between the Norway attacks and xenophobia was disrespectful and a form of ‘politicizing over the back of victims’.

MEE-landers platform
The third case study in my view is to a certain extent a reversal of primary and secondary narration. In his address to the House of Commons, Ino van den Besselaar speaks of people that experience nuisance and displacement by labour migrants from MEE-countries. Yet no particular examples are given in his speech acts. I argue that the website that was launched as a platform for complaints
essentially is the means for the primary narration. The representative of PVV posited that there was an issue with a particular group of labour migrants; and all the complaints that are to be filed subsequently would be the examples of this issue.

In contrast to the other cases, the MEE-landers platform actually came into being, which made it a more significant matter. The launch of the website and following media attention led to a wave of critique from foreign representatives and Dutch political actors. Two distinctly different counter narratives can be identified; one of the majority of the House of Commons, and one of the cabinet. The counter narrative of many political actors consisted of warning for the reputational and economic damage that the platform could inflict. These politicians often underlined the worth of labour migrants from MEE-countries. The other counter narrative was one that the cabinet adhered to, and which led to yet another wave of critique. The cabinet, particularly in the form of Prime Minister Rutte, explained that the MEE-landers platform was an initiative of one political party that did not represent the cabinet’s stance on the matter. While many urged for an explicit denunciation of the platform, the cabinet’s response remained the same.

A common denominator is that the cases all were related to immigration – be it directly or indirectly through xenophobia. The discursive crises were all constructed as issues that had to do with immigration and integration – either the influx of immigrants was problematized (MEE-lander case), the presence of foreign culture due to immigration was a problem (headscarf case) or the fact that society itself was turning inhospitable towards immigrants was marked as an obstacle (Norway discussion). The ‘pro-headscarf tax narrative’ was met with an ‘anti-headscarf tax narrative’; the proposal for a debate on xenophobia, following the Norway attacks, did not pass because of the ‘anti-debate discourse'; and the initiative
of the PVV for a platform for complaints was heavily critiqued by opposing political actors.

As Table 5 has shown, these repertoires are all marked to be inclusionary discourses. Though it is not feasible to draw any conclusions about development in discourse employment over a period of time – the debates are of too different a character for that –, it is possible to assess that the anti-immigration discourse has always been countered with speech acts from a less restrictive position on immigration. Whereas the anti-immigration discourse can be marked as an exclusionary one emphasizing negative effects of incoming migrants, the opposing discourses all appeal to an image of the Netherlands as an open society that is welcoming towards immigrants and that strives to create an environment in which cultural sensitivity, emancipation and active citizenship are highly regarded.

8.1.2 (2) Politicians discursively construct a crisis to gain support for their political agenda.

As we recall, Colin Hay describes how political actors can gain support for a cause by constructing a crisis through discourse. Through a process of primary and secondary narration, a multitude of complexly interrelated events are simplified to fit a certain meta-narrative. This research works on the assumption that political actors consciously construct crises through discourse to advance their goals. In the three case studies, we have encountered several instances where a crisis was constructed.

In the first case, the headscarf is made into a problem of Islamic immigration. Geert Wilders warns for the presence of headscarves in Dutch society, that are offensive to Dutch core values. It is portrayed as symptom of the larger meta-narrative of Islamization of European culture. The second case addresses xenophobia in political discourse, and its potentially violent consequences. Tofik Dibi of GroenLinks requested a debate on the topic of xenophobia.
As for the discursive construction of crisis, Dibi places the attacks in a larger meta-narrative of ‘an increase of xenophobia across European countries’.

The discursive construction of crisis is common in all three case studies. However, this research yielded results that are not consistent with what the effects should be according to Colin Hay. In fact, in all instances where a crisis was constructed through discourse, the actors gained no (political) support for their cause. No taxation on headscarves has passed and no debate on xenophobia has been held. As for the MEE-landers platform, it is too soon to draw conclusions as the results of the website are yet to be published. But the PVV had to endure a wave of critique, which would indicate to a strong lack of political support.

Colin Hay describes the construction of a crisis as a mechanism to gain momentum; it is a process of transformation. The results of this research could indicate that the construction of a crisis does not work when the political actor is not in power. In the cases that Hay has studied, those who construct a crisis had official institutional power. Perhaps the construction of a crisis is only effective in converting a situation, by portraying certain unpopular policies as necessary. Another reason for the ineffectiveness of Hay’s idea on the three case studies could be the fact that the constructed crises were not perceived by the public as being urgent or relevant. This would explain the lack of support that followed from the attempts of the political actors.

8.1.3 (3) Ideology is the driving force behind political discourse on immigration. Van Dijk posits that political ideologies are not only involved in the production and understanding of political discourses, but are also reproduced by them;
“discourses make ideologies observable in the sense that it is only in
discourse
that they may be explicitly expressed and formulated” (Van Dijk,
2006; 732 –
original bold emphasis). It follows that the repertoires that are
employed by
political actors carry out the ideological stance of the speaker.

To a large extent, this premise holds throughout this research. Indeed, the repertoires that were most actively employed by
different political actors demonstrate the political ideology that
underlies them. The opposing repertoires as listed above (9.1) can
be reckoned for ideological clashes within the political debate. But
when taking in the perspective of Van Dijk, not all repertoires can
be ideologically accounted for. For example, repertoires that contain
ridiculing remarks (not-related-to-content repertoire), or
suggestions for a change of direction for the debate (condition:
broader and await cabinet’s response) do not particularly carry any
ideological weight. Yet such seemingly random remarks are part of
political discourse; they appear throughout debates and cannot be
discarded in discourse analysis.

Van Dijk’s theory on discourse and ideology carries great
explanatory power with regard to the underlying political ideologies
in political discourse. He emphasized that political discourse has to
be analysed within its context structure, in their ‘subjective
participant definitions of communicative situations, which control
all aspects of discourse production and comprehension’ (Van Dijk
2006; 733). Yet within the context structure, the abovementioned
non-ideological repertoires appear as well. That presence leads me
to conclude that the theory of Van Dijk on political discourse and
ideology is deficient in this regard. Van Dijk’s theory holds to a
great extent when applied to the Dutch political debate on
immigration, but it cannot account for all types of political
discourse that have been found in this research. The types of speech acts aimed to show authority or dominance create an explanatory gap for this theory. It would appear that not all political discourse is eminently ideological.

8.1.4 (4) Politicians form alliances that fit the notion of Hajer’s discourse coalition to advance their interest in the immigration debate.

In his earlier articles on discourse, Maarten Hajer employs the term discourse coalition, which consists of the emergence of a new discourse ‘organised around a new uniting principal that appeals to different [political actors]’ (Hajer 1989; 258). In the different case studies, events occur that fit the definition of a discourse coalition. Especially in response to certain repertoires that exhibited elements of xenophobia, different political actors employed the same discourse in order to oppose it. A discourse coalition occurred in the headscarf tax case as a collective renunciation of the proposal of Wilders by members of various political parties. The new uniting principal might best be described as the felt need to actively reject the proposal, based on its potential discriminatory character.

The discourse coalition theory has many interfaces with the theory on ideological discourse of Van Dijk. It is however a very complex occurrence. The main common ground is that various political actors with different standpoints that perhaps conflict in the field of policy-making, may find joint ground in the renunciation of political expressions that are in conflict with both ideologies. Yet different parties can have conflicting ideologies but both be in favour of the same policy.

An example for immigration is the restrictive policy on the admission of asylum-seekers. Two parties may both be in favour of a tough, restrictive policy, but for very different reasons; one could make an economic calculation, where the other could have discriminatory reasons. The problem with discourse coalition is that
it is difficult to tell why political actors agree on particular topics. The theory of Van Dijk on ideology would be invigorating for this theory, and serve as an additional explanatory theory.
9. Reflection on research

This research has taken into account the complexity of political discourse, and focused on discourse in the institutional setting of the political debate. However, due to the complex nature of politics, it is near impossible for one research to adequately address all aspects of the domain of political discourse. There were some limitations that came up during research. Additional research is needed to create a more complete overview of how discourse is a part of the political spectrum. Below are some remarks on the boundaries to which this research was confined, but which additional research might open up.

Further research may address *all speech acts* of the public debate on immigration, e.g. extend the research to include discourse from radio, television, newspapers, books, etc. The approach of this research

In this research, the *impact* of political discourse remained unexplored. To gain an understanding of the actual consequences of political discourse, it is important to look into how political discourse genuinely affects people, for instance through political polls or the image of the country on an international level. Furthermore, this research has not addressed the interplay between political discourse and created policy. The goal of all politics is to influence the affairs of the state, but the actual influence that politicians have is difficult to assess. There is no doubt that political discourse and policy are interrelated, but the translation from discourse to real-world policies is a very complex process that is difficult to grasp in research. Additional research on the dynamics of political discourse must add to the understanding of the dynamics of the political debate and its implications for society.
10. Literature

10.1.1 Academic articles


Strauss, A. (1987) *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*


Talja, S. (1999) *Analyzing Qualitative Interview Data: The Discourse Analytic Method*


10.1.2 Parliamentary documents

10.1.2.1.1 Headscarf tax
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Handelingen II, vergaderjaar 2009-2010, kamerstuk 34219, nr. 3

10.1.2.1.2 Norway discussion
Handelingen II, vergaderjaar 2010-2011, vergaderingnummer 102, item 8
Handelingen II, vergaderjaar 2010-2011, vergaderingnummer 105, item 8
Handelingen II, vergaderjaar 2005-2006, kamerstuk 29754, nr. 1
Handelingen II, vergaderjaar 2010-2011, kamerstuk 29754, nr. 206
10.1.2.1.3 MEE-landers platform
Handelingen II, vergaderjaar 2011-2012, vergaderingnummer 35, item 32
See http://debatgemist.tweedekamer.nl/Player/?mid=1019
Handelingen II, vergaderjaar 2011-2012, vergaderingnummer 39, item 8
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Handelingen II, vergaderjaar 2011-2012, vergaderingnummer 50, item 16
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Handelingen II, vergaderjaar 2011-2012, kamerstuk 32680, nr. 4
Handelingen II, vergaderjaar 2011-2012, kamerstuk 33209, nr. 2
see http://debatgemist.tweedekamer.nl/Player/?mid=1254

10.1.3 Media
Transcript of press conference of 12-08-2011, Rutte.
Volkskrant, Interview Pim Fortuyn, De Islam is een achterlijke cultuur, 9-2-2002;
Website Partij Voor de Vrijheid, Verklaring Geert Wilders Noorwegen, 27-07-2011;