

**Videos in web campaign:
An analysis using political communication strategy**

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Introduction

The research of political parties' strategy followed during the election battle for the European elections in June 2009, raises questions relating to the degree of European elections' significance in the political scene, to the adoption of public policies and therefore to the thematic selection that defines a campaign's political agenda. Apparently, the argument refers to the establishment of a political agenda as a mechanism of political communication and thus as a mechanism for the function of the public space overall.. The research focuses on the use of the internet under the scope of the party's mechanism in Greece and consequently on the use of videos in the parties' websites. Worth mentioning the identification of a public problem and how it brings public awareness. Consequently the above awareness helps every political mechanism and as a matter of fact a public to face the problem. The choice and the adoption of a public action forms the party's agenda and consequently the strategy that each party follows during the election campaign. The thematic selection of the messages and the type of their presentation are the tools in this paper in order to determine the strategy that was adopted by each party's election' campaign mechanism. In addition, these tools enable us to make a comparison among the parties' mechanisms that play a key role in the Greek political scene through their presence in the Greek and the European Parliament.

Each thematic selection by any party's mechanism, the hierarchy of the issues in the election agenda (priming) as well as the comparative dimension among the different parties' mechanism that highlight different aspects of interpretation in an issue (framing) preoccupies our thinking which is embodied in the research field of political communication. This field highlights issues of methodological approach but also focuses on issues that are related to the role of the new technology through the Internet. Also to the role of the citizen in the production and interpretation of the messages. These issues are closely related to our argument concerning the interactivity of communication and political practices and therefore are inherent in the participation of citizens in the field of political action, which is in fact associated with the democratic demand itself.

Internet through the intense interactivity (You Tube, blog's creation, forums, email, Facebook, MySpace etc), urges the production and exchange of an information. At the same time, it reinforces the participation of one of the essential component functioning on democracy itself.

«Multimedia» is characterized by its non-linear mode of access to information, and combines different types of documents (texts, graphics, images, sounds).

Multimedia reconciles and liberates all media that is connected with. It allows each of these forms of expression to overcome their own disabilities. It liberates the text of its linearity, whenever it is necessary, through hypertext. It liberates television and radio of their program schedules and their channels. It opens new, wider horizons and carves new paths. It offers the best of the two factors, the text and the image. Alternatively, thanks to the multimedia networks in the future, it will offer the best of the three factors, the text, the audiovisual and the computer data.¹

Faster, less expensive, interactive and easily accessible, Internet compared to traditional media, promotes the flow of information: not only upwards but also vice versa. Furthermore, for political parties, as well as for a government, the Internet is also a particularly effective tool for establishing a dialogue and organizing a debate on public issues.²

Theorists, such as Lincoln Dahlberg³ mention specific features which distinguish the Internet from other traditional media. These can be specified in the following interactivity features. In particular: the rationality and flexibility, the possibility of reversal of roles to better understand the views of others, justice and autonomy.

Steven Schneider⁴ adds the following dimensions: equality, diversity, reciprocity and quality of the exchange. Jennifer Stronę-Galley⁵ recognizes inter alia the following factors contributing to quality electronic exchange and participation: an expression of a reasoned opinion, reference to external sources, equal participation, cohesion and narrativity.

¹ Balle F., *Médias et Sociétés*, Ed. Montchrestien, Paris, 1980 p.179-180.

² Balle F., *Médias et Sociétés*, Ed. Montchrestien, Paris, 1980 p. 667.

³ Dahlberg L., «Rethinking the fragmentation of the cyber public: from consensus to contestation», *New Media and Society*, vol. 9, no 5, 2007, p.827-847.

⁴ Schneider S.M. «Creating a democratic public sphere through political discussion: a case study of abortion conversation on the internet», *Social Science Computer Review*, 1996, vol.14, no 14, p. 373-393.

⁵ Stromer-Galley J. «New Voices in the Public Sphere: A comparative Analysis of Interpersonal and Online Political Talk», *Javnost/The public. Journal of The European Institute for Communication and Culture*, 2000, vol.9, n° 2, p.23-41

I The definition of Corpus

We should note that the way the parties represented in the European Parliament (PASOK, ND, KKE, SYRIZA, LAOS, Oikologoi Prasinoi) use their websites in significant different ways. Some of them have an intense activity concerning the presentation of videos on the site. This applies in particular to the form the individual videos are being transmitted such as the presentations of party's positions by the candidates MEPs themselves, broadcasted speeches of political leaders at electoral rallies. The last one is a Greek feature that political leaders usually choose an open-air rally to close the election period.

However, not all parliamentary parties upload on their sites broadcasted speeches e.g. KKE, Oikologoi Prasinoi due to the specific nature of these videos. Since they were individually broadcasted live on television and due to the fact that only the main opposition party hosted its speeches to the internet (some political parties hosted extracts of broadcasted speeches on their website), we preferred not to take these videos into account. Moreover, the fact that these broadcasted messages were too long, reveals that it is not consistent with the nature of the internet (short, brief and direct). In this way we cannot achieve the goals of the internet or even serve its unique norm. At this point we should also observe the remarkable feature of Greek Elections: The major parties usually close the pre-election period with a speech in an open-air place.

We would add that the selection of videos that will be analyzed come exclusively from the website of the political parties. It should be noted that the videos are embedded in other web servers such as You Tube and Vimeo (video sharing sites) and they are actually hosted on the party's website and we will not take them into account apart from the messages (videos) that we will analyze which come exclusively from each party's website. This restriction is necessary to be mentioned because during the research, through observation and analysis of the videos, we have found additional videos which were not hosted on the website of the party and the user was able to see them only through other video sharing sites. However, the analysis of the messages we are attempting in this paper has as unique source the website of each party. This is the reason why LAOS⁶ is excluded from our corpus, since

⁶ The Popular Orthodox Rally or The People's Orthodox Rally (Laïkos Orthodoxos Synagermos), often abbreviated to ΛΑ.Ο.Σ. (L.A.O.S.) is a right-wing populist and Christian democracy political party, founded and led by journalist Georgios Karatzaferis. Karatzaferis formed LAOS in 2000, a few months after he was expelled from the centre-right New Democracy. In 2004, LAOS secured support from the Party of Hellenism and the

although the party has a web tv channel, there are no videos embedded in the party's website, that was dedicated to the European election (www.laosElections.gr).

Before proceeding we should mention that the official launch of audiovisual messages of political parties started on May 20th 2009 . This date inaugurates the official beginning of the pre-election period, according to the Presidential Decree. Some of the audiovisual messages were broadcasted on TV and at the same time hosted on the internet, while some of them were hosted only in the website of the parties.

II Methodology: The study of the morphological and thematic structure of the message

A. Morphological Analysis

The research of the agenda setting in a web campaign is related to the content of the videos that were hosted on the party's website as well as to the form of attribution of content.

Regarding the form of attribution of a message's content, in terms of communication, it is identified not only in what it is said but also in the way of content attribution, thus providing a more spherical view of the text. Apart from the inquiry of the semantic content of the videos, the study of the way that each party's messages were presented constitutes an integral component of the party's communication and political strategy.

The identification of the different ways to present the parties' campaign, leads to a deeper comprehension of the party's positions and the way they are incorporated in the video's messages. It is obvious that the combination of form and content is the most satisfactory way to record messages during the pre-election campaign. «The relation between form and content is inseparable, given the fact that the type of the form that is adopted each time has direct consequences on the content of message⁷». In addition, the semantic content of a message clearly affects the way it is articulated. The criteria for selecting a form to broadcast a message is closely related to the specific nature of the medium selected and especially the Internet

Hellenic Women's Political Party. In 2005 LAOS absorbed the nationalist Hellenic Front. LAOS is part of the Europe of freedom and democracy Group and has elected 2 MEPs.

⁷ Psilla M., «To minima os antikeimeno ermeneias kai analysis» p. 82, in Papageorgiou G., *Methodoi stin Koinoniologiki Ereyina*, Typothito - Giorgos Dardanos, Athens, 1998.

The corpus is classified according to the morphological characteristics of the messages according to the form of attribution. This classification provides to the analyst additional information on the notional identification of each party's standpoints, while the morphological factor completes the image of a message in terms of communication.

The criteria of form classification are based:

1) On the way the content is articulated and presented (net-writing). a) For instance, if the video is an *extensive* (trailers, debates) or a *brief* (spots) where the aspect of the time is a key factor. b) The type of intervention has a significant role (*single-issue*, *interdisciplinary* or *modular* audio-visual message). c) The techniques of presentation (whether there is discourse, image, musical carpet, or alternation of plans etc.).

2) On the presence-participation of communicative actors who through their intervention achieve to transmit the message. In this case the number of intervenants is very important in the final result of transmission even more the communicative relations which are derived are of significant importance. More in concrete, the morphological categorisation is related with the special features of the website⁸, and the requirements of the political message itself. Consequently, its meaning is identified under the scope of comprehension and interpretation that it is attempted by the producers of the message and also by the recipients.

The categorisation in which every single analyst chooses to act for the needs of his own analysis, involves features of choice, which are related to his own intervention into the examined concept. Every categorisation is affected by the analyst's research field and his scientific values, which characterize him as a personality. Such a realisation will become more obvious in the following thematical categorisation that follows.

Concerning the morphological analysis, this research identified the following 5 forms of messages:

Spot: Short (10sec – 3min 30sec) audiovisual clips, often single-issue, with frequent rotation of images, brief political statements, using storytelling techniques as if they were films (there is the element of plot, in many cases the music dominates and voice-over is being used). At the end the slogan and the logo of the party appear. The videos follow the advertising

⁸ As Psilla M. reports in the «To minima os antikeimeno ermineias kai analysis», p.81, «Every communication channel delimits in some way the means of intervention according to its nature or even its structure.... The criteria for selecting the form of transmission of a message always follow certain norms that respect the specificity of the medium. Nevertheless, the final selection is determined by the sender. »

standards and their purpose is to persuade the public. They have to be eye-catching in order to attract attention and to communicate their message to the public.

Trailers: Long audiovisual clips based on the Greek electoral law 3023/2002 which sets out, inter alia, the guidelines for political advertising. They are characterized by rapid rotation plans and they have modular structure. Multiple techniques are being used (discourse, image, integration of the short clips) and more than one politicians appear (especially MEPs candidates).

Online debate: This is an Interactive approach that is harmonized to the internet techniques (conducted in real time with the presence of public, although the public does not participate in the process). The debate covers various aspects (it is multi-thematic) and is characterized by the participation of many candidates and one presenter, who coordinates it. The debate has time constraints. Each candidate has 1minute 30seconds to respond, while 1minute is available for summing up.

Web Interview: It is an interview with the presence of a journalist who mediates between the political leaders and the citizens-users of the internet who send their questions via mail. The role of the journalist is basically to coordinate the flow of the conversation. Nevertheless, the journalist can also ask his own questions, if he estimates that all the discussion topics that have been decided by the editorial team are of interest. Web interview is divided into sections with different topics of discussion

Standpoints' presentation: An original approach of the interview where the candidate MEP or the political officer of the party present the party's standpoints in different fields. The journalist is absent while the presence of a political figure dominates. These short audiovisual messages exclusively addressed to the users of the internet, are often multi-issue and they lack techniques used in the other types of videos. This unique form of message only appears in the website of SYRIZA.

B. Thematic analysis

Exploring the content of videos as they were appeared on the parties' site implemented using the classical thematic analysis highlights the themes developed by the parties and

consist the political agenda of each party. The analysis of the videos semantic content exploring in this way the topics of party speech in order to define the kind of themes developed as well as the hierarchy of issues on the agenda.

The principle of the classical thematic operation is the identification and collection of content modules that characterize or constitute a message. The analysis then, compiles this data according to their importance in matters which are then classified, counted and analyzed as appropriate⁹.

The fact of the content's concentration and aggregation on modules allows the analyst to distinguish the core concepts that make up a communication and whose **presence** and **frequency** might be indicative of an interpretive textual analysis. The incidence of the issues usually associated also with the central place that might hold these issues to elicit a specific speech.

However, "there is no guarantee that a matter of frequent occurrence is necessarily an interest issue, or conversely, a subject that is little invoking it is not related to an effective representation that has been suppressed but is a difficult vocalization subject"¹⁰. The question therefore is highly correlated with the value of a subject always in a set speech. It is obvious that the "number of repetitions does not set itself the importance of an issue "¹¹.

The absence of an issue has also a particular interest to investigate.¹² Indeed, according to research objectives and its hypotheses by the analyst, sometimes the lack of a theme in a speech is indicative of the interpretation and understanding about the signification of this speech in the construction of a performance event. The space-time frame is a parameter that should certainly be taken into account in recording the presence and issues in the assessment of issues absent. Each season pays on its practices of a particular expression way and therefore a re-structured content"¹³. Equally important is the spatial framework for the production of one event with obvious direct impact on the signifying. The space-time frame always gives meaning to an event, giving to the speech a social and cultural connotation.

⁹ According to Ghiglione R., Beauvois J. L., Chabrol C., Trognon A., *Manuel d'analyse de contenu*, A. Colin, Paris, 1980, p. 55 «The criteria for an efficace thematic classification are three: 1) the consideration of the text in its integrity, 2) the effort to remain accurate to the text's content, 3) the intention of self-sufficiency of the thematic units (the coding should avoid the reference-comeback to the corpus under examination).

¹⁰ Ghiglione R., Beauvois J. L., Chabrol C., Trognon A., *Manuel d'analyse de contenu*, A. Colin, Paris, 1980, p. 77

¹¹ Paille P., Mucchielli R., *The qualitative analysis in the humanities and social sciences*, A. Colin, Paris, 2003, p. 143.

¹² According to Abastado C. in *Messages and Medias*, CEDIC, Paris, 1980, p. 131, «The high frequency of a subject is always an important factor, its absence is sometimes more declarative».

¹³ Rey A., as quoted by Chevalier J.-C. in «Language et Histoire» in the *Langue Française*, 15, septembre 1972, p. 15.

Especially when it is mediated which is addressed to a wide audience, the absence of some issues related to specific social, political and cultural references is indicative of the sense-an event and how each tool handles an event. There is once again a question not only on the production of a speech and reading the related representations of each subject to read a message.

Nevertheless, we stress the quality character that has a thematic analysis, which may possibly lead us to take proportionate comparisons among different types of situations as different environments within which each operates every ground where recruits and also meaningful and communicative dimensions. It is also manifestes that only in finding relationships through proportional and transportation considerations we gain a better understanding of the meaning of a message.

An issue that worths attention for the analyst who chooses the application of classical thematic approach to the investigation an event is primarily the choice of subjects. Indeed, the choice of thematic areas involving the message is one of the greatest difficulties in implementing this method. To investigate the occurrence of an issue and to determine the beginning and end of development in a speech is often a risk of subjectivity involved in the subjective criteria of the analyst.¹⁴ Obviously, any selection takes place during a research effort may cause the emergence of a kind of conscious subjectivity always having a real relationship that develops between the observer and the subject being treated.

Exploring the central slogan of every political party through which each party or political organization, is a key position while indicating the ideological line of any political power, is as a link between the identity of the party and the central themes around which supports Strategy election campaign. Editing the slogan is so central to the borderline between the themes developed by each party and reimburse adopted to transfer the content that encapsulates the basic position of each party.

A point well worth exploring is the ethnocentric character which often takes the themes developed during the electoral campaign for European Parliament.

It should be processed and especially mentioned the focus of the parties on topics that are engaged in issues ethnocentric gravity indicate a significant degree the special role occupied by European elections in the political organization of society and in terms of political and symbolic representations of Europe's operation in the minds of citizens.

¹⁴ According to Isambert-Jamati V., *Crises de la société, crises de l'enseignement*, PUF, 1970, p. 53: "The agreement is less direct, among analysts concerning the beginning and end of a development issue rather than the frequency of a word.

Regarding the analysis of the messages' content, we have identified the following thematic categories:

1. *Environment*: This term includes environmental issues such as the protection of the environment, the values and perspectives of ecology, climate change and bio agriculture.
2. *Economy-Growth*: This category includes topics related to the financial crisis, the infrastructures, the digital development, energy sources, the redistribution of wealth, tax evasion, the banking system, the entrepreneurship, the creation of new jobs, inflation and the national debt.
3. *Scandals*: This category includes all references to scandals involving politicians and raise matters of transparency.
4. *Europe*: Relations between Greece and Europe, the stability pact and the EMU (Economic and Monetary Union) are included in this category.
5. *Foreign policy*: It includes themes such as the Cyprus issue, the financing of Turkish-Cypriots and the relations between Greece and FYROM.
6. *Agriculture*: The development of the countryside, the income of the farmers and the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) identify this thematic category.
7. *Education-Research*: This category groups issues referring to mobilization, private Universities and the percentage of the GNP that will be disposed to education.
8. *Immigration*: This category includes references to the immigration policy, xenophobia and racism, as well as the immigrants' rights.
9. *Employment*: Issues related to labor, such as insurance, unemployment, the rights of the workers, salaries, pensions, human resources and lifelong education fall under this category.
10. *Security*: The assassination of Alexis Grigoropoulos, a 15 year-old boy by a police officer last winter (December 6th, 2008) brought to the center of the public debate the issue of security. Moreover, references to military expenditure are included in this category.
11. *Democratization-Welfare state*: In this category topics related to the equality between the sexes, the political activism, the separation of the Church and the State, the human rights, the military service, the abstention, the independence of mass media, the suppression of violence etc.

12. Opposition Plea: In this category are grouped the cases of political “dispute”, of parties opposing to each other.

III The analysis of each political party

A. PASOK (Panhellinio Socialistiko Kinima)

PASOK¹⁵ is a center-left political party of socialist ideology, as its name points out.¹⁶ It was founded in 1974 by Andreas Papandreou, the father of George Papandreou, who is the present leader of the party. PASOK and Nea Dimokratia are the two parties that are winning the elections and govern the country since 1974. Its first victory takes place in 1981 and the party loses the elections only in 1989, 2004 and 2007. In June 2009 PASOK was in head of the opposition in the Hellenic Parliament. It belongs to the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament and is represented by 8 MEPs.

Morphological analysis

The political party of PASOK hosts 19 audiovisual messages in the specially designated for the European Elections area of its site. The videos are embedded in the party’s site and hosted on the party’s channel in You Tube (a video sharing site). The visitors can watch the videos on the party’s site, but they can rate them and make a comment only on the You Tube site.

Based on the morphological types defined at the beginning of this paper, in this site 3 of the 4 forms are identified.

Spot: A total of 15 videos that fall under the category of spot appear on the party’s website. Their duration varies from 17sec to 1min 7sec and they are embedded in the site from May 20th to June 3rd. Due to technical similarities, those videos have been grouped in 2 main categories, while there is also one that will be examined independently. The first group includes 12 audiovisual messages in which the techniques of voice over and quick image

¹⁵ <http://www.pasok.gr/portal/resource/section/euroElections>.

¹⁶ The acronym PA.SO.K stands for Panellinio Socialistiko Kinima (Panhellenic Socialist Movement).

interchange are being used, while there is music playing in the background through the entire video. At the end of each spot the party's slogan for the elections "We vote for Europe. We decide for Greece" followed by "PASOK. Citizens come first" is being heard. This group can be further divided in 2 subcategories, since at the first five videos a small video of the party's leader is being incorporated. The second group consists of 2 videos that are the last ones to be released before the Election Day. In this case as well the techniques of voice over and of the musical carpet are being used. Moreover fragments of public appearances of Kostas Karamanlis¹⁷ are incorporated in the spots. Apart from the fragments, there are no other images included in these videos. At their place written messages appear summarizing and visualizing the key points of the message that is being heard. At the end the slogan "No more lies. We answer with the truth of our vote" is being heard followed by the party's logo. The last video is a 1minute abstract of the party's third trailer. As it has already been mentioned, the interchange of plans follows the television's rules, while once again voice over and musical carpet are being used. The video ends with a shot of the party's logo and the slogan «Citizens come first».

Trailer: Three trailers are embedded in the party's site. All three are interdisciplinary and modular, while their duration ranges from 9min 18sec to 10min 3sec. The first trailer appears online on May 22nd (duration 9min 18sec), the second on May 23rd (duration 10min 1sec) and the last one on June 4th (duration 10min 3sec). The first trailer uses fragments of public speeches and the Socialist International conference featuring George Papandreou, as well as voice-over and written messages that give emphasis to concrete points of the speech. Moreover, there is music playing in the background, while spots of the party and of the PES are incorporated in the trailer. During these spots the image interchange is faster. The trailer ends with a screenshot of the party's slogan for the elections "We vote for Europe. We decide for Greece" followed by the PASOK's logo and the inspired by the PES slogan "Citizens come first" underneath it. In the second trailer plans with voice over and musical carpet are used again, while there are shots of the party's candidates for the European Parliament. Each candidate is being positioned on a specific issue and intercalary titles separate the shots of the candidates, dividing the trailer in modules. At the end of the video the party's slogan "We vote for Europe. We decide for Greece" appears. The third trailer shows an informal meeting-interview between George Papandreou and a group of citizens. Each citizen asks the party's

¹⁷ Kostas Karamanlis is the country's Prime Minister and the leader of the party of Nea Dimokratia, which is PASOK's major opponent in the electoral procedure.

leader a question to which Papandreou answers. Each question is preceded by an intercalary title, dividing the trailer to themes. There is shot interchange according to TV standards and music is playing in the background through the entire video. Moreover, the technique of voice over is being used. The trailer ends with the party's slogan for the elections "We vote for Europe. We decide for Greece" followed by the PASOK's logo and the inspired by the PES slogan "Citizens come first" underneath it.

Web interview: The interview was given by George Papandreou, the party's leader, to the journalist Stelios Kouloglou of the tvxs.gr web channel on June 4th. It is the first online interview to be realized during an election campaign in Greece, as both the journalist and Papandreou comment at the beginning of the interview. The interview was broadcasted live by the tvxs.gr web channel and was then intergraded in the PASOK's site. The duration of the interview is 1h 9min and various issues-modules are discussed, which is typical of an interview. The difference between an online interview and a television interview is the degree of interactivity. In this case the questions were actually posed by the citizens via email. The journalist played the role of the "moderator" by grouping the questions and choosing the ones to be asked. The questions were chosen on a popularity criterion, meaning how many times the same question was sent by the voters. At the end of the interview the journalist repositions his role in the procedure and asks a couple of questions of his own.

Thematic analysis

Based on frequency of appearance of the thematic categories, the political agenda of PASOK is the following:

1. *Democratization – Welfare state* (30 appearances)
2. *Economy – Growth* (20 appearances)
3. *Europe* (15 appearances)
4. *Employment* (10 appearances)
5. *Environment* (9 appearances)
6. *Opposition plea* (8 appearances)
7. *Education – Research* (7 appearances)
8. *Immigration* (4 appearances)
9. *Agriculture* (3 appearances)

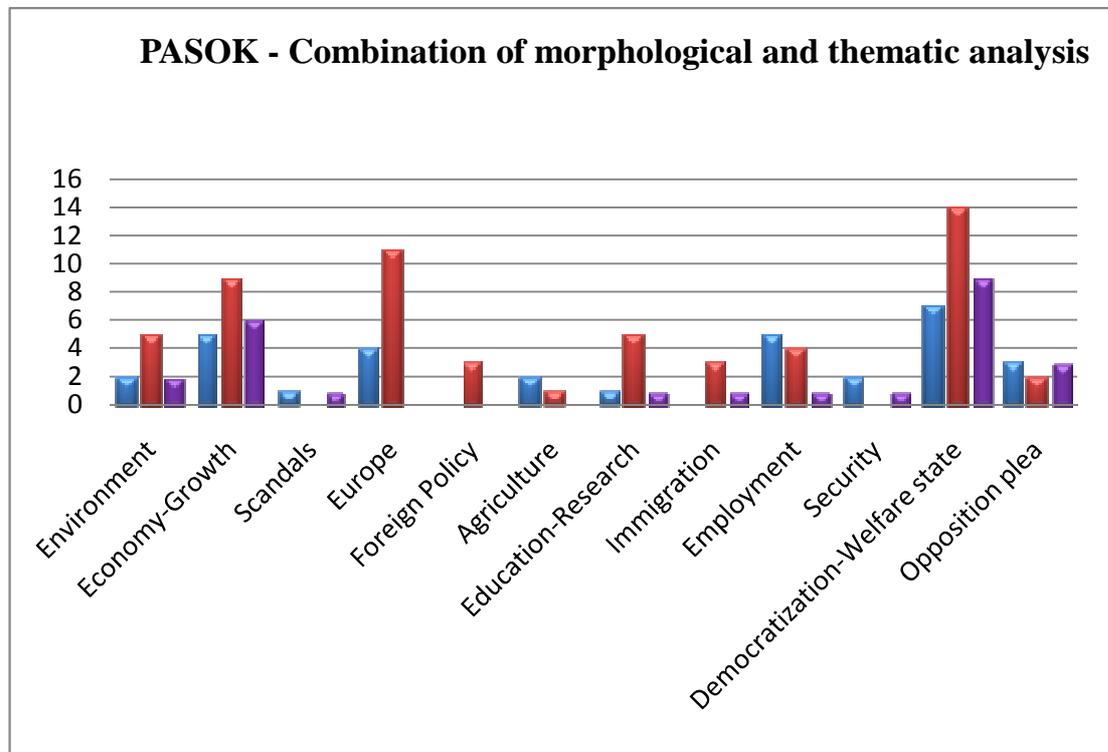
10. *Security* (3 appearances)
11. *Foreign policy* (3 appearances)
12. *Scandals* (2 appearances)

It comes as no surprise that the category *Democratization – Welfare state* is placed on the top of the party's political agenda. PASOK like most socialist parties is particularly sensitive to issues related to equality, human rights, social solidarity etc. Moreover, in the videos in question particular emphasis was given to the restriction of the abstention in the upcoming elections. An additional reason explaining the importance given to this category is to be found in the party's campaign strategy. PASOK adopts the PES political positioning that can be summed up in the party's slogan «People come first». PASOK slightly alters the wording and builds its campaign on the concept «Citizens come first». It comes thus as no surprise that issues related to the citizen are the ones to appear more often. Moreover, PASOK and specially its leader valorize as highly important the participation of the citizens in all the democratic institutions. A transparent and deeply democratic way of governance allowing people to control the government and to participate to all the important decisions has been greatly promoted by PASOK.

On the second place of the political agenda according to our corpus is the category *Economy – Growth*. This choice can be explained by two factors: a) the international financial crisis that people as well as the media consider as one of the most important problems that the society is facing at that period. By including the economy in its agenda PASOK gives the impression of a party that is in touch with the citizens, that understands their fears, their agonies and their needs. b) The party of Nea Dimokratia¹⁸ that is governing the country has increased taxes and also put in place new types of contributions. Taken into consideration that ND claimed before being elected that it was going to decrease the national deficit and improve the economy without increasing the taxes; one can easily understand that people are really unsatisfied with the way the Government has handled the situation. It is exactly this feeling of frustration that PASOK tries to take advantage of, in order to win the elections. This is why one of the last two spots that are added on the party's site before the elections focuses on the new taxes established by Nea Dimokratia. Moreover, the videos focus on growth and the subsequent creation of new jobs, profiteering and the protection of the

¹⁸ Nea Demokratia is PASOK's basic opponent in every electoral confrontation, since they are the only two parties that have won the elections or governed the country since the restoration of the democracy on 1974.

consumer, as well as the financing of small enterprises, most of which have been affected by the crisis.



Europe comes only in the third place of the agenda, although the entire campaign concerns the European Elections. The combination of the morphological and thematic analysis shows that issues related to Europe come up more frequently in the **trailers** than the **spots**, especially the trailer which presents the party's candidates for the election, who aspire to a seat in the European Parliament. It is thus logical that they adopt a more «European» discourse. At this point, it is made clear the advantage of combining the morphological and the thematic analysis in the approach of our corpus. As can be seen on the above diagram, issues related to *Europe* come up more frequently in the **trailers** than the **spots**, especially the **trailer** presenting the party's candidates for the election. However, we should note that Europe in most cases is being presented directly or indirectly combined with the Greek reality and national issues. The role that Greece can play in the European Union, national «successes» such as the country's participation to the Monetary Union and the integration of Cyprus in the Union which have been achieved by the government of PASOK are being promoted. Moreover, the European programs that are being mentioned in the videos are the ones from which Greece has or will have an immediate benefit, such as the CAP that benefits

the farmers, the European Agreement on labor rights and the European Treaty of Social Progress, covering sensitive sectors like education, health and social security.

Another topic with an important presence in the videos under examination is *Employment*. Greece has a high unemployment rate compared to the European average, especially amongst younger people. Moreover, salaries are rather low and employees do not get paid for working overtime. Being underpaid is so common nowadays that a whole generation has been named after its salary: G700 (the generation of 700 Euros). PASOK includes labor in its political agenda, giving emphasis to the employees and their rights, thus showing that it understands the worries and uncertainty they are feeling, especially in a period of high instability like the one of the economic crisis.

The *environment* is an issue that has always been evaluated high in the PASOK's agenda, usually combined with «green» growth, one of the party's standpoints. This theme appears several times in the party's **trailers** and it is thoroughly analyzed in the party's **interview**. The new international data and the participation of Oikologoi Prasinoi for the first time in the election, give to PASOK an additional reason to give emphasis to environmental issues: to avoid that the most eco sensitive of its supporters vote for the Oikologoi Prasinoi. However, only one of the party's spot is dedicated to the environment, since under the existing circumstances it was not evaluated as a top priority issue by the majority of the voters. This is why it is not so much exploited in videos addressing the whole electoral body, such as **spots**.

In the sixth place comes the thematic category *Opposition plea*. Still nowadays the political parties try to create a climate of polarization, especially before the elections. This technique is also being used by the Socialist Party on «they-conservatives versus we-socialists» basis. PASOK opposes its program and standpoints only to the party of Nea Dimokratia that is its main adversary for the electoral victory. The polarization reaches its peak a few days before the elections, in order to increase the party's rallying and to promote participation to the elections. PASOK does not make an excessive use of this technique since, based on the conducted polls, it has a clear advantage on the party of ND. This is why it prefers a more moderate opposition plea, in order to avoid scaring off voters that are unsatisfied by the governing party but yet do not consider themselves PASOK's supporters.

Education is an issue with a constant presence in the political agenda. A common belief that the educational system is out of date and problematic, as well as that schools and universities have poor infrastructures exists in Greek society. This fact in combination to the

small percentage of the Gross National Product that is being used for educational purposes compared to other European states makes education an evergreen topic.

Immigration is a relatively new issue on the Greek political agenda, but is considered really important since during the last years there is a constantly growing number of immigrants who are illegal. This issue has been incorporated in the public agenda especially due to: a) the lack of infrastructures that would make possible the handling of such a big number of new comers, which subsequently provokes several problems for the immigrants and for the natives, and b) the emphasis given to this issue by the media. What is striking is the fact that migration is positioned lower in the political agenda than in the media and the public ones, as we can deduce from the lack of any related reference in the party's spots. This is due to the controversial standpoints that exist and split the society almost in half. So PASOK avoids raising the issue in order not to drive off a part of the voters. For this reason, the party points out the necessity of adopting an Immigration Policy and of respecting the rights of the immigrants, without presenting any concrete measures that need to be adopted.

Agriculture is another issue that is constantly present in electoral campaigns. Although the percentage of farmers compared to other professional groups is low, they are one of the most important electoral groups. An important degree of political volatility characterizes this professional group. For this reason, the vote of the farmers affects decisively the electoral result and can cost the victory¹⁹. Any party who wishes to win an election has to present its standpoints on agriculture. In the case of European elections this is even more obvious, since the farmers' income is mainly based on the subventions they receive in the framework of the CAP. It is exactly under this point of view that the agricultural issue is presented in the party's videos.

Security has been transformed to an issue by the citizens after the murder of a student on December 6th 2008 and the riots that followed it. Due to a general and growing feeling of insecurity in the Greek society, PASOK includes this issue in its agenda but in one of the last positions, since security is mainly identified with the right wing of the political spectrum and not with the socialist theory. PASOK recognizes that measures to assure security have to be taken, but at the same time points that these measures should not restrain the personal freedoms of the citizens.

Foreign policy is another standard topic, always present in the political scene. In the corpus this issue is to be found only in trailers and it consists of references to the country's

¹⁹ The Socialist Party has lost the national election of 2006 mainly because it had lost the support of the farmers.

relations with Turkey, the Balkans and Cyprus. They are the biggest challenges in the field of Foreign Affairs that every Greek Government but also the country's MEP have to face, due to existing tensions and different interests. Cyprus is also considered by the Socialist party as one of its bigger achievements, since Cyprus was integrated in the EU when PASOK was governing the country. Foreign policy issues are presented exclusively in the party's **trailers**, since the party's contribution to this field dates before 2004, when it was governing the country. Additionally, all parties have a similar positioning when it comes to foreign affairs. This is why this category is not included in the most important element of the party's campaign, the **spots**, since it slightly influences the citizens' decision which party to vote for.

The last category is *Scandals*, thus particular emphasis is given to it during the last days of the campaign, when a video appears in the party's site referring exclusively to this issue. Scandals and cases of corruption involving politicians have almost monopolized the media agenda from the beginning of 2009 until summer. The accusations and existing rumors involve politicians belonging both to PASOK and Nea Dimokratia, but the lack of reaction from the part of the ND puts its credibility in question. On the other hand PASOK manages to inverse the situation to its favor and in the last phase of its campaigns, it uses this issue in order to increase the level of polarization and to assure its electoral victory. It is for this reason that an entire **spot**, the more "massive" form of video, is dedicated to this topic. Due to their short duration, spots are the type of videos that are most likely to be viewed on the Internet and thus to affect the citizens' perception of the reality. The existence of a spot referring to scandals shows that PASOK considers this issue important.

The party's slogan for the European elections of 2009 is «We vote for Europe. We decide for Greece» followed by «PASOK. Citizens come first». The first part of the slogan shows the connection that exists between the European Union and its member states. Since citizens tend to consider that the EU does not influence their everyday life, it is likely that they will not participate to the election. By making obvious the relation existing between Europe and Greece and by using the verb «we vote» the slogan is urging the citizens not to abstain from the election. The second part of the slogan represents the political philosophy of the party that focuses on the citizen and its needs and places him in the core of governance.

B. Nea Dimokratia (ND)

Nea Dimokratia²⁰ is the main centre-right political party and one of the two major parties in Greece. It was founded in 1974 by Konstantinos Karamanlis and formed the first cabinet of the Third Hellenic Republic. New Democracy governed Greece from 2004 to 2009, and is now the main opposition party in the Hellenic Parliament after its smashing defeat in the 2009 Greek National elections in which it recorded its lowest percentage of votes in the party's history. After the defeat, the president of ND Kostas Karamanlis, nephew of the party's founder, resigned and Antonis Samaras was elected as the new president of the party through a leadership election in November 2009. Nea Demokratia is a member of the European People's Party and currently occupies 8 out of the 22 Greek seats in the European Parliament.

Morphological analysis

Nea Dimokratia hosts 13 videos in the specially designated for the European Elections part of its site. The videos are filed chronologically in the website of the party and they are in fact embedded in it, but hosted on the party's web channel in You Tube (video sharing site). The users can rate and comment the videos when they visit You Tube, while they can only watch them in the party's site.

The videos are categorized, according to the morphological types that have been identified, in the following forms:

Spot: In this category belong 12 of the videos hosted on the party's webpage. Their duration ranges from 32sec to 1min and 50sec. Nine of the videos are interdisciplinary while the remaining three are single-issue. In the majority of the spots the techniques of voice over and musical carpet are being used. The first four spots that appear on the internet have a plot, a story in which the political message is incorporated. In the rest of the videos there is shots' alternation. Important is the role of text in the spots embedded in the party's website, since it is with this form that the main political messages of the party are presented. There are even two spots in which all the messages appear in written and the only thing to be heard is music. At the end of the spots the party's logo and campaign slogan appears: «With you as ally».

²⁰ http://www.nd.gr/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=53217&Itemid=152.

There is also one group of three spots, in which the campaign slogan is being preceded by the phrase: «You. You know the truth».

Trailer: Only one trailer is hosted in the party's website. It is uploaded on May 25th and its duration is 9min 53sec. The trailer is interdisciplinary and intercalary titles are used to clearly divide it in modules. The techniques of voice over and musical carpet are being used in the trailer, while the plans' interchange is rather fast. Fragments of public speeches of Kostas Karamanlis have been incorporated in the video. Moreover, short sentences appear, summing up the basic actions taken by the Government in the fields that are presented in the trailer.

We should also note that the majority of the spots begin with one or more parrots that set the topic that will be presented in the video by «speaking out» PASOK's point of view.

Thematic analysis

At the heart of the party's political agenda for the elections, are the citizen and the problems of their everyday life, as seen from the campaign **spots** and **trailer**.

Particular emphasis is given, to take necessary measures to address the problems exacerbated particularly at national level, with the advent of a large global financial crisis. In this, first of all the party based on the citizen who want to tell the truth and wants to be an ally in all major political decisions. The emergence of the citizen in "driver force" arises also from the election campaign's central slogan: «With you as ally» as the secondary slogan: «You know the truth», as can be seen in the three spots of the total 13 campaign videos that we have already looked morphologically above.

In particular, the classification of thematic categories during the election campaign in order of severity as concluded by all appearances in the videos is as follows:

- 1) *Economy-Growth*: 63 appearances
- 2) *Employment*: 29 appearances
- 3) *Environment*: 16 appearances
- 4) *Foreign Policy*: 16 appearances
- 5) *Democratization-Welfare State*: 13 appearances
- 6) *Education-Research*: 13 appearances
- 7) *Opposition plea*: 12 appearances
- 8) *Agriculture*: 10 appearances

- 9) *Europe*: 9 appearances
- 10) *Security*: 6 appearances
- 11) Immigration: 4 appearances
- 12) Scandals-Transparency: 3 appearances

We observed that the issues of *economy*, *growth* and *employment* are at the top of the agenda, with references to the global economic crisis, to the sustainable plan and to shielding the Greek economy as also the deficit reduction. Through the campaign videos has been trying to convince people that there is a draft and can take appropriate measures to reduce unemployment, job security and create new jobs, while enhancing the incomes of the economically disadvantaged.

On the same subject category, were among other references to major infrastructure projects undertaken and implemented, the privatization of the national airline, a strategic agreement for the ports, energy self-sufficiency and projects related to the use of renewable energy and regional development. Also there were reports in digital development, in broadband connections, to promote exports, to strengthen entrepreneurship and competitiveness.

On the political agenda followed the reports mainly in the **trailer** and less on the **spot** for on the *environment* and *foreign policy*. In particular, inter alia, stressed the green growth, adherence to the objectives of the Kyoto protocol, sustainable transport and strategic agreements were signed on energy. The plan in the **trailer** with the bus sign was the slogan: «We're trying for a more human city. » Were re-fixed national positions and efforts of a good neighbourhood concerning the big foreign policy issues in relation to Macedonia, Cyprus and Turkey.

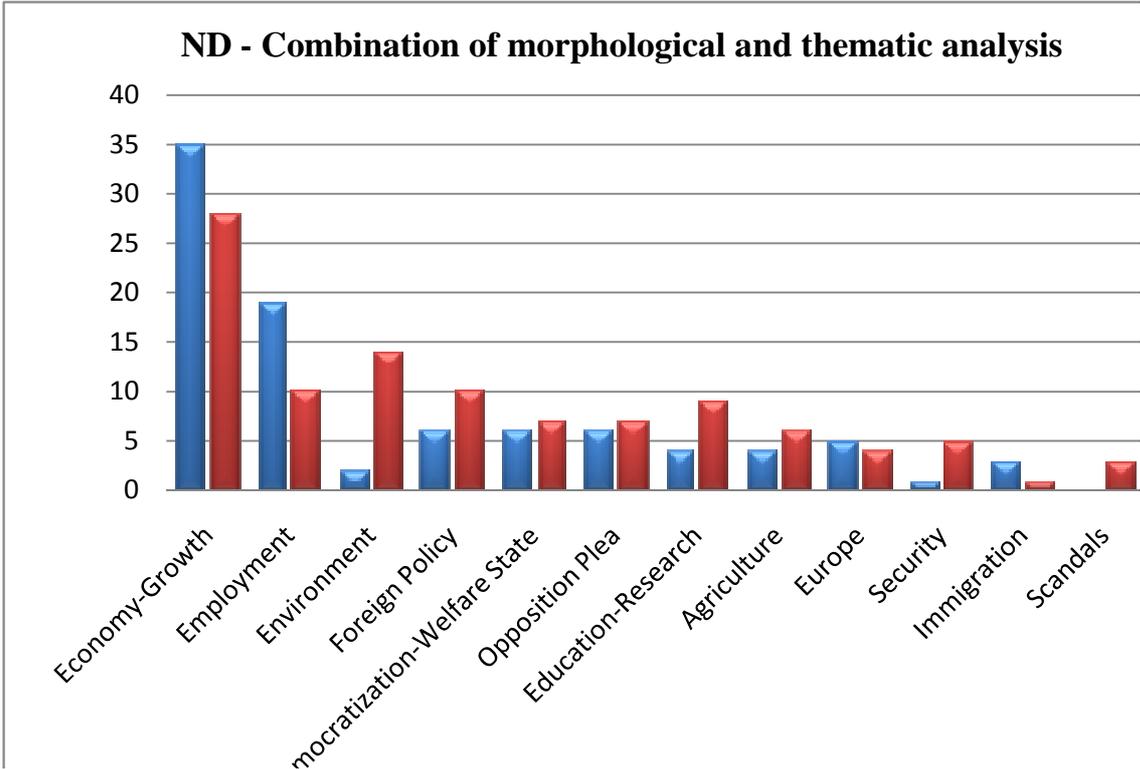
The political agenda of the party followed by the categories: *Democratization-Welfare State*, and *Education-Research*. Specifically, and in particular there are reports of strengthening the welfare state, implementing training programs and promotion of education, protection of fundamental human rights, to increase the participation and consultation. In this, response also the main campaign slogan of the party, about the emergence of citizenship and its contribution to the big political decisions.

The electoral period was for the ruling Nea Demokratia party, the opportunity to defend the policy and answer criticisms accepted by the opposition parties in the handling of the particular sector of the economy. The slogan: "You know the truth," responds to the ruling

party trying to convince that the opposition parties are those that lie and not tell the truth to people.

The rural development, namely the integration of young farmers, support farm income, the provision of soft loans, the improvements in production methods and land use in conjunction with the implementation of infrastructure projects and aid to rural employment, included also to the political agenda of New Democracy.

The thematic classification of party’s political agenda, filled with the following categories: *Europe, Security, Immigration* and *Scandals-Transparency*. We observed that, the issues of Europe's citizens went to the back. The emergence of ethnocentric insistence of local issues reinforced by the fact that in Greece following the national elections. Consequently, the campaign for EU’ elections was an opportunity for a political confrontation with the horizon the upcoming parliamentary elections in October 2009.



As shown in the diagram above, there have been very few references (only on the trailer) on transparency and scandals that deplored Nea Dimokratia party, which party was at the helm of the state during the campaign MEPs elections. Instead there was a focus on global financial crisis and associated problems at national level with the international situation both the **spot** and the **trailer**.

C. KKE (Kommounistiko Komma Elladas)

The Communist Party of Greece (Kommounistiko Komma Elladas), better known by its acronym, KKE²¹, is the oldest party in the Greek political scene. After the restoration of parliamentary democracy in 1974, Constantine Karamanlis legalised the KKE hoping to reclaim «a vital part of national memory». KKE's youth organization is the Communist Youth of Greece, KNE, which closely supports KKE's goals and strategic targets. KKE stands in elections and has representatives in the Greek Parliament, local government, and the European Parliament, where its 2 MEPs sit with the European United Left - Nordic Green Left. Aleka Papatrifa serves the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) as its General Secretary since 1991. She is the first woman to head the party. It should be noted that KKE despite the fact that the party participates in the European Parliament is against the European Union and European policy in general.

Morphological analysis

KKE hosts totally 10 videos in its website. These audiovisual clips are in fact embedded in it, but hosted on the party's web channel in Vimeo (video sharing site). The users can rate and comment the videos by clicking on an icon (a heart) in order to state whether they like after they have seen it.

In these 10 videos we meet only two out of five types of messages that have been identified in the beginning of this paper.

Spots: 8 out of 10 videos belong to the category named spots. All spots last 12sec to 30 sec. The 7 spots are single-issue while the remaining one contains more than one issues. All of them use very few techniques and not in a very imaginative way while only one of them has a plot. They have a few screenshots with voice over and shots of ordinary citizens who usually protest enriched sometimes with a «music carpet» and sometimes with a speech. Apart from three, all the others end with the party's slogan for the elections «Open the way of peoples' counterattack» while in all of them one can hear the main slogan of the party «Powerful KKE». During the spots one can also see and hear brief phrases such as «Stop them», «Punish

²¹ http://www.kke.gr/eyroekloges_2009.

them», «They lied to you», «You, scare them». Finally, all spots use the red color very often in order to fill their background given the fact that red is the party's color.

Trailer: The party hosted two trailers on the site when the trailers which were released were in fact three. They are both interdisciplinary audio-visual clips of 9min and 51sec the first one and of 9min and 53sec the second one. The trailers have short rotation plans, plans with a «musical carpet», screenshots with voice over, shots of citizens who usually protest enriched sometimes with a «music carpet» and sometimes with a speech. During the spots, usually in the beginning of the clip one can hear the motto «Punish them» while both of them ending with the party's slogan for the elections «Open the way of peoples' counterattack» and the main slogan of the party «Powerful KKE». On the one hand, it can be noticed that they don't have modular structure or plot, political figures are absent. On the other hand, the music often dominates in the beginning, during and at the end of the clip. Lastly, following the technique of the spots, the red color is intensively used during the trailers.

Thematic analysis

According to the frequency of appearance, the issues that constitute the party's political agenda are:

1. *Economy-Growth* (6 appearances)
2. *Europe* (6 appearances)
3. *Opposition Plea* (5 appearances)
4. *Employment* (4 appearances)
5. *Democratization-Welfare state* (2 appearances)
6. *Environment* (1 appearance)
7. *Foreign policy* (1 appearance)

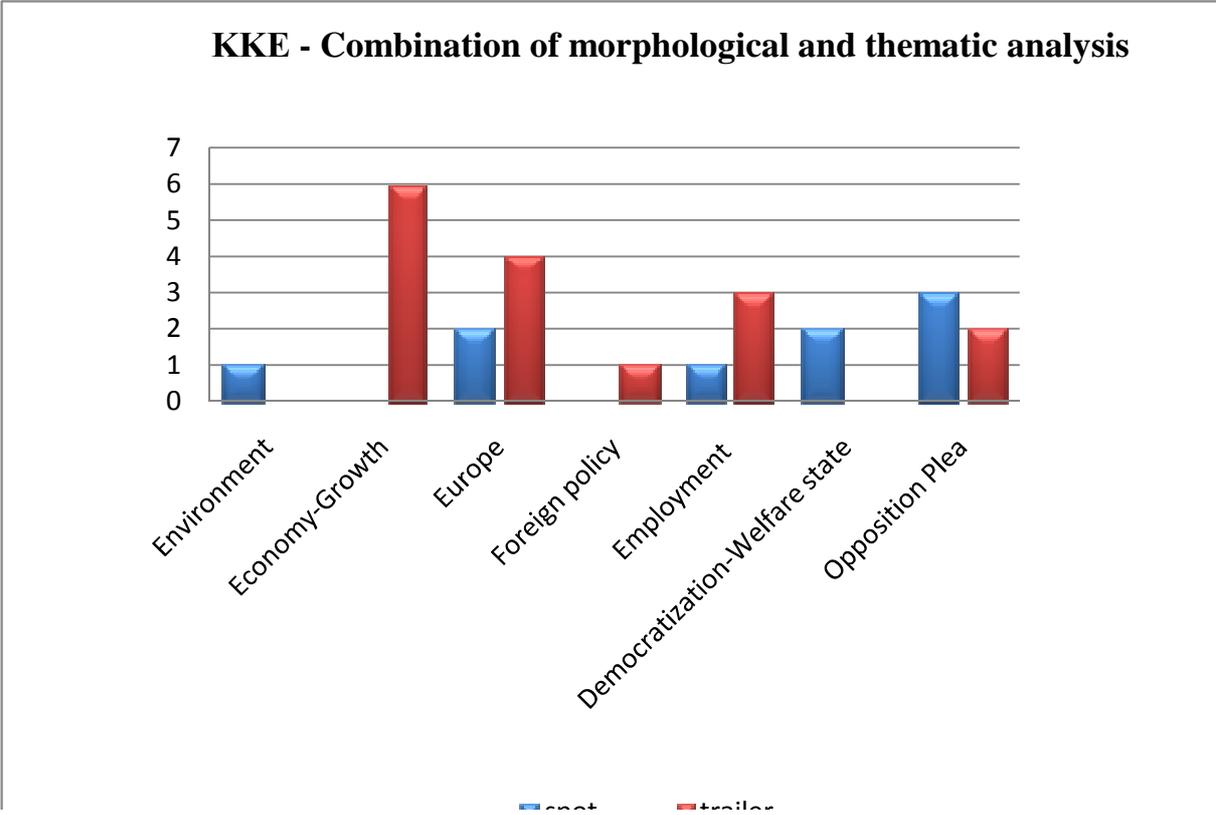
At first glance, one can see the absence of major issues such as education-research, foreign policy, security, immigration, agriculture and scandals.

According to the political agenda of KKE, first comes the economy-growth and Europe. The financial crisis and its consequences especially in the working class as well as the European policy monopolize the campaign of the party. It is well known that although KKE participates in the European Elections and always elects MEPs in the European

Parliament, the communist party of Greece was from the beginning opposed in the integration of Greece in the European Union. As a consequence, KKE give emphasis to the unpopular European policies (stability pact, EMU, Maastricht Treaty) followed each time by the Greek government. KKE strengthens its position by declaring that the European Union alongside with the policies of globalization are responsible for the bad socio-economical situation of the country.

Furthermore, *the opposition plea* prevails during its election campaign due to the fact that the party always tends to blame the two major parties (PASOK, ND) for bipartisanship and for using dilemmas thus blackmailing the voters. KKE calls citizens to strengthen party's public power («Powerful KKE) and to «Open the way of peoples' counterattack» as its slogan says.

Employment is placed fourth in its political agenda. KKE is a party which is mainly addressed to the poorest sections of society and to the working class struggle. It declares its opposition and conflicts with the capitalists and those who concentrate economic power in their hands. Therefore, issues like unemployment, job insecurity, low salaries and pensions, the concentration of wealth in hands of a few preoccupy its political agenda. Party's constant demand is the redistribution of wealth and the stop of monopolies.



Through our research, we also see that issues like *democratization, environment and foreign policy* play less significant role in the party's political agenda. To sum up, the organisation relies heavily on its party apparatus, which was first built up in cooperation with the former Soviet Union, so it comes as no surprise that KKE adopts conservative and outdated values during the pre-election campaign. This is also reflected in the low percentage that KKE received in the European Elections 2009.

Lastly, based on the above figure, we detect that majors issues such as *economy-growth and foreign policy* only appear in the category of the trailers while *environment and democratization-welfare state* are exclusively presented in the party's spots.

D. SYRIZA (Synaspismos Rizospastikis Aristeras)

The Coalition of the Radical Left (Synaspismos Rizospastikis Aristeras), commonly known by its Greek abbreviation SYRIZA²², is a coalition of left political parties in Greece. In 2007–2009 its parliamentary leader was Alekos Alavanos, former president of Synaspismos, the largest of the parties that form the coalition. In 27 November 2007, Alavanos announced that he would not apply for a renewal of his presidency of Synaspismos, due to private reasons. The 5th party congress of Synaspismos elected 33 year old Alexis Tsipras for party president in 10 February 2008. Alavanos retained the parliamentary leadership of SYRIZA until October 2009 when National Elections took place and Tsipras succeeded him in the parliament leadership. SYRIZA stands in elections and has representatives in the Greek Parliament, local government, and the European Parliament, where its one MEP (Nikos Hountis) sit with the European United Left - Nordic Green Left.

Morphological analysis

The political party of SYRIZA hosts a total of 32 audio-visual messages on its website that was specially designed for the 2009 European Parliament elections (syriza.eu). Although videos appear to be hosted on the website of the political party, they are in fact embedded in the webpage syriza.eu while they are hosted on other web server called Vimeo (video sharing

²² <http://syriza.eu/>.

site). Users can assess the video. They can click on an icon (a heart) and to state whether they like after they have seen it.

In these 32 videos we meet all 5 types of messages that have been identified earlier.

Spots: Five out of 32 videos of SYRIZA belong to the category named spots. Similarities are found in four of them. As a result, they will be a common analysis for the four film, while the fifth one which differs significantly will be analyzed separately. The four spots which last 22 to 30sec (three are of 22sec and one of 30sec) have alternate shots with voice over and shots of ordinary citizens with a «music carpet» instead of speech. All of them end with the party's slogan for the elections "*For the needs of the majority*" and in three of them one can also hear the main slogan of the party «SYRIZA NOW». The music and screenshots with voice over dominate in the two spots, while the other two project ordinary citizens using voice over and inline some screenshots with «music carpet». Two of them are single-issue while the other two have more than one module. Finally, the fifth spot differs in comparison with the previous ones that has a duration of 3min and 30sec, and is interdisciplinary. We could say that it has a person – oriented approach given the strong presence of politicians of the party. The political leader appears 3 times in the video (extracts of statements and interviews), the former political leader once (from a television debate) while there are also screenshots of other politicians of SYRIZA. It has also alternate shots with voice over and sometimes with «musical carpet». It ends with a screenshot containing the party's slogan for the elections «*For the needs of the majority*», all the elements of the political party, while one can also hear the main slogan of the party «SYRIZA NOW».

Trailer: The trailer of SYRIZA was hosted on the site of the political party and was described as the first trailer for SYRIZA when in fact was the second trailer that was released. This is an interdisciplinary and modular audio-visual clip of 8min and 59sec. With regard to the interveners, we discern the presence of all the party's candidates MEPs. The trailer has short rotation plans, plans with a «musical carpet», screenshots with voice over, shots of politicians of the party and intercalary titles which aim to divide the trailer in modules. The trailer does not end with the election slogan of the party but with the track of the Beatles "Working Class Hero". At the end of the excerpt sounds "If you wanna be a hero, well just follow me", as prompted. It is a call for participation.

Online debate: The site hosts an online debate that is embedded in a web channel. This is the first online debate conducted officially at a National and European elections level with the participation of 6 parties (PASOK, ND, KKE, SYRIZA, LAOS, Ecogreens). It was conducted in real time on June 3rd, 2009 and broadcasted through the web channel txvs.gr. Five of the six parties that participated, they occupied seats in the European Parliament (Ecogreens did not previously have elected members in the European Parliament).

The debate was organized by a citizens' initiative through the site debate.gr which functioned as a social media tool. The discussion group was moderated by a university professor from the Department of Communication Media and Culture of the Panteion University in the presence of students and citizens. Each candidate had 1min 30sec – noted that it was the same for all 6 party candidates MEPs – per question at his disposal in order to answer and while there was also the opportunity of repositioning on the same subject within a minute. The total duration of the online debate was 1h 39min and 50sec. The candidate whose party held the majority of seats in the European Parliament had the floor for the first topic. The second part was called first to answer the candidate whose party held the second largest force in the European Parliament etc. The debate was divided into six modules. It is noteworthy that during the response no one else of the other candidates interrupts. The primary nucleus of citizens (debate.gr) entered the thematic sectors. These sectors were developed with the participation of an increasing number of people who responded to the invitation of the site. Through the intervention of the public the final corpus of questions was eventually formed. This morphological category contains the element of interactivity. We found this key element both in the configuration of the questions mentioned above and the structure of this morphological category. The questions were chosen by online public vote. Regarding the conditions for conducting an online debate for at least from the point of view of what the public see, the conditions are exactly the same as holding a television debate.

Web Interview: The online interview was given on the web channel tvxs.gr to the journalist Stelios Kouloglou on June 6th, 2009 and was the last interview given by the president of SYRIZA Alexis Tsipras before the election on June 7th. The interview was conducted in real time, lasted 1h 34min 57sec and can be characterized multidisciplinary - modular. The communication link between the journalist and the political leader was bipolar and the conduct of the interview was of interactive nature. The element of interactivity and the unique nature of the Internet as a means of communication were commented upon even the head of SYRIZA, himself. The journalist then explains how the questions were prepared and

submitted by the audience – users and determines the conditions to conduct the interview by the actors themselves. Innovative element in the process is the existence of questions as shaped by users through the Internet. The editorial team had previously defined the topic areas and according to these topic areas, users set their own questions. The questions were submitted by the journalist in order of interest· depending on the number of votes received - the popularity of questions. However, if journalist estimates that the questions of the public do not fully cover all topic areas that were initially developed by the editorial team then sets his own questions. In addition, users were invited to pose their questions during the debate – journalist is in front of a laptop and receives online questions by the audience. It is usually divided into sections. Apart from the fact that this is the last interview of the political leader of SYRIZA before the elections it is also the first given to a web channel during an election period. At this point we should note that the journalist expressed his disagreement to the content some of the questions posed. It is therefore the intervention and the role of citizen in the process of participation, public consultation and democracy in general.

Standpoints' presentation: The remaining 24 videos of SYRIZA are of unique structure and this form of message appears only in the webpage of SYRIZA. Their duration ranges from 1min 24sec to 8min 51sec. These clips specially designed for the internet lack of moderator-journalist. The setting is very simple as we don't have multiple techniques, just the political figure that stands in front of a camera and unfolds the party's political positions. In the background appears the logo of SYRIZA while the clip opens and closes with the same logo of the party. The only technique that is used during the clip is the interference of brief titles-questions who substitute the role of a journalist. The majority of these 24 videos are multi-issue while only 5 of them are considered to be single-issue.

Thematic analysis

Based on the issue's frequency, the ranking of the different themes is the following:

1. *Democratization-Welfare state* (51 appearances)
2. *Economy-Growth* (35 appearances)
3. *Employment* (28 appearances)
4. *Environment* (23 appearances)
5. *Europe* (18 appearances)
6. *Education-Research* (13 appearances)

7. *Foreign policy* (10 appearances)
8. *Security* (9 appearances)
9. *Opposition Plea* (9 appearances)
10. *Immigration* (7 appearances)
11. *Agriculture* (6 appearances)
12. *Scandals* (4 appearances)

The category *Democratization – Welfare state* is placed on top of the party's political agenda which is very sensible given the fact that SYRIZA is a leftist party, thus more closely related to issues such as human rights, women revendications, social equality, access to public goods for every person, democratic participation of citizens, separation between church-state.

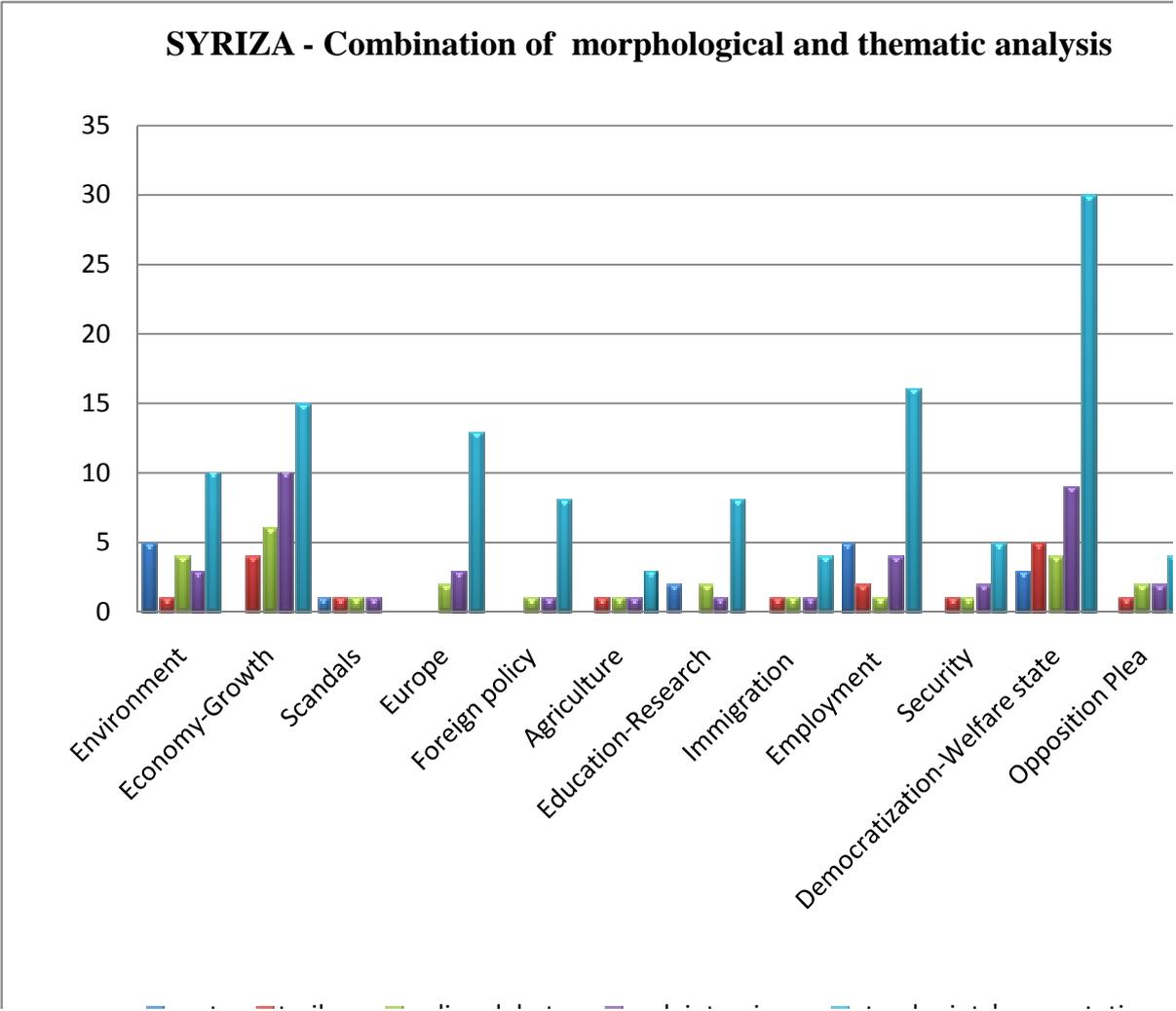
According to our corpus the category *Economy – Growth* is on the second place of the party's political agenda. The financial crisis has shaken citizens' confidence in the Greek economy. Greece is one of the most indebted nations in the eurozone in terms of gross domestic product (GDP). The leftist coalition SYRIZA has best been able to profit from the present crisis. It has adapted to the protests with radical sounding declarations of support. SYRIZA and its affiliated organizations have taken part in a number of the demonstrations and have called for measures to fight the country's socio-economical crisis. This can be explained by the fact that the slogan of the party «For the needs of the majority» is based on the financial crisis meaning that the citizens should not pay for the mistakes of the government and the banking system.

In the third place we find *employment* which is strongly related with the financial crisis and issues like unemployment, «freezing» of salaries, pensions while next in the political agenda come *Europe* and the *environment*. The party supports the democratization of European institutions and the repeal of European policies related to the stability pact, the EMU and the European financial restrictions. Moreover, SYRIZA had recently organized many initiatives in order to protest and stop the construction of a mall with parking seats, projects that violate the balanced development of the environment.

Education-research, foreign policy and security are also of significance. SYRIZA recently demanded a democratic reform of the police force and more intensively after the assassination of a 15 year-old boy by a police officer, alongside measures to provide more jobs, strengthen educational expenditure and improve the country's labour laws. This demand for a police reform is directly bound up with a call for the stabilization of state power. The alliance's demands, include a stop to privatizations, increased public expenditure (polemic

tactic followed towards Turkey), and superficial reforms of the social and educational systems while the party is in favor of inter-balkan co-operations, durable solutions for national issues (problem of Cyprus, the conflict with FYROM about the name etc.).

SYRIZA clearly declared it is against the political discourse that is focused on *scandals* and bipolarization during the elections (*opposition plea*), while the leftist party decides to set in the political agenda issues of *immigration* and *agriculture*. SYRIZA supports the farmers' demands for tax exemptions and additional subsidies and committed to lobby in the European parliament on behalf of the Greek farmers. In addition, it raises questions such as the political, public rights and the citizenship of immigrants whereas the party sets in the last place of its political agenda the scandals. It is reasonably given the fact that the party has already expressed its opposition to cultivate a political discourse based on scandals when in fact the country confronts major issues in a national and European level.



Fundamentally, the policy of SYRIZA strongly resembles the reformist policy of PASOK in the 1980s—calling for a halt to privatizations, an increase in public expenditure and development of the social welfare net, combined with a foreign policy based on opposition to the US and the European Union. However, minor parties are doing all they can to deconstruct the existing order.

In brief, it should be mentioned that the party's colours indicate also its ideological core which is the red of the labor movement, the green of ecology and the blue one of feminism.

According to the above diagram which indicates the relation between morphological and thematic analysis we come across the following observations: 1) the significant issue of *economy-growth* does not appear in the spots, alongside with *Europe, foreign policy, agriculture, education-research, immigration, security* and *opposition plea*, 2) only *environment, employment* and *democratization-welfare state* are presented in all five morphological categories, 3) *Europe, foreign policy* and *education-research* do not appear at all in the party's **trailer**, 4) all issues are appeared in the **online debate** and the **web interview** and 5) apart from *scandals* all the other categories appear in the **standpoints'** presentation.

E. Oikologoi Prasinoi (Ecogreens)

Oikologoi Prasinoi²³ is a new actor in the Greek political scene, since the party appears a couple of months before the European Parliament election. It is a one-issue party focusing on the environment. Thanks to the participation and the support of popular artists the party's reputation is growing fast. Oikologoi Prasinoi is part of the Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance and has elected 1 MEP.

Morphological analysis

The political party Oikologoi Prasinoi hosts a total of 6 videos in its site. The videos are embedded in the party's site, while the first one is hosted in the party's web tv channel while the other five are hosted on its channel in You Tube (a video sharing site). The users

²³ <http://eurelec.ecogreens-gr.org/>.

can watch the videos that are hosted in You Tube on the party's site, but they have to visit the site of You Tube in order to rate or comment them. In order to watch the first video, the user is being redirected to the party's web tv channel.

Two morphological types of videos are identified in this site: trailers and spots.

Trailers: In the party site two trailers are embedded. The duration of the first video is 10min 35sec and the second one (that appears online on May 19th) lasts 5min 10sec. There are shots of the candidates presenting themselves and the party's standpoints in both trailers. Moreover, there are plans usually related to the environment accompanied by music in both of them. In the first trailer the posters of the party's campaign have been incorporated and the technique of the music carpet is being used. The video ends with a shot of the party's logo and the slogan "Vote with vision" appears underneath it. In the second trailer written messages play an important role, since they are often used to provide essential information that doesn't exist in the audio. At the end the party's logo appears followed by the motto "Green solution to the crisis".

Spots: Four videos that belong to the category "spots" are available on the party's site, all of which are uploaded on May 17th. Their duration ranges from 1min 7sec to 1min 21sec. The four spots will be examined commonly since the same techniques are used in all of them. In all of them emphasis is given on the visual part, since the political messages are being transmitted through the images and text appearing on the screen. The audio part of the spots includes exclusively music. At the end of the videos the slogan "I vote with vision. I vote for Oikologoi Prasinoi." appears, followed by the party's logo.

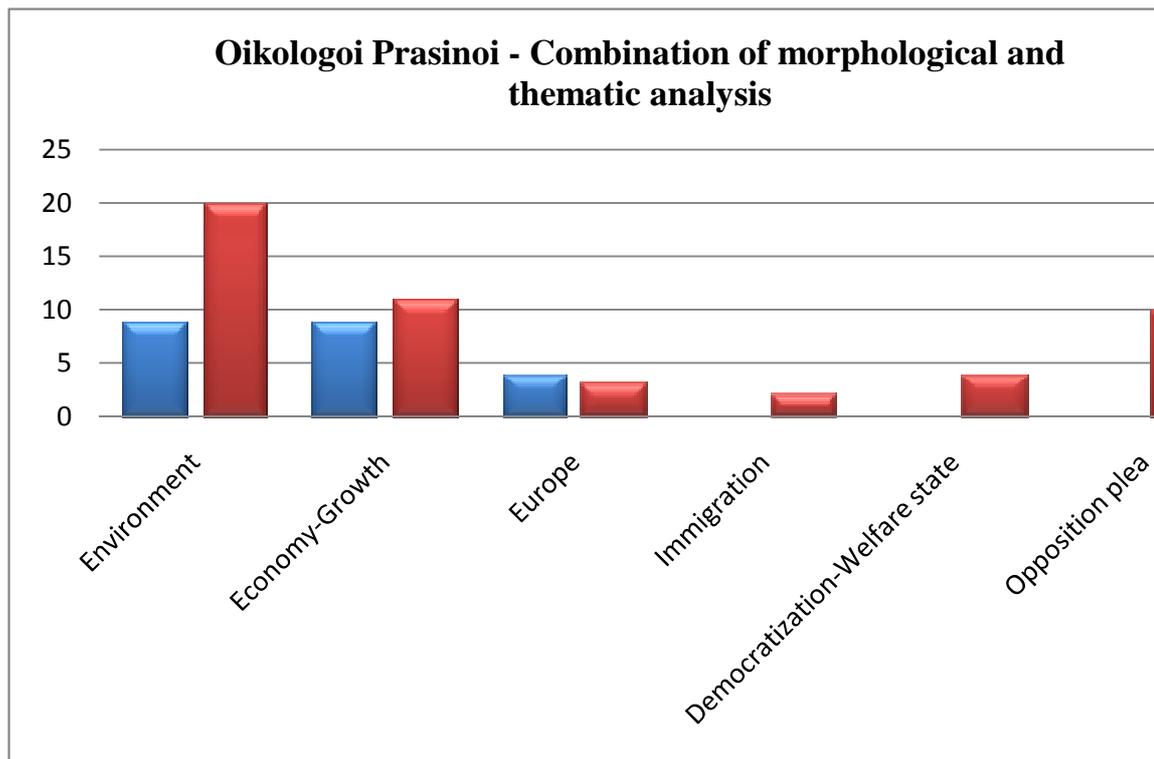
Thematic analysis

According to the frequency of appearance of the different thematic categories, the party's political agenda is:

1. *Environment* (29 appearances)
2. *Economy-Growth* (20 appearances)
3. *Opposition plea* (10 appearances)
4. *Europe* (7 appearances)
5. *Democratization-Welfare state* (4 appearances)
6. *Immigration* (2 appearances)

Since the *environment* is the cornerstone of the party's political proposal, it comes as no surprise that this issue is ranked first in the political agenda. Emphasis is given to the protection of the environment, the preservation of the nature, the climate change, the pollution of the atmosphere and the water, the importance of ecology and its values. What may be surprising is that the category *Economy-Growth* has a significant number of appearances and occupies the second place in the party's agenda. It should be pointed out that this category includes topics that are closely related to the environment, such as the creation of new "green" jobs, the renewable energy sources, eco friendly public transport. This interaction between the environment and the economy-growth is omnipresent in the party's spot, while it is also observed in the trailers. We can thus deduce that it constitutes a political choice on behalf of the party.

Opposition plea comes in the third place of the political agenda. This category is constituted by statements referring to the party's comparative advantages, the elements that differentiate it from the other political parties. The party's morality, its political purity (it is a new party so it has not committed any mistakes), the fact that it offers a different-fresh point of view, the party's will to represent the common interest are the new elements that the party has to offer. The emphasis given to this category can be explained by the party's need to form its own identity, an identity that will differentiate it from the other political parties in the mind of the voters. This is very important for a party that participates for the first time in an electoral battle.



In the case of Oikologoi Prasinoi the thematic category *Europe* includes mainly allusions made to the Group of the Greens, the fifth most important party of the European Parliament. This way the party tries to increase its credibility and urge people to trust it. Although new in the country's political arena, it is part of a well known and respected European party. It is then capable of representing Greek people to the European Parliament.

The category *Democratization-Welfare state* includes references to human rights, equality and the renewal of the political system and is followed by *Immigration* that occupies the last place of the party's agenda. These issues come up only in the trailers, where time restrictions are fewer and the appearance of different political figures permits the articulation of a more diversiform discourse. However, even in the case of the **trailers** the time spent on the presentation of the party's standpoints on these issues is minimal.

The party's effort to create a political identity is a key element of its campaign. The aim of the party's slogan «I vote with vision. I vote for Oikologoi Prasinoi» is to convince the voters that the party has something to offer, that it can constitute a political «solution». This is made obvious in the party's trailers, where the phrase «Green solution to the crisis» is being used.

IV Conclusions

Throughout our research we came across that Europe is not considered as the cornerstone of the parties' political campaign in the European Elections 2009. The European institutional policy and in particular the axes that determine the European policies do not actually state the prevailing strategic goal of the Greek political parties. We thus deduce that the political discourse of the parties is deeply ethnocentric, since emphasis is given to the nation's interests. We observe that the parties' political agenda less focuses on issues related to Europe and its institutional organs and its policies, while the issues that are highlighted by the parties could also be included in the constitution of the agenda for a National Election Campaign. As we can see, Europe is presented under a concrete angle by the majority of the parties while KKE gives an alternative interpretation on what we call Europe (framing). On the one hand European Union seems to be a mean for solving tackling problems for PASOK, ND, SYRIZA, Oikologoi Prasinoi on the other hand the communist party of Greece claims that Europe is responsible for the bad socio-economical situation of the country. Moreover, we should note that the two major parties, PASOK and ND present the country's participation to EU for a national achievement.

Concerning the ranking of the category *Europe* in the political agenda (priming), it could be noted that it does not constitute a priority. Taken into consideration that we are examining the electoral campaign for the European elections, one would think that *Europe* would occupy the first position. However, it comes second in the KKE's agenda, 3rd in the case of PASOK, 4th in the agenda of Oikologoi Prasinoi and Syriza. Moreover, it is always closely related to the Greek reality, that we only refer to EU policies when they directly affect the country, such as the case of the CAP. It is worth mentioning that PASOK's main slogan «We vote for Europe. We decide for Greece» shows the close connection between the European and the national element in the party's political discourse. The party's positioning is not clear, since the slogan contains a dual meaning (Europe – Greece).

On the other hand *Economy-Growth* is highly ranked in the political agenda of all parties. This is due to the international financial crisis that affects the country and to the emphasis given to this issue by the media. In morphological terms, references to this topic were found in the trailers of all the parties, a form of video that tends to be more analytic and condenses the pre-electoral strategy. Relatively high are also ranked the thematic categories

Environment and *Employment*. Both constitute important issues for the Greek society and they are always included in the political agenda.

The category *Democratization – Welfare State* occupies the first place in the political agenda of PASOK and SYRIZA. This is not surprising due to their ideological identity (centre-left, left), their social profile and the fact that they both belong to the opposition. This category, which is ranked in the 5th place, does not constitute a major preoccupation in the agenda of Nea Dimokratia, a party positioned at the center-right of the political spectrum.

Scandals is a category exploited by the two major parties, since just before the European elections the Siemens scandal, involving both parties, dominated the media and public agenda. PASOK, the major opposition party, used scandals as opposition plea at the end of the election campaign. At this point, it should be noted that PASOK gave emphasis on the opposition plea a few days before the elections, while ND had adopted an “aggressive” advertising campaign from the beginning. Green (PASOK’s colour) parrots were starring in this campaign. The campaign’s aim was to deconstruct PASOK’s accusation that the MPs of ND were blindly following the party’s orders as if they were parrots (repeating without critique). This choice indicates the party’s need to rally its voters, since the polls conducted before the elections showed that PASOK was going to win. The effort of rallying is also detected in Nea Dimokratia’s main slogan «With you as ally».

Security does not appear in KKE’s and the Ecogreens’ agenda, while it occupies one of the last places in the agenda of the other parties. Even though references to *Immigration* are made by all political parties except KKE, the frequency of these references is not very often. Taken into consideration that both issues have split the Greek society in two, one can understand that the parties avoid raising these matters in order not to drive away potential voters.

We have to point out that KKE and Oikologoi Prasinoi have a «narrow» agenda in comparison to the other parties. This can be explained by the fact that Ecogreens is a newly formed party which has not yet fully determined its political identity. Furthermore, KKE follows a strict political agenda that characterizes its socio-political ideology.

Regarding the morphological categories, all parties have included in their web campaigning the forms of spots and trailers. However, some parties such as SYRIZA use more various forms of videos (web interview, online debate, standpoints’ presentation) that reinforce its presence in the web during the elections.

The element of interactivity is the main feature of the forms of web interview and online debate. For the first time we detect in these two forms that the users have the

opportunity to actively participate, an initiative which is closely related to issues like democratic participation and consultation, fundamental elements of the democracy. The nature of the net's function comprise the notion of networking that allows the grouping and leads to the collectivity and consequently to the implementation of democracy.

Eventually policy passes through the internet or is on the internet? Does this mean that we are passing from a representative democracy to a participatory democracy? So the democracy may become permanent? Doubtless, this would extent the internet access and would bridge the digital gap which exacerbates dangerously the pre-existing inequalities. But internet should also be considered as a complementary tool to the other forms of media, or their substitute and not as a competitive medium of communication.

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