

THE AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP TEST
and the importance of frames
in policymaking



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The collage on the cover page of this thesis is a representation of how I see Australia. You might recognize some pictures and think they are an appropriate image to include in a collage of Australia (surfing? Uluru?). You might consider other pictures to be a bit inappropriate and unconventional in symbolizing 'Oz' (seriously Tebbine, a goon bag? Kylie Minogue?). But that's okay! That doesn't matter. Because it is *my* image of Australia. It is how I perceive that great, great country all the way across the other side of the world of which I had the pleasure to live in and be part of for half a year. What the country and its people have come to mean to me is my personal view and that does not necessarily need to be a view that everyone shares. The meaning I subscribe to footy and bogans (yes, that's what that mysterious picture is of that guy sitting on his Eski) and the meaning I give to Captain Cook and The Twelve Apostles might be a complete different meaning than for any other person. Footy to me is just a game, a sport that some people play. But many Australians and especially many Victorians live and breathe it. The colour of their team runs through their veins. The Twelve Apostles to me is not just a boring rock formation shaped by the elements over time but instead signifies the place where my new Australian friend brought me in her car in horrible weather because she wanted to give me 'the real' tourist experience. Meaning giving and the subjective experience of the world around us is a central theme in this thesis. In my research I have looked at how the Australian Citizenship Test has been shaped through the subjective and social meaning that its founders subscribed to several of its elements. Government policy is the same as my collage on the cover page, a representation of a particular way of looking at the world; a particular way of framing the reality. And I will devote the next 70 pages to show how the Australian Citizenship Test was similarly framed and given a particular meaning.

Before I go into the 'serious stuff' of this thesis I want to show my gratitude to a bunch of people who have made my incredible journey – the literal and metaphorical – of the last 9 months possible. My biggest and deepest praise goes out to John, who has so kindly invited a stranger to come and work with ANZSOG and who has been the biggest and best support throughout my entire stay in Melbourne and even beyond that. Thank you John, for everything. For your trust, your kind encouragements to do the best I can, thank you for all the mini-lectures in your office about Australian politics and what not, they've helped a lot! Thank you for making me feel welcome and at home in a new workplace in a new country and above all thank you for just being you. I look forward to having our next get-together and sharing of good food and inspiring thoughts. I want to thank Paul 't Hart too for setting up the connection with John and using his great networking ability to provide me with an unforgettable international work experience. Similarly, I couldn't have made the journey to Australia if it wasn't for Jolanda. Thanks girl for helping me out the way you did. Bill and Linda have been there for me during my whole stay in Melbourne through supporting me wherever they could and by taking me in as family. Thank you guys for making me feel so much at home and for making my whole experience in Australia a lot easier but above all very 'gezellig'! Peter, thanks for putting up with my sometimes frantic monologues via Skype and in real life. You have been a real champ in helping me getting my focus where it should be. Bruno, thanks for having the patience of putting up with my stress, my stress-related clutter and with my half-year absence in our life together. You have been one of the biggest inspirations in my life and I will always love you. And finally I want to thank my mom for being the best freaking mom of the world. Mom, you can't imagine how comforting and safe it feels to know that you are always there for me no matter what happens. I love you to death and I am for ever grateful of the fight you put up to provide Tedson and me with the possibilities to grow and develop to our maximum capacities – both academic and emotionally. I dedicate this thesis to you. And my diploma (once I get it) will be partially your achievement too, just because you are my foundation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

2014 is the 65th anniversary of Australian citizenship. A memorable year that the Australian government celebrated with numerous events across the country. The Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) launched a yearlong social media campaign to kick off the 65th anniversary of Australian citizenship, highlighting unique stories of those who have recently become Australian Citizens. It was not until 1949 that Australian citizenship came into existence and it can be seen as a relatively young concept. There are many people who are proud of being an Australian citizen and happily take part in the anniversary celebrations across the country. Much less joyful and happy are the issues that Australia has been having with asylum seekers who try to gain access to Australia by boat illegally. Since 2001 Australia has seen a huge uprise in refugees trying to reach Australia's shore by paying large sums of money to people smugglers to get them across the dangerous seas in unsuitable boats. Succeeding governments have struggled with their approach to this issue and Tony Abbott – the current Prime Minister who came into power in 2013 – has even made his solution to the issue the backbone of his election campaign. His language around 'stopping the boats' and his approach to dealing with the 'boat people' are by many perceived as too harsh and dishonourable towards already vulnerable refugees seeking desperately to get access to a new and better life. These two stories are very distinct stories that relate to citizenship; one more clearly than the other. The first story is about celebrating a construct that many Australians receive through birth and that some gain by applying for it later in life. It is about sense of community, loyalty and pride to be an Australian citizenship. The other story is about deciding who gets permission to enter the country, about people who desperately want to be part of the community and risks their lives to pursue their dream of becoming an Australian citizen.

Although my account of the two stories might be different from anyone else's attempt to describe the meaning of these stories for citizenship, it does highlight how one concept can mean different things in different contexts. The language that I used to create these stories literally constructed the realities of the events. My construction was only aimed at giving you as a reader an appealing introduction to the rest of my thesis. But what role does the construction of reality through use of language have in deciding governmental policies that affect many lives in a society? A governmental policy as a response to illegal, undeserving boat people that do not belong in Australia might take other shapes than a policy that tries to help refugees; men, women and children in distress who had no other choice but to 'illegally' find their way to the shores of Australia. The language through which a societal issue is portrayed or created influences in important ways the governmental response to it. The languages of politics inscribe the meanings of a policy problem. Public policy is not only expressed in words, it is literally 'constructed' through the language(s) in which it is described. And it is this understanding that is central to this thesis. In this thesis I will look at how the Australian Citizenship Test policy was discursively constructed by actors relevant to the policy process. The main research question is:

What frames were used by actors in the policymaking process of the Australian Citizenship Test and how did those frames affect the Test?

Frames are mental tools that people use to better understand and act upon social reality. A frame is a way of selecting, organizing, interpreting and making sense of a complex reality. Frames function both as a picture frame and as the framework of a building. A picture frame frames a photo and creates the boundaries through which the photo is perceived. You only see what you see within the picture frame

and hence your frame of reference for the situation in the photo does not exceed the frame boundaries. You might have more information about the situation in the photo because maybe you were there when the photo was taken or maybe you just understand what is happening in the photo. But that 'just understanding' happens because the picture frame helps you to organize the reality of the photo by selecting only that information that is relevant to you in understanding the photo. Understanding and meaning in everyday life is something that usually happens unnoticed. Concepts, social interactions and phenomena carry unmediated meaning and that unmediated meaning makes social life a lot easier. If we would constantly have to explain ourselves when we converse, if we would have to explain for example what we mean by "I am taking a taxi" (what is 'taking'? are you trying to seize capture of the taxi?) then our world would become a messy and chaotic place.¹ Framing contributes to making the world an easier place to live in because, as I said earlier, it can be considered to be similar to the framework of a building. Framing largely happens unconsciously and no one is exempt from the need of framing. Frames constitute the building blocks for how we live our lives. Frames help us to approach and understand everything we encounter: from social interaction with people around us to decisions at work to creating governmental policies to resolving an argument with our neighbor. If my neighbor and I are having an argument and in the middle of the conversation he stops talking, puts his hand forward with a big smile on his face and says "let's call it a truce" I know to shake his hand before he changes his mind. My previous experience with the swiftly changing temper of my neighbor, my own inclination to avoid confrontation, my upbringing which taught me to give people a second chance, and my interpretation of the smiling face and the friendly hand gesture – in short, my frame – allows me to decide within a second to shake his hand.

Analyzing framing in a policy setting is interesting because it can reveal the importance that language plays in constructing the reality of a policy program. Policy is built on certain perceptions of problem situations or societal issues. Behind every policy there is a story to tell about how the program is supposed to work, how it will solve a certain societal issue, what the rationale is behind the program, how the target population is perceived and so on and so forth. All of these presuppositions are a certain way of looking at the world and determine to a large degree how a program will look in the end. Actors involved in the policy process influence through their framing of reality the construction of a policy program. I am interested to find out how actors involved in the policymaking of the Australian Citizenship Test influenced the policy story behind the program through their discursive construction of reality. The Australian Citizenship Test is a tool that is used in the citizenship application process for citizenship who are permanent residents in Australia. This makes it an interesting case for frame analysis because the program possibly relates not only to citizenship issues but also to issues like migration, social cohesion and integration. Through the analysis of the policy process of the Australian Citizenship Test, the analysis of which (group of) actors had a role in that process and through analysis of how those actors framed citizenship and related issues, I will try to find the presuppositions of the policy story and how that influenced the overall Australian Citizenship Test process and program. My aim is to describe and explain how in the empirical world the discursive construction of reality can influence policy programs. An empirical account of the social construction of policy programs adds value to better understanding discursive construction in practice. My findings will contribute to theory about the relation between discursive construction, policy development and power relations between

¹ This reminds me of friends and family who have told me about working or living with autistic people. Although there are many different kinds of autism, generally speaking, people with autism are unable to infer the meaning of social conventions or social interactions that carry unmediated intentions. Saying to an autistic person that "you'll be seeing them" as a way of saying farewell would make them very confused because you are not mentioning when that next time of seeing them will be and on what date and which location. Much of my argument that we would have a chaotic world if we did not implicitly agree to the unmediated meaning of words relates to the experiences of persons with autism.

policy actors. I will theoretically generalize my findings and contribute to the already existing body of literature about frame analysis

Research Method in Brief

To be able to answer the main research question I will pay attention to a set of sub questions that I will try to answer throughout the thesis. These questions are:

- *In what social and political background was the Australian Citizenship Test developed?*
- *How was the Australian Citizenship Test policy developed?*
- *What actors are involved in the Australian Citizenship Test process?*
- *How do policy-relevant actors frame citizenship?*

The first sub question is answered in chapter 4, the context of the Australian Citizenship Test. The stories in this chapter are mainly a product of reading, analyzing and portraying secondary sources about the history and context of immigration and citizenship in Australia. The second and the third question are answered in chapter 5 in which I provide the more rational policy analysis I did of the development of the program. The main data generating tool that I used here was my interpretation of primary sources which were mainly documents. Finally in chapter 6 I will describe how relevant actors framed citizenship and show my interpretation of the story they created around the Australian Citizenship Test. For this chapter I did extensive document analysis too and also looked at how public servants working with the Test framed citizenship by talking to them in interviews. The methodology of this research can be symbolized as a 'bricolage': a construction made of whatever materials were at hand. There is not one right way of doing interpretive research and I found out along the way of my research project that an interpretive researcher has to often create his or her own methods, has to borrow ideas from other research, has to put together different elements of different analytical methods and just has to decide ad hoc what is the best suitable method or approach. An important reason that I had to craft my own research methods was that frame analysis is theoretically strong but methodologically rather weak. There is yet to appear a handbook for doing frame analysis. I also learned that interpretive research involves 'layering' your empirical data. It is not merely a matter of presenting raw word data but the quality of an interpretive project largely depends on the interpretations of that data and the story you are able to tell about what those word data tell you. The empirical chapter 5 and 6 are therefore a result of several layers of writing, analyzing, rewriting, reanalyzing and so on. My decision to study framing within the policymaking of the Australian Citizenship Test was prompted by the opportunity I got to do research in Australia, my interest in the subjectivity of policy programs and my interest in citizenship theory. Although framing takes place at the individual level I have decided to analyze collective frames. My assumption is that people share ways of framing social reality. On a very detailed level people might not have identical frames but by and large people tend to perceive of reality in similar fashion – a topic I will go into more in chapter 2 the theoretical framework.

Relevance

Frame analysis of policy enables the researcher to dive deep into the role that language plays in politics and public administration. With my research I contribute to enhanced attention for discursive analysis in academic public administration. A dominant approach to policy analysis is the rational policy cycle approach that prescribes that policies develop in an orderly and step-wise fashion and are informed by rational-analytical process steps. My analysis shows however that the development of the Australian Citizenship Test was far from an orderly process and was driven by ideologically informed discursive constructions rather than rational-analytical forces. Bringing the social constructivist idea into policy analysis makes way for explanations that go beyond accepting an objective truth out there. Especially in politics language often appears to relate to facts and objective truths but my social

constructivist approach of the Australian Citizenship Test will prove that politics and policymaking is just as ordinary life much created through our perceptions and understandings of the world around us. The ability to make clear diverging interpretations of policy meanings advanced by different groups, as well as understanding the elements through which these meanings are transmitted, allows me to assist in identifying the underlying sources of policy politics. By revealing the taken-for-granted assumptions that underlie policy I can contribute to an awareness in academia but also an awareness of the general public and of actors within government how much policy and political language affects how we think about problems and solutions. Policies are political constructions of reality and an in-depth analysis contributes to showing how those constructed realities can function as a discursively created hegemony. Showing how governments can be dominant in putting forward their view of society opens up the discussion about democracy and participation of citizens in policy and politics.

2. THEORY

Introduction

The research approach presented in this paper departs from a social constructivist philosophy. I will explain in the first section what this approach holds for the study of policy. In the next section I will focus on how two discursive approaches within the broader constructivist framework were developed to better understand the role that language plays in reflecting and shaping our day to day understanding of reality. Discourse and framing theory both have at their core that understanding the social construction of language is key to understanding the social world. Discourses are systems of discursive representation – both spoken and written – that have developed socially in order to make and circulate a coherent set of social meaning. Discursive refers to by means of language and other symbolic systems. Frames are mental constructs that help us organize how we perceive the world. A frame shapes what we see inside the frame and the messages that we receive about reality are through the frame transformed into a meaningful whole. Frames help us to interpret the information we receive through other already available thoughts and principles. Although the focus in this research project is on framing, I will discuss both discourse and frame theories because they both have, as their central thesis, that language enacts social and cultural perspectives. In the final section I will pay attention to the role that frame analysis can play in policy research by highlighting how much of what is talked about or written in policy or political arenas is actually a representation of reality by one particular actor.

A Social Constructivist Approach of Policy

Social constructivism is a scientific perspective that has at its core the idea that the social reality we live in is created by the individuals living in it. People are constantly involved in ascribing meaning and interpreting events and things around them and in that way ‘create’ their own reality. Social constructivist researchers reject the idea of a mind-independent and permanently fixed reality that can be grasped or even sensibly thought of without the mediation of structuring. What distinguishes human social action from the movement of physical objects is that the former is inherently meaningful. What follows from this perspective is that a social reality can only be grasped through a better understanding of the everyday meaning making that research subjects take part in. People create concepts and give meaning to their reality to bring order and sense to the human experience (Yanow, 2003). Social ‘reality’ may be construed differently by different people: the social world we inhabit and experience is potentially a world of multiple realities and multiple interpretations (Hatch and Yanow, 2003). The difference between social constructivism and a more traditional view on science, such as one that is directed at generating law like explanations, is that instead of explaining or predicting social reality, one would want to understand reality or what is called *verstehen* in German. *Verstehen* is the process through which the researcher and researched come to understand each other’s frame of reference, with language playing the central mediating role in interpretation (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2006). Understanding instead of explaining entails making clear people’s interpretations of their own and others’ experiences, leading to the discovery of context-specific meaning. *Verstehen* concerns human subjectivity and intersubjectivity as both subjects of and explanations for human action (ibid.). The constructionist understanding of scientific practices is that research focuses on science’s account of reality rather than on reality itself. The focus is not on real and separate objects and their properties per se, but rather on the vocabularies and concepts used by human beings to know and represent them (Fischer, 2003). The goal is to understand how these varying cognitive elements interact discursively to shape that which comes to be taken as knowledge (ibid.).

Policies in the light of social constructivist thinking can be defined as the mechanisms through which values are authoritatively allocated for society (Schneider and Ingram, 1997). Policies are revealed through texts, practices, symbols, discourses and frames that define and deliver values including goods and services as well as regulations, income status, and other positively or negatively valued attributes. A social constructivist approach of policies holds that problems, policy programs, solutions and target groups are all socially constructed differently by (groups of) people using different discourses and frames through which they perceive reality (Hajer, 1993; Bekkers, 2007). Even though the policy exists and has actual consequences, such as the allocation of resources, the policy becomes redistributive, regulatory, or distributive through the construction of its meaning by actors involved in the policy process. The social construction of reality shapes the characteristics of policy designs and through the meanings and interpretations attached to policy, effects on democratic values and society are realized (Schneider and Ingram, 2007). Policy is not a straightforward, stepwise, rational process that has clear means and ends or is based on technical and objective information. Rather, policy is a dynamic and complex phenomenon that is very much shaped by the perceptions and representations of reality of differing groups of people. Policy evolves as a diverse, often contradictory, and shifting set of responses to a spectrum of political interests. Public policy is a discursive construct rather than a self-defining phenomenon. The process leading to decisions and action is one of defining the situation, searching for ideas, crafting possibilities, simulated testing of the ideas, (re)framing, and so forth – a highly iterative process rather than a closely prescribed selection from among multiple predefined alternatives (Schneider and Ingram, 2007). This view on policy is different from the more dominant view on public policy; the rational approach in which objective information is the crucial driver of the process. This approach departs from a different epistemology because it holds that policy problems and information about possible solutions can be objectively collected and analyzed. Policy processes are assumed to be means to end approaches where policy actors rationally choose from different alternatives the best solution to achieve clear policy goals (Dunn, 2004; Bekkers, 2007; Cochran and Malone, 2009). A heuristic theoretical model that was created in line with this view is the policy cycle or policy stages model.

The policy cycle model describes the several stages that a policy goes through from initial idea generation to implementation and evaluation. Numerous scholars have devoted attention to create their own versions of the policy cycle and hence there are various differing models. In general though, there are at least five stages that a policy is believed to go through. The first stage is the agenda-setting in which attention for a particular issues is raised; an issue is put on the agenda of politicians and other policy actors. In this stage political or societal actors evoke ideas about possible solutions. The policy formulation or analysis stage is the phase in which a thorough ex-ante analysis of available information is performed to compare multiple alternatives and decide on the best course of action in terms of means, goals, outputs and outcomes. It is a stage in which a rational-analytical approach of available information has to yield insights not only for the social issue but also what possible governmental interference could help solve the issue. Then in the policy development phase the preferred policy options are chosen and the policy program is developed in further detail – this is sometimes also called the decision making phase. The subsequent step, the policy implementation, is where the program and tools will be put into practice. Finally the policy evaluation stage is an assessment of the program mostly in terms of its perceived outputs and outcomes. The policy cycle model is not a claim to universal application or explanation and is more a tool to organize observation into familiar patterns and hence provide a guide for action (Bridgman and Davis, 2003). Although the model is mostly applied in research with different epistemological principles, in this research it can provide as a useful heuristic method to organize and structure the policy analysis provided in chapter 5.

The effects of policies depend on the meanings and interpretations attached to the policy by citizens, interest groups, media, and others. In a social constructivist analysis of policy it is important to look at the participants in the process of socially constructing the realities relevant to public policy. These participants include elected officials, media, members of social groups, powerful and influential people, interest groups, political parties and public servants. Many social constructivists point at how in a policy setting those different groups of actors are involved in a continuing struggle to gain acceptance of a particular construction of social reality. Basic to the politics of policymaking, then, must be an understanding of the discursive struggle to create and control systems of shared social meanings (Fischer, 2003). The control and creation of the meaning of a policy are in important ways informed by actors' moral or ideological positions that establish and govern competing views of the good society. The construction of reality through political language is a powerful tool because the claims that politicians make hold essential ideas about how they view the world. Their view is only one of many possible views on political reality. Different discourses, definitions and questions lead to different policy prescriptions. However, often politicians and policymakers – and news media too – portray political or societal issues as 'facts' and people tend to forget that political language is political reality itself and not a reflection of it. From the social constructionist perspective the social and political life under investigation is embedded in a web of social meanings produced and reproduced through discursive practices (ibid.). These features make language a powerful and fundamental force within politics. The ability to use it effectively is an essential resource in the unfolding of the political process and the recognition of the 'facts' created by politicians largely depends on the success of the rhetorical performance. Because of the centrality of the discursive construction of meaning in the constructivist approach of policy next I will turn to two theories about language and meaning making.

The Discursive Construction of Reality

Two scholars who advanced social sciences in important ways – French philosopher Michel Foucault and Canadian-born sociologist Erving Goffman – both developed theories that influenced the social constructivist approach of policies. Foucault progressed the idea of discourse in social studies by relating discourse theory clearly to the production of power. His later work revolves around the pervasiveness of power relations within the broader pattern of discourse and demonstrate that knowledge claims are part of this relationship (Schneck, 1987). Discourses for Foucault are socially constructed representations of reality that produce categories of knowledge and hence decide what is acceptable and functions as 'truth'. Goffman introduced frame theory in the social sciences in his 1974 book *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. Goffman saw frames as 'interpretive schemata' that both shape and limit what we perceive as reality. Frames to Goffman are a day-to-day sense-making technique; individuals create and rely on frames to make sense of daily interactions, conventional rituals, discourse, advertising, and other elements of societal experience (Creed, Langstraat and Scully, 2002). The distinction between discourse and frames is on the level in which the discursive construction takes place. Discourses are shaped and employed on a collective level while frames operate at the individual level. Both models hold as their central tenet that the language we use is assigned a specific meaning. Concepts, symbols and other discursive representations are not conceptual isolates (Yanow, 2003). They represent and encapsulate broader sets of ideas, some known explicitly, and some tacitly. Language does not mirror the world but instead constitutes the world as we know it and function in it (Weldes, 2006). To understand how language has come to invoke one set of connotations rather than another and to account for its common sense status, one needs to understand how the concept is represented. Why are those representations accepted; and how, if at all, are they contested (ibid.). In understanding the representation of discursive elements, the field of discourse theory and frame analysis offers useful insights. Policies or

political decisions cannot be understood without having a sense of the discourse and frames through which people apprehend policy problems (Weldes, 2006).

Discourse

Discourse theory and discourse analysis is widely known and used throughout the social sciences. Discourse is, however, not easily defined. Different scholars mean different things with it. Bacchi (2000) suitably remarks that one cannot provide a definition of discourse easily because the whole idea of discourse is that definitions play an important part in delineating and creating 'knowledge'. Because definitions have that effect, they require scrutiny and replication. Weldes (2006) describes a discourse as a set of capabilities, or a set of socio-cultural resources used by people in the constructing of meaning about their world and their activities. It is a structure of meaning-in-use, a language or system of representation that has developed socially in order to make and circulate a coherent set of meanings. Discourses are sets of rules for ordering and relating discursive elements – like subjects, objects, their characteristics, tropes, narratives, and so on – in such a way that some meanings rather than other meanings are constituted (Weldes, 2006). Fischer (2003) asserts that discourse refers to historically specific systems of meaning which form the identities of subjects and objects. The social meanings that are created through discourse are shaped by the social and political struggles in specific historical periods. The goal of discourse analysis is thus to show how actions and objects come to be socially constructed and what they mean for social organization and interaction (Fischer, 2003). Discourse is more than just a synonym of discussion or talking. The meanings of the words used and the statements employed in a discourse depend on the social context in which they are uttered, including the positions or arguments against which they are advanced. At the level of everyday interaction, discourses represent specific systems of power and the social practices that produce and reproduce them (ibid.).

The concept of discourse is different from the concepts of discussion or talk because it specifically relates language to the social constructionist idea of *verstehen* and situates it in groups of people that share the same system of meaning. Hajer (1993) calls the groups of people that share the same system of meaning discourse coalitions. A discourse coalition is the ensemble of a set of story lines, the actors that utter these story lines, and the practices that conform to these story lines, all organized around a discourse. The discourse coalition approach suggests that politics is a process in which different actors from various backgrounds form specific coalitions around specific story lines (Hajer, 1993). Analyzing discourse coalitions consists of three elements: the analysis of the discursive production of reality; the analysis of the social practices from which social constructs emerge and the analysis of the engagement of actors who make these statement. If a discourse is successful – that is to say, if many people use it to conceptualize the world – it will solidify into an institution, sometimes as organizational practices, sometimes as traditional way of reasoning. Fischer (2003) in his book talks of dominant and subordinate social groups in the construction of reality. Especially in political science the relationship between discourse, power and ideologies is often debated and multiple scholars emphasize how competing discourses struggle to gain recognition and power. Discursive practices can create discourse hegemonies through ideological means and material concessions in an effort to build, sustain or block alliances (Fischer, 2003). This idea also offers a warning for the policy analysts: treating certain meanings or findings as clear or evident (like positivist scientists do), means that you assign to them in effect the social understandings of the dominant social groups. In a world of dominant and subordinate groups, this practice wittingly or unwittingly supports the conception of the socio-political world advanced by social and political elites.

Framing

The theoretical framework for frame analysis has been strongly developed in sociology and political studies, particularly within the social movement theory. Frames are generally considered to be a mental construct which people use to make sense of the world. Framing is a way of constructing social reality so that it becomes easier to understand and can be used as a guideline for action (Rein and Schön, 1993). A frame is a way of selecting, organizing, interpreting, and making sense of a complex reality to provide guideposts for knowing, analyzing, persuading, and acting. The most important aspect of framing is that it highlights some information while omitting other information. Highlight here means that you make information more noticeable, meaningful or memorable to certain audiences. Mental structures, appreciations, worldmaking, and framing are terms that capture the different people use to construct interpretations of situations. This makes the situations coherent from various perspectives and provides users with evaluative frameworks within which to judge appropriate action. No one is exempt from the need for framing (Rein and Schön, 1993). And no frame is right or wrong. It is a matter of individual choice, preferences, background and mental structures that determines how situations are framed. Even a single unillustrated appearance of a notion in an obscure part of a text or a message can be highly salient, as long as it comports with the existing frames in a receiver's belief system (Entman, 1993). Further, the information omitted is as important as the information that is highlighted. Most frames are defined by what they omit as well as what they include, and the omissions of potential problem definitions, explanations, evaluations, and recommendations may be as critical as the inclusions in guiding the audience (ibid.). Frame analysis is a technique for approaching a text or speech by attending to its diverse idea elements and is guided by the following question: what holds these elements together? The goal of frame analysis is understanding how certain idea elements are linked together into packages of meaning. Frame analysis is explicitly about social actors' lenses and metaphors as they are deployed in the social world (Creed, Langstraat and Scully, 2002).

Framing is a dynamic process by which producers and receivers of messages transform information into a meaningful whole by interpreting them through other available social, psychological and cultural concepts, axioms, and principles. A frame has the ability to define problems, state a diagnosis, pass judgement, and reach a conclusion. Explicitly or implicitly, the meaning of an incident or situation is structured by the evaluation that logically connects cause, responsibility and remedy. Conflicting frames can cause difficulties when one does not understand or know from which frame another party is acting. Hence, framing can become problematic because it can lead to different views of the world and can create multiple social realities. Although framing takes place on the individual level, frames can be shared by multiple actors. Rein and Schön (1993), although implicitly, suggest that frames can be shared by actors when they describe multiple forms of frames. They distinguish between rhetorical frames and action frames. Rhetorical frames underlie the persuasive use of story and argument in policy debates. These frames serve the rhetorical functions of persuasion, justification and symbolic display. Action frames on the other hand inform policy practice. In this setting policy stories influence the shaping of laws, regulations, allocation of decisions, institutional mechanisms, sanctions, incentives, procedures, and patterns of behavior that determine what policies actually mean in action. Action frames in turn can be divided into policy frames and institutional action frames. Institutional action frames are frames that are prevalent in a certain institution like an advocacy group or a city government. Institutional action frames are made up of families of related frames. Action frames held by individual may be only loosely coupled to the action frames of the institutions of which they are members. Individuals' frames may represent selections from or variations of the institution's larger store. Metacultural frames are a broader, culturally shared systems of belief and are at the root of the policy stories that shape both rhetorical and action frames.

Frame Analysis in Policy Research

Frame analysis in policy research is important because it recognizes that a policy problem can be perceived in multiple ways. Societal problems, policies, solutions and target groups are all socially constructed differently by (groups) of people using different discourses and frames through which they perceive reality (Hajer, 1993; Bekkers, 2007). Focusing on the discursive social constructions of political actors, policy institutions, and analysts, frame analysts focus on the crucial role of language, discourse, rhetorical argument, and stories in framing both policy questions and the contextual contours of argumentation. A particular interest goes out to the ways normative presuppositions operate below the surface to structure basic policy definitions and understandings (Fischer, 2003: 14). The way a policy problem is perceived affects what kind of policy is designed to cope with the problem, it affects the debate and it can even affect how the general public thinks about a certain issue. Yanow (2003) asserts that public policies are a collective narrative that construct public, collective knowledge and identity. She explains that public policies can be seen as narratives or stories through which a polity's members express, to themselves and to one another, as well as to more distant public, their collective identity and values. What a discursive policy analysis adds to the anthropological and linguistic discussion about language in its social context is an appreciation for the role the state plays in constructing and maintaining concepts implicated in public policy and administrative practices. Categories and concepts are not just manifestations of individual identity. Rather, they comprise ways in which states exert their influence over their citizens and residents (ibid.). This idea rejects the rational view of policy as a rational process that is based on objective and technical information. Instead, it underlines that what often mistakenly identified as objective 'truly' is as often as not the product of deeper, less visible, political presuppositions (Fischer, 2003). Frame researchers generally aim to uncover people's presuppositions that discursively structure social perceptions, organize 'facticity', and deem events as normal, expected, and natural (Fischer, 2003: 14). Policy frames and their underlying appreciative systems are revealed through the stories participants are disposed to tell about policy situations.

People construct the problems of policy situations through frames in which facts, values, theories and interests are integrated (Rein and Schön, 2003). Framing is problematic because it leads to different views of the world and creates multiple social realities. Troublesome policy situations – or what Rein and Schön call 'stubborn policy controversies' – are disagreed upon by participants because of the multiple social reality created by conflicting frames. It is difficult to resolve these conflicts of frames because the frames themselves decide what counts as an argument and what does not. Understanding disagreements about policies as conflicts in frames opens the way for an explanation in which not the struggle for power is emphasized perse, but instead the struggle for creating and controlling systems of social meaning. In a discursive approach of policy, ideology is an important factor to take into account. The social meaning upon which political discourses are made are mainly derived from moral or ideological positions that establish and govern competing views of the society (Fischer, 2003). A political claim reflects and reinforces an ideology. Those who accept and support policy wittingly or unwittingly sustain a construction of a world that treats the issues in line with particular ideological assumptions underlying the policy. When the ideological premises for or against an action are embedded in the existing discourses, people will accept them as part of how the world works and not recognize them as an ideology. Looking at political and policy frames means that the researcher needs to exercise a lot of political insight in the processes of policy definition and formation. By getting deeply involved in the discursive and symbolic sides of politics, policy analysts help decision-makers and citizens develop alternatives that speak to their own needs and interest rather than those defined and shaped for them by others. Frame analysis can reveal how hegemonic conceptions of reality forwarded

by dominant actors can influence political reality. Towards this end, a lot of frame researchers stress the need for participatory democracy and the development of techniques of participatory policy analysis. The goal is to provide access and explanation of data to all parties, to empower the public to understand analyzes, and to promote serious public discussions (Fischer, 2003).

Conclusion

My discussion of a social constructivist and discursive approach to policy reveals that such an approach recognizes that a policy can be perceived in multiple ways. The government plays an important role in constructing and maintaining concepts implicated in public policies and administrative practices. It is my goal in this research paper to show how the presuppositions of actors in the government discursively structured the social perceptions, 'facticity' and process of the Australian Citizenship Test program. In my analysis I will combine the ideas of Hajer (1993), Rein and Schön (1993), and Fischer (2003) that framing and discourse construction can be shared by actors who hold similar conceptions of the social reality. Although framing takes place on an individual level groups of people can share the same system of meaning which can bring them together under a similar understanding of the world. Additionally, although a social constructivist approach of policy suggests looking at policy as a fluid and social process that represents a struggle over different meaning of issues, events and argument, I will use the rational way of looking at the policy process to structure my policy analysis presented in chapter 5. I use the rational approach as a heuristic analysis method to create a story line in the development of the process rather than use it as an explanation of why the process developed as it did. Finally, the realization that a discursive analysis of policy holds implications about how ideological assumptions shape political reality will help in understand the role that politicians played in creating the story of the Australian Citizenship Test Policy.

3. METHODS

Introduction

The research presented in this paper is a qualitative interpretive case study. The field of qualitative research is presented through an enormous variety of methods, research philosophies and projects. For this reason, one cannot speak of qualitative research as one specific research stream with set rules and design principles. Rather, the qualitative research project is often portrayed as a *bricolage* (Bhaskar, 1989; Blatter and Haverland, 2012; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Lévi-Strauss as cited in Yanow and Tsoukas, 2009). A bricolage is something made up or put together using whatever materials happen to be available. The qualitative researcher as a *bricoleur* – or maker of quilts – uses the aesthetics and material tools of his or her craft, deploying whatever strategies, methods, and materials are at hand. If the researcher needs to invent, or piece together, new tools or techniques, he or she will do so. This idea fits with my vision on this research project and it underlines the idea that choices regarding which interpretive practices to employ are not necessarily made in advance. Much of what I did or encountered in the field could not be anticipated up front; my research approach was highly inductive. The description of my methods is therefore a reflection of an ongoing process of shaping, creating, inventing, borrowing and moulding the tools and steps that fit the research questions and objectives. In the following sections I will start to touch upon the philosophical considerations of my work and then I will continue to talk about the design – case study – and the purpose – descriptive and explanatory – of the research. What follows is a section on the quality criteria of this research and how I took those criteria into account in my project. I look at quality in the data by discussing thick description, triangulation and methodological accountability and I look at my own role in the research project. I will shortly explain a bit about the Australian Citizenship Test and then I will go onto discussing the data generation and analysis process.

Philosophical Considerations

In the previous chapter I already clearly positioned myself as an interpretive researcher with a social constructivist epistemological conviction. Although interpretive research comes in many shapes and forms, adhering to an interpretive paradigm means to me that I am involved in understanding the interpretations of the social world of people rather than causally explaining particular behavior. Social science, to me, is a practice where addressing what is meaningful to the people in the social situation being studied is most important (Hatch and Yanow, 2003). Knowledge is always a representation of a certain time and context and it is not empirically generalizable. The tools with which we try to understand the world are affected by theory, by the scientific community and by the a priori knowledge of the researcher. How we get to know things is subjective in nature. The researcher and the person under investigation are interactively linked. The varied and personal nature of social constructions suggests that individual constructions are elicited and refined through interaction between and among investigators and respondents. This means that findings are literally co-created as the investigation proceeds. In relation to this point I prefer to use the term ‘generating’ data instead of collecting or gathering because it points to the understanding that there is no data that has some sort of ontologically prior, independent existence waiting for the researcher to extract from the field (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2003). Data is not given but has to be observed and made sense of, interpreted. What is accessed, are sources of data; the data themselves are generated, whether by the researcher or by interacting with visual, tactile or spatial sources or coproducing data in interviews (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2003). The researcher creates his or her data through conceptual and mental interaction with documentary materials or observed events. In addition to that, data can be “co-generated” through interviews, physical and nonverbal exchanges or during participatory interactions with the people under study (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2003). As described in chapter

2, the research in this paper shows a special interest in how reality is created through the use of specific language and frames. This focus harbors the very idea of a subjective epistemology because it acknowledges that language is the carrier of knowledge and the vessel for the co-creation of everyday meaning.

Research Design, Purpose and Results

The design of this research is that of a qualitative single case study with both an explanatory and descriptive purpose. The main question is a combination of a descriptive “what” question and an explanatory “how” question. This fits with the case study design because of the desire to understand the framing of citizenship in The Australian Citizenship Test policy process in depth. Yin (2009) defines the case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context. Stake (2005) distinguishes between the intrinsic and the instrumental case where the former is a case study where only the case itself is of interest to the researcher and the latter is a study where the case is mainly to provide insight into another issue than the case itself. It is my aim to be able to theoretically generalize – not to be confused with statistical generalization – my findings and to contribute to the existing theoretical framework on framing in policy. The conclusions that I formulate should provide further guidelines and new insights for research into cases similar to the one presented in this report. The demarcation of the case brings with it the limitation to not be able to look beyond the specific policy and the framing by governmental actors in that context. Framing as explained is something that no one is exempt from and occurs in all kinds of settings. Furthermore, my expectation is that a broader analysis of other citizenship policies would yield a bigger and probably different frame of citizenship and related issues. As such, a more extensive study could either give a different frame, a more extensive frame or both. The Australian Citizenship Test policy program is however approached as a complete process and the analysis in this report will provide insights about framing in the specific setting of policy development rather than framing in the government at large.

Although my findings might be perceived by some as being a critical reflection, it is not meant as being a critique on the functioning of government. Good qualitative research means to me that researchers address what is highlighted by participants and documents but also address what is not told, what can be read between the lines, what tacit knowledge or taken for granted assumptions prevail and what the ordinary, day-to-day practice look like. Furthermore, looking at how the discursive creation of reality within a network of power relations means that I will automatically also look at how language can create or maintain certain hegemonies in certain policy fields. This is not to say that uncovering the ‘unsaid’ or the ‘hegemonic’ is the equivalent of uncovering what government is doing wrong. My aim is *not* to enlighten or emancipate. I depart from the idea that no construction or no interpretation is right or wrong. My interpretation of the data that I generated is presented in chapter 5 and 6 and is the result of an ongoing process of going back and forth between data, theory, interpretations and my own writings. The representation is the result of different layers of writing and rewriting, interpreting and reinterpreting. I had to go over my data and interpretations multiple times to find a story line that is readable and presentable to the reader and to create a coherent story in line with my overall conclusions. My conclusions did not logically present themselves to me but I had to read and interpret my data several times before I came to the story that I will present in the following chapters. Because of my epistemological assumptions I subscribe to the idea that my story is only a partial and provisional ‘truth’. It is however a story that in its own context describes and explains the role that framing played and the effect it had within the development of a policy program. The quality of this research therefore lies in the intrinsic value of the context specific and the in depth empirical data itself.

Quality Criteria and the Role of the Researcher

Quality assurance of qualitative interpretive research is a much debated topic and often interpretative researchers are accused of being neither rigorous nor objective (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2006). These charges often come from positivist researchers and hence are not to be taken into account by interpretive researchers. Interpretive research is a whole different ball game than positivist research and both branches depart from very different epistemologies. The words that I will use here to describe the quality criteria of my research should therefore not be confused with its counterparts in the positivistic science. The validity of an interpretative research project lies in the relationship between the account of the phenomenon under study and the actual account itself. There is however no way of knowing if the account is a correct and objective account of the phenomena because we cannot step outside our own experiences to obtain some observer-independent account of what we experienced. In other words, we can have no direct knowledge of the phenomena and thus no independent entity to which to compare the account with. The validity or credibility of an interpretive research project therefore lies in other criteria that do not demand a "God's eye view" on social reality. There are four criteria that are relevant for my research project: thick description, triangulation, methodological accountability and reflexivity. The first three all have to do with data. Thick description refers to sufficient detail of an event or setting to capture context specific nuances of meaning such that the researcher's interpretation is supported by "thickly descriptive" evidentiary data (Schwartz-Shae, 2006). I applied this idea in my research by letting my data often speak for itself. I inserted quotes and text fragments wherever I thought it would contribute to a better understanding of the situation by the reader and would help support my interpretations. Related to this is the idea of triangulation. This idea is most broadly understood as trying to understand a phenomenon by using at least three analytical tools. My choice to look at frame coalitions made that I mostly applied triangulation to establish if particular frame elements were shared by multiple actors. By cross verifying if multiple sources or multiple accounts supported the shared frame I could establish my interpretations with more certainty. When it came to showing individual quotes I was not able to verify them using triangulation because of the individual value of a particular quote. Lastly, methodological accountability refers to the documentation of the research methods and steps. By including a proper account of all activities, others can judge whether my interpretations can be trusted. I applied this criteria by writing an extensive methodological chapter in which I try to be as explicit as I can about all the steps that I made.

The criteria of reflexivity refers to the role of the researcher in the research project and the ability to reflect on one's own work and position. Reflexivity is an overall scholarly attitude and involves awareness of the role of the self in all phases of the research process (Schwartz-Shea, 2006). Researchers – the same as their subjects – are human beings that give meaning to the things around them. They bring a priori knowledge to the field of study and hence their interpretations of the phenomenon are influenced by that knowledge. Throughout the research project I constantly tried to stay aware of my own perspective and possible shifts in my interpretations. An example is that I am aware that my own position on policies and politics leans more towards left-wing approaches and I tried not to have this position influence my interpretation of the data. Most of the time I was able to achieve this by reminding myself that every frame is valid because it is a fundamental building block in the way an actor perceives the world; and no perception of social reality is more valid than another one. Another side of the reflection on my role was that I could use my position sometimes as an advantage. In Australia I was a foreigner and hence less aware of certain culture-dependent presuppositions or knowledge. I could therefore often ask if people could elaborate on certain issues because I was not familiar with it. This was a good 'excuse' to get people to explain more and talk in a more descriptive way so that I could focus on how they actually framed certain topics.

About The Australian Citizenship Test

The Australian Citizenship Test was created in 2007 and was part of a larger amendment in citizenship legislation. In total there are two broad categories and four sub-categories of citizenship laid down in the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007*. There is a division between acquiring citizenship automatically and acquiring citizenship by application. People acquiring citizenship automatically do not need to sit for The Australian Citizenship Test. The citizenship by application category has four sub-categories. Of those four only one sub-category, citizenship by conferral, is required to successfully complete The Australian Citizenship Test: citizenship by conferral. One needs to be a permanent resident and willing to make a pledge of commitment to apply for citizenship by conferral. The other three sub-categories under the application category are citizenship by descent, citizenship for persons adopted and resuming citizenship. The *Australian Citizenship Act 2007* – of which the introduction of the Australian Citizenship Test was a part of – was the first act that completely replaced the old and first Australian citizenship act from 1948. The Australian Citizenship Test is both an English language test and a common knowledge test. The normal test is a computer-based test that consists of only multiple choice questions. In 2008 the initial Australian Citizenship Test program was revised and in 2009 a new test was implemented – a subject that I will elaborate more on in chapters 5 and 6. It is important to note that because of the citizenship application sub-category that the Test is a part of – the pathway of citizenship by conferral – the Australian Citizenship Test is automatically linked by all actors to immigration. Permanent residents of Australia who apply for citizenship by conferral have not been born in Australia and hence at one stage they have migrated to Australia. Taking up citizenship and having to pass the Australian Citizenship Test is seen as the last step of the migration journey. Appendix 3 and 4 provide more information on the old and new tests and present example questions.

Data Generating Tools

The main tools that were used to generate data were documents, interviews and my own audit trail. The main forms of documentation used were primary sources but some secondary sources were also used to provide a better understanding of the context of the study. As a preparation of the field work, a literature study was performed (see chapter 2) to explore the fundamentals of a social constructivist approach of policy. Adopting a frame perspective in this research had certain practical implications for the data generating process. In the next section about the data analysis I will go deeper into the frame analysis technique but here I will simply discuss the implications that this approach had for the data generating process. Scrutinizing what subjects regard as natural or given is an important aspect of frame-analysis. Often people are not aware of their own frames that they use to approach a certain topic so a frame has to be discovered by 'reading between the lines'. Furthermore, the context of participants was taken into account by considering the current political and societal developments that are presented in chapter 4. Additionally, Johnston (1995) points at three aspects of frame research that have to be taken into account that lay outside the actual spoken or written text. What gets said or written is influenced by social roles. Although social roles are usually correlated with specific speech situations, it is common that role perspectives from which people speak can change in the course of a narrative. Further, Johnston (1995) remarks that speeches have a pragmatic intent; insinuating that a speaker or a writer tries to accomplish something with text or speech. Finally, he stresses that nonverbal channels of information also convey meaning. These three points played a more significant part in the analysis than it did in the data generating process but I did try to take it into account when reading documents and talking to my interviewees.

Interviews

One of the main tools I used to gather information was interviewing. In total, I interviewed eight public servants and four experts. I was referred to interviewees by acquaintances and colleagues – a technique which is also called snowball sampling. Seven of the eight public servants worked in the Department of Border Protection (DIBP) in Canberra and the eighth worked at a citizenship application processing centre in Melbourne. The manager of the department where I had most of my interviews required that the interviews remained anonymous; therefore I will refer to them in the empirical chapters as ‘departmental officers’. The four experts I talked to were three professors in fields related to my research and one migrant agent who helped clients with all sorts of migration and visa issues including citizenship issues. The interviews were semi-structured in that I always prepared the structure of the interviews and often also prepared specific questions I wanted to ask. An interview protocol was prepared for all the interviews but every single interview ended up following a different structure than that which I had planned. I let this ‘diversion’ happen deliberately because it fits with the research philosophy. Letting the flow of the conversation determine the progression of the interview enables the researcher to get familiar with how participants view things and how they like to (choose to) talk about certain subjects. Uncovering frames is in a large degree listening to what people take for granted and listening to their everyday talk. I made use of probing techniques to get more in-depth knowledge of particular answers that interviewees gave and these often yielded interesting insights. All 12 interviews were transcribed and the transcriptions were used for my analysis.

Documents

The documents I analyzed varied greatly and I used a significant amount of documents that helped me with my analysis. I analyzed political speeches, legislation, second reading speeches, news articles, transcripts of parliamentary debates, the two resource booklet that help applicants prepare for the test, the test questions, policy documents, research and review reports and governmental annual reports. I found those documents along the way and never stopped looking for more primary sources of information that helped me to analyze the frame use of actors in the Australian Citizenship Test policy process. My interviewees were very helpful in providing me with documents that were useful for my research. Next to that I made use of Hansard; the governmental website where transcripts of debates in the Senate and House of Representatives are saved. Another useful source was Pandora; a web archive run by the National Library that holds historic online publications relating to Australia and Australians. This website proved to be helpful in recovering online publications that no longer existed but were archived in this database. I used Hansard and Pandora mainly when I already had a lead and needed to find the full and original document. For the selection of newspaper articles I made use of Lexis Nexis Academic to find articles that expressed opinions in the wider public and society. I did an advanced search of Nexis Lexis and filled out to search for news articles (all news) from 1/1/2006 until 1/08/2010 to include most stages of the policy process. I manually browsed through all the articles to judge them on usability; I made decision about the readability and about the extent to which actual opinions were expressed. Using that selection method I ended up with 87 news articles all of which were analyzed. Throughout my research project I read most documents multiple times. The first time I read a document was always more for a general introduction and then after that I would go deeper into the meaning of a specific text. A large part of reading through the documents was devoted to try and construct a policy process development narrative that I present in chapter 5. After I made myself very familiar with the time line, the events and the stakeholders in the policy process I slowly moved on to trying to uncover frames.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process was not a separate process from the data generating process; rather, they were intertwined and related. The plethora of documents I had to read through caused me to decide not to wait with the analysis until I had read through everything. The initial guideline for my analysis was to understand how the policy process of the Australian Citizenship Test had evolved and to understand which actors had played a role in the process. I tried to create a story of the process that provided the reader with a logical account of what happened and who played a part. This story is represented in chapter 5 and created the basis for the actual frame analysis presented in chapter 6. Familiarizing myself with the policy process helped to identify and recognize several idea elements across different documents and speeches that together indicated a particular policy story. The idea of a 'policy story' was something that shaped itself as a concept that guided my analysis by pointing at a coherent story that was told by several actors to justify the creation of the Australian Citizenship Test policy. The uncovering of this story contributed in important ways to the uncovering of the dominant frame that was used in the policymaking process. While reading through the documents I found that many politicians in the initial stage of the policy process talked about citizenship, immigration and the Australian Citizenship Test in a similar fashion and this realization made me to start filtering out the specific elements of that joined story. The scrutiny of the elements of that joined story led to the natural unfolding of the dominant frame which I have described in chapter 6.

Although frame-analysis is gaining in popularity within the social sciences, there are not a lot of researchers who write about the practical side of doing frame-analysis. However, it is still possible to distil directions for applying frame-analytical techniques in the data generating phase from the general frame theory. The four defining elements of frame analysis that I found to aid my operationalization were:

- 1) the frames that people use to select, organize and interpret information are implicit in the way a person acts or speaks – frames are obscure and operate below the surface;
- 2) frames are shaped through other available social, psychological and cultural concepts, axioms, or principles;
- 3) people's frames discursively structure social perception and organize 'factuality' – frames help people to deem events as normal, expected and natural
- 4) frames highlight some bits of information while omitting other information.

These core elements hold the following implications for frame-analysis as data generating tool:

- frames and their underlying appreciative systems are revealed through the stories participants tell;
- the social, psychological and cultural context of an author or a speaker has to be taken into account to find out how it affects the frame;
- the researcher has to pay close attention to information considered by the author or speaker as normal, natural or expected;
- information that is not included in written or oral communication is just as important as information that is included

These four elements all helped me in uncovering the frames that were used in the Australian Citizenship Test policy process. One of the most important questions that I kept asking myself was "what is this actor actually saying here?". This seems to be a rather simple question but to me was effective in helping me stay in the frame analysis mindset. From the point of view that a lot of our day to day communication holds implicit meaning that we do not have to establish (think of my example of "taking a taxi") it is important to ask such a seemingly simple question just to remind oneself that speech and text holds a lot of implicit meaning. And it is that implicit meaning that tells something about someone's frame.

A tool that I used to organize my frame analysis into an understandable account is the signature matrix created by Gamson and Lasch (1983). Gamson and Lasch (1983) created the signature matrix as an analytic tool to lay out the specific elements of a set of texts and spoken words. The entries in the matrix are the signature elements of the frame – hence the name of the matrix. The columns in the matrix represent what Gamson and Lasch (1983) call ‘symbolic devices’. These devices are rhetorical devices that describe a representation of reality. Gamson and Lasch called metaphors, catchphrases, visual images and examples ‘framing’ devices and roots of an issue, appeals to principal and consequences of a issue the ‘reasoning’ devices. The framing devices facilitate frame articulation and description and the reasoning device help create the logic of a frame. Not all signature elements are always present in a given frame. I slightly adapted the signature matrix tool by changing the role of the rows in the matrix. In my signature matrix presented in chapter 6 I divided the rows into several themes that all relate to each other and form one frame. I made this decision because I found during my analysis that the Australian Citizenship Test was in the dominant frame linked to several bigger themes. The goal of using the signature matrix is to direct attention to how different idea elements are deployed in an integrated way. And although actors in favour of the Test in the early stages of the policy process sometimes framed citizenship in terms of the one key theme and sometimes in terms of the other, in the end, the signature matrix shows that the themes taken together provide a coherent citizenship frame of interwoven ideas and thoughts.

4. CONTEXT

Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to provide background information about Australia and its citizenship and migration issues and history. Australia is a very interesting country in terms of citizenship and migration issues and several developments or certain knowledge needs to be provided to the reader to understand the context in which the Australian Citizenship Test was developed. To begin with, Australia is one of the most culturally diverse societies in the world (Jakubowicz and Ho, 2013). In 2011, 46.2% of people living in Australia had at least one parent born overseas and 30.2% of people were themselves born somewhere other than Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). The most common countries of birth within the latter group in 2011 were – in order of largest percentage to smaller – England, New Zealand, China, India and Italy. Australia was discovered by European settlers at the end of the 17th century but long before that was inhabited by the Aborigines. The earliest free settlers in the 17th century mainly came from Great Britain and Ireland. The British and Irish heritage has therefore had a major influence on Australia’s history, culture and political institutions. In 1851, gold was discovered and people from all around the world came to the colonies to try their luck. Chinese people arriving at this time were the first large group of migrants not from Europe. The great bulk of immigrants arriving in Australia between 1901 and 1940 were of British origin but there was some non-British migration in that period too, predominantly from Southern European countries like Italy and Greece (Foster and Stockley, 1984). After the Second World War the Australian government installed the ‘Migration Program’ that was intended to increase Australia’s population by 1 per cent per annum. Since the start of the Migration Program each succeeding government maintained the program but adjusted it to take account of changing economic, social and political environments (DIBP, 2014a). The Australian population grew from 3,774,072 in 1901 to 8,421,700 in 1951 to 21,507,717 in 2011 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006; Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011). This growth in population could not have been established if it would only have had to come from natural growth. In 2008-2009 for example the natural increase in population was 157,792 and the increase by net overseas migration was 298,924. Australia has over 180 different national origins, over 200 languages and a strong Indigenous presence (Jakubowicz and Ho, 2013). Citizenship by conferral was in 2012-13 taken up by 123,438 people from at 190 different countries. In table 1 an overview of people taking up citizen in 2012-2013 is showed on the basis of their previous country of nationality if the number of people is higher than 1,000.

Previous country of nationality or citizenship	Persons	Previous country of nationality or citizenship	Persons
United Kingdom	20 478	Iran	1 657
India	19 217	United States	1 564
Philippines	9 090	Myanmar (Burma)	1 489
China	8 979	Fiji	1 459
South Africa	7 900	Zimbabwe	1 437
New Zealand	3 794	Nepal	1 384
Sri Lanka	2 746	Thailand	1 316
Iraq	2 739	Afghanistan	1 253
Vietnam	2 568	Canada	1 074
Korea, South	2 109	Lebanon	1 057
Pakistan	2 100	Indonesia	1 056

Bangladesh	1 946	Other (163 countries)	21 389
Malaysia	1 841	Grand Total	123 438
Ireland	1 796		

Australia has a set of parameters that makes it a very interesting and distinctive country to study migration and citizenship practice. Unlike Europe, Australia has planned for and sought after immigrants. Unlike the USA, Australia exhibits a population diversity that is not dominated by large blocks of minorities, for example, African Americans and Hispanics (Ho and Jakubowicz, 2013). Furthermore, the indigenous population in Australia has always taken an important place in Australia's multicultural history – be it unfortunately because of injustice done to them by different settler and federal authorities. Australia is one of the few countries in the world that does not share its borders with other countries but is bordered by water only. This has not stopped migrants, refugees and asylum seekers from finding their way to Australia, may it be by plane or boat and may it be via legal or illegal ways. Australia has its own national ethos that is comparable to the American Dream: the fair go. The fair go principle is based on the idea that everyone should have the opportunity to improve their lot in life regardless their background, wealth, age, sex and political persuasion (Herscovitch, 2013). Australia in 1902 was one of the first countries to grant women the right to vote and to stand for parliament. And it was Australia who introduced the eight-hour working day, setting a standard that much of the world followed. The Australian governmental system is a federal system that is a unique mix of the Westminster and the U.S. systems with important elements of both systems present. Australia is a federal constitutional parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy with the monarch residing in the United Kingdom (in appendix 1 on page 74 you can find a more extensive explanation of Australia's political system). Finally, Australia is the only – next to New Zealand – westernized migration country in the region. Australia is the odd one out in the region, being mainly surrounded by Asian countries. In short, Australia makes a very interesting case for studying immigration and citizenship because it faces many challenges that find no resemblance in other parts of the world.

The development of Australian citizenship has been intertwined with immigration since the beginning of federation and this chapter therefore will describe the context of both immigration and citizenship. The regulation of the movement of people to Australia has to a large degree been under political control. Immigration became a Commonwealth Government responsibility on Federation in 1901 and was dealt with by a number of government departments up to 1936. From 1936 to 1945 the Department of the Interior controlled immigration matters but in the latter year, the Department of Immigration was established. Prior to 1901, the individual colonies administered their own immigration policies and programmes (Foster and Stockley, 1984). Because immigration has mainly been under political control, much of the background information in this chapter will focus on governmental policies and approaches to immigration policy. The first paragraph of this chapter gives an overview of Australia's history in relation to citizenship and immigration from the early European settlement until the 1980's. The second paragraph zooms in on triggering events in the 1990s and 2000s that caused for the public and political opinion on immigration and multiculturalism to change. It is against the backdrop of the events in these years that the Australian Citizenship Test emerged and hence a better understanding of political and societal debate in those years is essential.

A Short History of Citizenship and Immigration in Australia

Migration played an essential role in the history of contemporary Australia. Since the discovery of the land by European explorers and the resulting British settlement starting at the end of the 17th century, people from all over the world have migrated to Australia. The first establishment camp – a penalty

camp – was opened on 26 January 1788². Soon after the arrival of ‘the first fleet’ and the settlement of the penalty camp, free settlers found their way to Australia too. The earliest free settlers mainly came from Great Britain and Ireland. In 1851, gold was discovered and people from all around the world came to the colonies to try their luck. Chinese people arriving at this time were the first large group of migrants not from Europe. Long before migrants from Europe and Asia came, however, Australia was inhabited by other people: the Aborigines. Estimates about how far the Aboriginal history goes back range from 40.000 to 60.000 year. There is a lot of debate about how Australian history should be perceived. Broadly speaking there are two views on Australian history: one view condemning Australia’s history and the other looking at it more bright. The former is a view that rose in the early 70’s, suggesting that Australian national history as documented up to that point had been selective and had largely misrepresented or ignored the indigenous Australian history. This view on Australian history includes ideas about Australia being imperialistic, exploiting and racist towards its indigenous people. This view is a ‘shameful’ look on Australian history. On the other hand, the more cheerful idea builds on the idea that everything after the first settlement was positive and good. These two views do not describe the whole debate about Australian history – there are other, more nuanced perspectives too – but it gives an understanding of the main question of the debate: was Australia settled or invaded? The debate is still an ongoing public debate in Australia and is usually referred to as the ‘history wars’.³

In 1901, Australia became a self-governing entity – officially known under the name the Commonwealth of Australia – through Federation and the adoption of a constitution. Before that, Australia was divided into six separate and self-governing colonies. Australians were formally known as British subjects until the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948* was passed and came into operation on Australia Day 1949 (Galligan and Roberts, 2004). Being British subjects, Australian colonists enjoyed the benefits of being part of all that the British Empire entailed but additionally they were colonial citizens as well. This meant that they had a say in the colonial politics that governed most aspects of their day-to-day life. So although Australian citizenship did not exist until the 1948 Citizenship Act came into effect, Australians were already dual citizens sharing in two distinct but overlapping political entities (Galligan and Roberts, 2004). The Australian Constitution – which was drafted in preparation of the federation of the colonies and was proclaimed on 1 January 1901 – does not define citizenship rights. Citizenship and the rights and immunities of citizens were left mainly for parliaments to determine. Galligan and Roberts (2004) describe the Australian Constitution as being mainly a process document that specifies institutional structures and rules. It is not a substantive document that spells out what an Australian citizen is or should aspire to be. The parliament did not pass an Act dealing with citizenship but tackled particular aspects in discrete legislation. As a consequence of such piecemeal

² The 26th of January has become a national holiday for Australians and marks the anniversary of the arrival of the first fleet of British ships. The national day of Australia is called Australia Day and is celebrated throughout Australia every year. It is an official public holiday.

³ Two Australian Prime Ministers – Paul Keating, Labor Prime Minister from 1991 to 1996 and John Howard, Coalition Prime Minister from 1996 to 2007 – played a central role in this debate. An important part of their disagreement was about whether or not the Australian government should apologize for the wrongs done to Aboriginal Australian’s. When in 2007 the Labor Party won the elections, the new Prime Minister Kevin Rudd announced that an apology would be made to Indigenous Australians. The official apology was presented on 13 February 2008. The apology was particularly directed at the ‘stolen generations’. The stolen generations were children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent who were removed from their families by the Australian government from the beginning of the 20th century until the 70’s. The purported intention of governments and welfare officials was to institutionalize and assimilate the children into white society and thus rid Australia of its Aboriginal people. Counter arguments say however that there was no stolen generation and that the number of removals was based on traditional grounds of welfare. Whatever the objectives for the removals, research has shown that forced removal has had a severe social impact on the ‘stolen’ children. For more information:

treatment of citizenship, there could be disparities between a person's status as a citizen and the rights and entitlements specified in particular legislation.

From the beginning of federation the Commonwealth Parliament had a full agenda of creating the legislative framework of national governance. Multiple of these decisions had important consequences for citizenship of which a very significant one was the *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902* that guaranteed the right to vote for men and women over 21 years of age (Galligan and Roberts, 2004). This act, however, excluded all 'Aboriginal natives' of Australia from voting. Excluding Aborigine from voting was the first step in a long history of denying substantive citizenship rights to Aboriginal people, which persisted until the 1960s. The *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* was another act that influenced citizenship. It enabled Australia to eliminate non-European migration. The implementation of this act was the first formal sign of the so called 'White Australia Policy'. The White Australia Policy was established in the form of a series of legislative and administrative measures throughout the years and aimed at severely restricting non-European immigration to Australia. It was a nationalist doctrine which embodied Australia's desire to maintain itself as a white, British nation. During the period between federation and the onset of the Second World War, the policy enjoyed almost unquestioned popular support. Its durability reflected a number of deeply held beliefs and attitudes: racial arrogance and hostility; a perception of national identity founded upon racial and cultural homogeneity; fear of invasion by external aggressors; and a strong social-liberal faith in the state's ability to create a cohesive and prosperous society through a program of active intervention in civil society (Tavan, 2004). Implementation of the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* included the 'Dictation Test', which was used to exclude certain applicants by requiring them to pass a written test in a European language with which they were not necessarily familiar. The *Naturalisation Act 1903* introduced the conditions by which 'aliens' could be granted naturalisation by the Commonwealth and attain the rights and privileges of British subjects. This Act precluded persons from Asia, Africa or the Pacific Islands from applying for naturalisation.

Australia had to compete with northern hemisphere centres of population growth – Canada and the United States – in the building of a European-oriented society. The Northern American countries were favoured for immigration and this led to the offering of inducements to preferred migrants (Foster and Stockley, 1984). The inducement policy has been a particular characteristic of Australian immigration policy in the past. Inducements took the form of the utilization of public money and land to aid migrants with travel costs, accommodation and work (Foster and Stockley, 1984). The 1920s was a successful decade in terms of net migration gain. More than 300,000 immigrants arrived, two thirds of whom were 'Assisted'. Assisted migrants were offered assistance with the cost of passage to Australia from the Australian Government. Until April 1981 assistance was offered to migrants from certain countries as an inducement to migrate. Since April 1981 assistance has only been given to refugees (DIMA, 2001). A number of developments, however, caused that in 1925 the government made it legally possible to restrict immigration. The *Immigration (Amendment) Act 1925* made it possible to proclaim limits or place bans on the admission of any national group (Foster and Stockley, 1984). The restricted immigration policy based on the 1925 act complemented The White Australia Policy (Foster and Stockley, 1984).

In 1945, the Government launched the first 'Migration Program'. Immigration was intended to increase Australia's population by 1 per cent per annum, and thereby achieve an annual growth rate of 2 per cent. The Migration Program has been maintained by each succeeding government and is adjusted to take account of changing economic, social and political environments. World War II raised the awareness of Australians that a population growth was necessary to ensure a stable, safe and growing

Australia. The near invasion of Australia by Japan in 1941-1942 remained in the forefront of Australian consciousness and had placed emphasis on the need for a growth in population to boost Australia's security. Furthermore, the demands of wartime had shaken confidence in the continued dependence on Britain for manufactured goods and the wartime stimulus to Australian industry had given indication of the many opportunities in this sector. Hence, plans were created to instigate massive scale immigration – although still enforcing the White Australia Policy. Australia entered into agreements with other government and international organisations for free or assisted passage schemes from a range of European countries and to resettle displaced people from camps in Europe (DIBP, 2014a). The preference was on British migrants but the Commonwealth government realized that the rapid growth in population they envisioned could not come from migration from England alone. The program of assisted migration gained momentum and in 1949 alone nearly 120,000 assisted migrants arrived in Australia. In November 1955 net overseas Migration reached a record high of 153,685. This year also marked the arrival of the millionth post-war migrant (DIMA, 2001).

The before mentioned *Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948* was the first act that created Australian citizenship and the conditions by which it could be acquired. The Act introduced an oath of allegiance taken as part of a ceremony for new citizens. The first citizenship ceremony was held at the Albert Hall in Canberra in 1949 (DIMA, 2001). The department monitored the take-up of citizenship by migrants but found that the number of applications was not as high as they had hoped it to be. Concerns by the public were that the immigration program and the low numbers of those becoming Australian citizens would cause that migrants would not 'have any truck with the Australian way of life' and 'did their utmost to bind their children with old national ties' (DIMA, 2001). In response to this the *Nationality and Citizenship Act 1955* removed many of the difficulties faced by those attempting to obtain citizenship. The changes brought a significant rise in the number of those becoming Australian citizens with the number of naturalisations jumping from 4,770 in 1954 to 49,087 in 1959. The *Revised Migration Act 1958* showed the first signs that the Commonwealth government was moving away from the White Australia Policy. Among other changes, the revised act avoided references to questions of race and abolished the dictation test that had been applied to enable exclusion of people who could not answer questions in a specified language. In 1957 a decision was made to allow non-European migrants with 15 years of residence in Australia to become Australian citizens (DIBP, 2014b). The White Australia Policy was abolished in 1973 but Asian immigration and its benefits have continued to be debated up until today.

In the 1960's and 1970's migration and citizenship were affected by a number of events. The Vietnam War and the introduction of a requirement for all British subjects and Australian citizens to register for conscription in 1964 became a strong disincentive for potential citizens to naturalise. Immigration experienced a boost because of the introduction of the Special Passage and Assistance Program in 1966 which allowed European guest workers, who had finished their contracts in Europe, to migrate to Australia. In contrast, the numbers of those granted citizenship was still lower than the government wanted. The *Citizenship Act 1969* sought to make it easier for non-British migrants to become citizens by reducing the residency requirement for aliens to two years if they could read, write, speak and understand English proficiently. A declining economic situation in the 1970's led to the planned migration target being lowered (DIMA, 2001). In 1972 the Government sought to completely dismantle the White Australia Policy. The focus of immigration policy shifted and looked more at the benefits of migration for the economy, for employment and housing and focussed at social service support. Priority for admission was given to close dependent relatives and limited numbers of workers in occupations for which there was unmet demand. All migrants became eligible to obtain citizenship after three years of residence. The abandonment of the White Australia Policy in the early 1970s

opened the way for public debate on issues of diversity and how to respond to diversity. The solution was seen in adopting multiculturalism as a policy (Babacan and Babacan, 2007). The election of the Howard government in 1996 led to a re-defining of the principles of multiculturalism. The Citizenship Test was implemented in 2007 when the Howard Government was still in power. During the Howard era a number of events heavily influenced public debate and governmental policy on immigration and citizenship. In this next paragraph I will pay attention to these events.

90's and 00's: Growing Public Concern about Immigration

When reading about the Australian citizenship history and comparing it with the latest developments in citizenship legislation, it is striking that for the first time since the existence of Australian citizenship the government has moved away from making it easier for applicants to acquire citizenship to making it more difficult to become an Australian citizen. Although there have been a lot of amendments to the citizenship act of 1948, the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007* was the first act to completely replace the old act. The new act installed a stricter residence requirement; it changed from two to four years. Additionally, the Citizenship Test was put in place to test if applicants “*have an adequate knowledge of Australia and of the responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship; and possesses a basic knowledge of the English language*”. The trend of making citizenship easier to acquire reflected the goal of successive governments to encourage settlers to take out citizenship quickly (Klapdor, Coombs and Bohm, 2009). The *Australian Citizenship Act 2007* seems to represent a departure and possibly an end to this trend. Set against the backdrop of a range of events in the late 90's and early 00's that change did not come as a surprise. In chapter 5 I will go into more detail about the reasons behind the 2007-change but in this paragraph I will give an overview of events in the late 90's and early 00's that create the background to which the 2007-change was implemented.

During the 1996 federal elections a controversy developed around the Liberal Party's candidate for the House of Representatives Pauline Hanson. Hanson has by many been painted as a racist populist and a far-right politician with a large mainly 'silent' constituency. She was elected as an independent local council member and endorsed by the Liberal Party in 1996 to run as their candidate in the seat of Oxley for the federal elections. During the election campaign Pauline Hanson wrote a letter to the *Queensland Times* commenting on what she saw as reverse racism governing Aboriginal entitlements. The letter caused a lot of controversy and led the Liberal Party to disendorse her for her seat. Hanson then decided to run the elections as an independent. Hanson won the seat and delivered a maiden speech to the House of Representatives (ABC, 2014). This speech gained a lot of media criticism and public dismay within and outside Australia and instigated a public debate about multiculturalism, immigrants and racism (Deutchman and Ellison, 1999). In summary Hanson called for the abolition of targeted benefits for Aboriginal people, the abolition of multiculturalism, and the reintroduction of a racially discriminatory immigration policy to save Australia from being 'swamped by Asians'. The Prime Minister John Howard was in turn criticized for not openly disassociating with Hanson's views. In 1997 Pauline Hanson officially formed the One Nation Party with two partners and in the 1998 State elections in Queensland she won 22.7% of the 89 seats. Political scientists have struggled to come to grips with One Nation's success and have sought to find answer to the question 'What sorts of people have voted for One Nation and why?' (Goot and Watson, 2001). There was not one clear voice that rose from this debate but the 1998 success is a clear sign that a large group of voters in Queensland supported the far-right ideas of Pauline Hanson and the One Nation Party. For a short while the One Nation Party had a major impact on mainstream Australian Politics but in the 2009 state elections in Queensland the last seat was lost.

Following, in 2001 Australia was shocked – just as the rest of the world – by the terrorist attacks in the U.S.A. on 11 September 2001. On 12 October 2002, much closer to home on Bali, Indonesia – which is a beloved tourist destination amongst young Australians – the detonation of three bombs by a violent Indonesian group killed 202 people including 88 Australians, 38 Indonesians, 27 Britons, 7 Americans, 6 Swedish and 3 Danish citizens. Concerns about terrorist attacks on Australian soil heightened following the 7 July 2005 bombings in London. In 2005 racial tension came to a clash during the Cronulla race riots in Sydney. These riots were a series of confrontations in the Sydney suburb of Cronulla that were instigated by a fight between a small group of Lebanese men and off-duty lifesavers. The event was picked up by a lot of media amongst who a radio commentator who fuelled the tensions by making derogatory remarks about Australians from Lebanese descent. One of his comments was: “We don’t have Anglo-Saxon kids out there raping women in Western Sydney.” With this comment he referred to the Sydney gang rapes that took place in 2000 by a group of fourteen Lebanese Australians and which caused a lot of racial controversy. These events in the early 00’s caused that multiculturalism came under attack. During the era of the Liberal Howard Government the commitment to a national multicultural policy agenda wavered and in 2001, the Howard Government had condemned multiculturalism as being divisive and harmful (Mansouri and Lobo, 2011). The 2005 London attacks provided government officials and conservative people with an even stronger case to suggest that multiculturalism could constitute a security threat to Australia (Jakubowicz and Ho, 2013). In 1999 Australia also experienced a dramatic rise in number of asylum seekers trying to reach Australia by boat. In 1998, 200 people tried to reach Australia’s shores by boat but in 1999 it climbed to a high of 3,721 with the highest number reached in 2001 when 5,516 refugees arrived in Australia by boat (Philips, 2014).

In the first year of office, the Howard Government cut immigration programs, shut down the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research and some \$400 million dollars was slashed from the Aboriginal budget (Markus, 2001). On top of that, the fate of the long fought for native title rights were left in the balance (ibid.).⁴ Net migration was at a higher level than at any other time in the 1990s and aspects of the Labor’s Government immigration policy – who had power until 1996 – were generating vocal opposition (Goot and Watson, 2005). Swept into office, the government began to ring the changes: planned immigration was cut from 96,000 in 1995-1996 to 86,000 in 1996-1999; the proportion of the intake coming under the family reunion category, more narrowly defined than under the previous Labor Government, fell from more than two-thirds in 1995-1996 to less than a half in 1997-1998; and while the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs became the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, the word ‘multicultural’ was not often to be read from the Prime Minister’s lips (ibid.). Then in 2001 the Tampa affair occurred; a diplomatic crisis that followed when the Australian government denied entry to a Norwegian freighter that rescued refugees on their way to Australia. And although this crisis was highly debated and caused a lot of people to criticize the government’s position in the event, the Coalition was still re-elected in the same year and again in 2004. In response to the Tampa affair the Howard Government installed the Pacific Solution that allowed the government to transport asylum seekers to detention centres on island nations in the Pacific Ocean, rather than allowing them to land on the Australian mainland. This policy was later in 2008 dismantled by the Labor government but installed again by that same government in 2012.

⁴ Native title is the recognition by Australian law that some Indigenous people have rights and interests to their land that come from their traditional laws and customs. In 1992 the High Court of Australia ruled in the *Mabo (No.2)* case that the doctrine of *terra nullius* should not have been applied to Australia and that the common law of Australia would recognize native title. In 1993 this decisions was turned into legislation in the *Native Title Act 1993*. For more information: <http://www.nntt.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

The citizenship and multicultural ideas of the Howard Government emphasized national identity, social cohesion and community harmony. The focus on obligations was strengthened and that of rights weakened. Multicultural policy was less about the rights of immigrants than it was about ensuring social cohesion and unity among a diverse population (Galligan and Roberts, 2004). The new policy was called 'Australian Multiculturalism' to indicate that the implementation of multiculturalism has been uniquely Australian (Jakubowicz and Ho, 2013). In the wake of the terrorist attacks, multiculturalism became more about managing the threats to national security and social cohesion that were allegedly presented by cultural minorities. The choice of the Howard Government to focus on unity and cohesion was evident in the 2003 policy statement *Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity: Updating the 1999 New Agenda for Multicultural Australia: Strategic Directions for 2003-2006* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2003). In this policy statement words like 'harmony' were often repeated. In the policy statement a view on citizenship is expressed and reads as follows: "Australian Citizenship involves reciprocal responsibilities and privileges and enables individuals to become fully contributing members of the Australia community. Citizenship is a strong unifying force in our diverse multicultural community. Our commitment to and defence of Australian values of equality and freedom unite us in our diverse origins, and enhance the ability of us all to participate fully in all spheres of Australian society." Jakubowicz and Ho (2013) see this policy direction as one of assimilation. Additionally, the focus in Australian internal ethnic relations was placed on the Muslim community. The Howard Government addressed potential threats posed by Muslim Australians who had failed to integrate into Australian society and who were allegedly undermining social cohesion and even the 'Australian way of life'. In much popular discourse, multiculturalism almost became code for discussing 'Muslims' (Jakubowicz and Ho, 2013).

When the Labor Government in 2007 came into office after they won the elections, there were no radical departments of the multicultural policy ideology that the Howard Government had put forward. Labor's key social policy framework of social inclusion was framed in terms of addressing socio-economic inequality (Jakubowicz and Ho, 2013). After three years of publishing no policy documents on multiculturalism, in 2011 the Gillard Government put forward *The People of Australia, Australia's Multicultural Policy* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011). This document puts multiculturalism in a more positive light than under the Howard Government. It highlighted that "Australia's multicultural composition is at the heart of our national identity [...]". The four policy principles set out in the policy statement were in short: celebrating the benefits of cultural diversity within the broader aims of national unity, community harmony and maintenance of democratic values; a just, inclusive and socially cohesive society; welcoming economic, trade and investment benefits arising from multiculturalism; and promote understanding and acceptance and respond to intolerance and discrimination with strength (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011). These principles seem to indicate that the Labor Government continued the earlier focus of the Howard Government on unity but added the importance of equality and tolerance. With the electoral victory of The Coalition in September 2013, attention for multiculturalism policy diminished and language on immigration – especially that on 'boat people' – became a lot harsher than it has ever been before.

When Tony Abbot came into power in September 2013 he scrapped the position of Multicultural Affairs Minister and moved multicultural affairs and settlement services from the Department of Immigration to the Department of Social Services. The name of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship was formally changed into the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. Subsequently, Operation Sovereign Borders was launched (OSB). OSB is a military-led, border security operation supported and assisted by a wide range of federal government agencies. Half a year later,

on March 30, 2014, Prime Minister Tony Abbott declared that “the way is closed” for people smugglers and he hailed the 100th day without any asylum seeker boat arrivals. Appraisal of the Coalitions immigration policies are not shared by everyone though. In November 2013 the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) publishes two evaluative reports on the two offshore detention centres on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea and in Nauru that were opened at the end of 2012 under the Labor Government under Prime Ministers Gillian and Rudd. The UNHCR concludes that “policies, operational approaches and harsh physical conditions at the centres, not only do not meet international standards, but impact very profoundly on the men, women and children housed at the camps”. In February 2014 the tension between detainees, guards and locals at Manus Island rises to such a high that a big riot – not the first one in the offshore detention centres – breaks out resulting in more than 60 injuries and the death of a 23 year-old Iranian asylum seeker. The ‘asylum seeker issue’ in Australia is a highly debated topic in which two camps seem to be lined directly opposite each other; one camp opposing the stricter immigration policies and demanding a more humane approach and one group supportive of the Abbott policies ‘stopping all boats’

Conclusion

The above stories shed light on the important role that migration plays in the Australian society. Australian governments have always sought for migrants to come to Australia and Australia would not be the great and prosperous country it is today if it were not for all those migrants who came and are still coming to Australia. Important questions relating to immigration and citizenship for governments are ‘How to attract migrants?’ ‘Who do we let in?’ ‘How to help migrants and other minorities integrate in the Australian society?’ and ‘How accessible should the take up of Australian citizenship be?’. Policy and legislative answers to these questions have changed over time according to the political and societal views of the hour. Two clearly controversial approaches to the ‘who to let in?’ question are the former White Australia Policy and the current Operation Sovereign Borders. In terms of integration and multiculturalism, Australian governments have taken different stances over time too. The treatment of the indigenous people is for many Australians a blemish on their joint history and multiculturalism has meant different things to different governments. Australian citizenship was only legally recognized in the mid-20th century and is still under development, with the latest amendments in 2007 radically changing the legislative framework and installing the Australian Citizenship Test. 2014 marks the 65th anniversary of Australian Citizenship which is celebrated throughout the country with special citizenship ceremonies and other events. In the next chapter I pick up the story by zooming in on the policy environment in which the Australian Citizenship Test emerged. The chapter builds the policy analysis on which in chapter 6 I can base the frame analysis to ultimately be able to answer what citizenship frames are embedded in the Australian Citizenship Test.

5. POLICY ANALYSIS

Introduction

In this chapter I present my analysis of the policy process of the Australian Citizenship Test. The two principles that guided this analysis were first to identify important stages in the policy cycle and second to try and identify (groups of) actors that were involved in the policy process. To structure the policy analysis I made use of the rational policy cycle model. This model prescribes that the development of policy evolves in several stages. Rather than using this model as a tool to explain the process I used it as a heuristic method to structure the process around several important stages in the lifetime of the policy. Not all the steps of the policy cycle were followed and hence I only describe the stages that were significant for the development of the policy process. These stages are the agenda-setting phase, the development phase and the evaluation. Additionally, I included a section on the responses on the initiative to show how the initiative was received and which voices were heard either opposing or favouring the proposal. This is in line with the second goal of this chapter; to identify coalitions of people who might have shared the same frame in constructing the issues and concepts relevant for the Australian Citizenship Test. I look at which actors seemed to have been dominant in the policy process so that in chapter 6 I can analyze if their way of framing the policy has been dominant too. The policy analysis and the identification of the actors involved in the process together will provide a solid fundament for the frame-analysis that is presented in chapter 6.

Agenda-setting

The first person who formally put the intention to develop a citizenship test on the agenda was the then Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs: Andrew Robb⁵. On 27 April 2006 he held a speech at the Sydney Institute about the past successes and future challenges of migrant integration. At the end of this speech Robb announced he would be looking at the merits of introducing a citizenship test. In his speech Robb talked about common Australian values and how those values bind people together but also about how it was becoming increasingly important to help migrants integrate. He said that English language is a strong determinant of people's success in getting a job and in integrating into the society. Additionally, an understanding of the Australian society and its values and norms is important for people taking up citizenship. Together these two arguments build up to his announcement that he will explore the idea to introduce a compulsory citizenship test in Australia.

At one stage in his speech, Andrew Robb refers to a quote from a speech by the Prime Minister John Howard on Australia Day in January 2006. John Howard said that:

“The truth is that people come to this country because they want to become Australians. The irony is that no institution or code lays down precisely what that means. Such is the nature of our free society. No one sits a test of Australianness.” (Howard, 2006)

This quote reveals that – although there were no official signs of a citizenship test yet – Howard was already hinting at how the government would propose to have a citizenship test. This speech seems to be important for the agenda-setting of the Australian Citizenship Test. Looking closer at the speech reveals that Howard talked about migration and integration in a similar fashion as Robb. Both politicians for example talk about values, about the English language being an important part of

⁵ A parliamentary secretary in Australia is a member of parliament who assists ministers in their work. Sometimes these secretaries are also referred to as 'junior ministers'

integration and about several other issues. These similarities suggest that the integration and migration frames of Robb and Howard are at least loosely coupled and share several idea elements. Another speech that seemed to be important in setting the stage for the Australian Citizenship Test was a speech by Peter Costello, the then Treasurer. His speech was called '*worth promoting, worth defending, Australian citizenship, what it means and how to nurture it*'. In this speech about Australian citizenship, multiculturalism, immigration and integration Costello is very outspoken about all these issues and positions himself clearly in favour of 'asking all citizens to subscribe to Australian values'. Costello's speech is important too for looking at the government's framing of citizenship issues and in chapter 6 I will give a more in-depth account of what all three actors said.

Policy Development

After the first governmental announcement by Andrew Robb on 27 April 2006 to 'have a serious look at the merits of a compulsory citizenship test', the first official document published by the federal government was a discussion paper on the merits of introducing a citizenship test called *Australian citizenship: much more than a ceremony*, published on 17 September 2006. Discussion papers are a tool to formally publish policy ideas and to seek the public's input on those ideas. The discussion paper is therefore useful in discerning how the policy developers perceive reality surrounding the Australian Citizenship Test. The introduction of the discussion paper states: "*The purpose of this discussion paper is to seek the Australian community's views on the merits of introducing a formal citizenship test, including seeking a commitment to Australian values.*" It is not made explicit in the discussion paper how the views of the community will be used in the further policy design process. The introduction further states that comments were particularly sought on four key questions: Should Australia introduce a formal citizenship test?; How important is knowledge of Australia for Australian citizenship?; What level of English is required to participate as an Australian citizen?; How important is a demonstrated commitment to Australia's way of life and values for those intending to settle permanently in Australia or spend a significant period of time in Australia? Additionally, further questions were asked in relation to the possible parameters for a formal citizenship test, should it be decided to be introduced.

The vision set out in the discussion paper seems to be thought well through and high in detail. Judging from the time between the first announcement of Andrew Robb and the discussion paper – half a year – it is likely that a lot of research went into creating the discussion paper. Unfortunately I did not gain insight into the development period of the discussion paper because that would have showed how decisions in writing the report were framed. According to the rational model of policy development the policy proposal that was introduced to the agenda in the agenda-setting phase goes subsequently through a phase in which information is gathered and analyzed and advice about the policy is given to prepare decision-making. In a phase like this – called the policy formulation or analysis phase – a thorough analysis of information about the policy problem, the causes of the problem, the goals of a program, the proposed means and implementation and the envisioned outputs and outcomes can yield better insight in the legitimacy, viability and reasoning of a proposal. As said though, in the policy life cycle of the Australian Citizenship Test there was no clearly identifiable stage in which such a rational-analytical step was made to consider multiple options or alternatives. Rather, the vision set out in the discussion paper seems more to rely on a specific way of looking at the world in which claims and ideas reflect the ideological beliefs of the initiators. In chapter 6 I will elicit the deeper logic beneath the story in the discussion paper but for now it is important to point at what seems to be the most important question in the discussion paper: *Should Australia introduce a formal citizenship test?*. This question is the first question in the discussion paper and the answers from people to this question takes a central role in the summary report on the outcomes of the public consultation that was

published in late 2006. In the next section I will go deeper into the results of the public consultations and how the government used those results to legitimize its proposal.

In the discussion paper it is not made very clear what the goals of a citizenship test would be. In one section in the paper it does state that the test could be an important part of the process of assisting people to fully participate in the Australian community because the test provides an incentive to learn English and understand the Australian way of life. It is highlighted in the text of the discussion paper a couple of times that the test would benefit the wider community so a part of the espoused outcomes of the test are broader than only an individual outcome. Australian citizenship as a concept is positioned as something that takes place in the wider community and hence the argument seems to be that the Citizenship Test benefits the wider community too. This argument looks like circular reasoning though: through the Test immigrants will become full participants in the community; so the community will benefit from the Test because it will help immigrants to fully participate. What the exact mechanism is that will cause that migrants participate better when they are taking a test is not made clear. Learning about English and the Australian way of life cannot merely on its own cause migrants to become better integrated into a community but the authors of the discussion paper seem to be satisfied with this 'black box' explanation and do not provide any further details on the link between the test and the espoused outcome.

In terms of defining a problem to which a citizenship test should be an answer to, you can read in the discussion paper that the ageing population is in issue to take into account. The government wants to retain existing labor and attract new sources of labor in light of this issue but the challenge leading from this is that working migrants need to be integrated in the Australian community. Besides identifying the ageing population as a challenge for migration practices there is no other problem definition presented in the paper. Petro Georgiou, Liberal member of the House of Representatives during the time that the discussion paper came out commented on this issue in an opinionative article that he wrote to *The Age*:

"I have looked closely at the Federal Government's discussion paper [...] and I can find no detailed, robust analysis of a problem, and no evidence of how the new measures would resolve a problem that has not been demonstrated." (Georgiou, 2006)

What the above shows is that the development of the Australian Citizenship Test presented in the discussion paper was a somewhat messy process and not a straightforward analytical exercise. It is not clear why the public's input is sought, the objectives and goals of the Test need to be guessed at when reading the discussion paper and a definition of a problem to which the Australian Citizenship Test should be an answer to is lacking. Persuasive use of story and argument seemed to have prevailed and 'big' words like for example participation and population ageing are used to create a policy story that contains elements that are important for the Howard Government. It is a policy story that does not necessarily follow any design or process logic or involves explicit explanations of certain concepts. The dynamic of the policy design cannot be explained by thinking of policy as a rational consideration of different alternatives to a clearly defined problem. Rather, the policy design phase of the Australian Citizenship Test seems to suggest that the ideas surrounding the policy are a set of idea elements favoring a certain way of looking at the world.

Response to the Policy Initiative

There were two moments in the policy cycle of the Australian Citizenship Test where other actors than the government formally had an opportunity to respond to the initiative. Additionally, media picked

up on the government's plans too and there was considerable attention for the initiative in several newspapers. The first instance where actors could formally respond was when the earlier mentioned discussion paper was published with the goal to consult the public. Through the discussion paper the government encouraged individuals and organizations to submit responses to the vision set out in the discussion paper. In this section I will go into the results of the public consultations that were made available for the public. To represent how the public responded to the proposal through media I analyzed newspaper articles about the Australian Citizenship Test. The media are not seen as an actor participating in the policy field and expressing a coherent opinion but they do represent broader opinions of proponents and opponents and can therefore give some insight in responses to the initiative in the wider community. The second occasion where the initiative was officially open for discussion was when the Australian Citizenship Test was debated in the House of Representatives and in the Senate during the so-called second reading debate. In the last subsection of this section I will discuss this debate.

Public consultations

In total the Department of Immigration received 1,644 written response to the discussion paper. Almost 1,500 of those responses were from individual members of the Australian community. These responses were not made publicly available due to protect the privacy of the individuals. On its website the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) did make responses of 116 organizations available which were not marked as being clearly confidential. Of these 116 responses I drew a random sample of 5 submissions using Microsoft Excel. I read these selected submissions in-depth to get a feeling of what was being said by these organizations. The sample of 5 is not representative for the total set of 116 organizational responses because I believe that every single entry of every organization has its own value and meaning. However, the sample does give a general insight in what some organizations responded. In analyzing the responses of the 5 sampled organizations I choose to mainly look at if the organizations were in favor or were opposing the test and which arguments they gave to support their opinions. In the discussion paper the government suggested that submissions were formatted according to four key questions but not all of the organizations chose to adopt that format. The responses of the five organizations were between the 2 and 6 pages long.

The five organizations of which I analyzed the responses were a lobby group for just policies and programs for refugees and asylum seekers called A Just Australia (AJA); a local government in Victoria, the City of Casey; a local community and business development association called The Augusta Community Development Association (ACDA); a Northern Territory peak body concerned with the interests of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds called The Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory (MCNT); and Mackay Youth Connections which is a peak body for youth service providers in the Mackay Whitsunday region in Queensland. The five submissions all vary greatly in which topics they address and in the way they support or oppose the proposal. AJA and the MCNT showed clear objections to the test; the City of Casey in general approves of the plans and only raises a couple of concerns; the ACDA approves of citizenship testing in general but wants to maintain and improve testing via interviewing and Mackay Youth Connections does not clearly oppose or support the proposal but raises a number of questions about issues that were not addressed in the discussion paper. This latter organization did not provide a coherent argument in its response and it is difficult to make out how they actually feel about the proposal. The goal of the Mackay Youth Connection seems to be to raise questions and not to answer the questions from the discussion paper. To give an idea of what was being said in the response of the AJA who were against installing a citizenship test:

“While it may be ideal that all Australian citizens are highly proficient in English, share common values and commitment to democracy, and have an understanding of what it is like to live in Australia, there is no evidence that linking a “test” of these requirements – no matter how sophisticated – to the granting of citizenship will produce the outcomes desired.” (A Just Australia, 2006)

And a part from the response of the City of Casey who in general seemed to agree with the need to install a test:

“Yes there is a strong need for a formal citizenship test and some applicants will take longer to achieve the necessary standards than others. (Not unlike acquiring a driving license!) The notion of a guidebook similar to the UK example was seen to be a useful tool both before and after migration.” (City of Casey, 2006)

The government itself published a report that shared the results of the public consultations late 2006. Striking in this report is that the results of the submissions are only expressed in percentages and not in a more descriptive form. All of the 1,644 submissions were written submissions and as we have seen in the examples above, not all of the submissions followed the proposed formatting of answering the four main questions. However, in the results report of the government the submissions were reduced merely to fit pre-determined answer categories for every question so that all the submissions could be displayed as percentages. Interestingly, all the questions that were posed in the discussion paper – except for one – were by the majority of respondents not addressed in their submissions. In the results report this ‘didn’t address’ rate was for all the questions between 60 and 91 percent. The question that seems to be most important for the government – the question if Australia should have a citizenship test – did not have a ‘didn’t address’ rate but only had an ‘unclear’ response percentage of 15% (240 response absolute). The rest of the respondents was either supportive with 985 responses and a percentage of 60 or unsupportive of a test with 419 responses and a percentage of 25.

The analysis of the five organizational responses and of the results report suggests two things. Firstly, it shows that the responses are not formatted along the lines of the suggestions of the government. The responses have their own set-up and touch upon more issues than the government touched upon in its suggestion to answer predetermined questions. For 4 out of the 5 responses I read I was able to discern if the organizations were either in favour or against the proposal but for one response it was unclear how the organization positioned itself. This organization chose to raise questions in their responses that they thought were related to the issues surrounding the Australian Citizenship Test. The other responses too included input that fell outside the suggested format but much of that input was ignored by the government in the response report, which brings me to my second conclusion. The submissions of organizations and individuals were provided to the government in text form but the government chose to represent the summary of responses in numerical form. Therefore, it is likely that – because I found five submissions that all diverged from the suggested format and had their own intrinsic value – other submissions had valuable input that was not represented in the numerical results that the government gave. The government did not give any insights into how they used the inputs but they did use the response to the key question – 60 percent in favor of the Test – several times to declare that the consultation process shows that the community supports the Citizenship Test. In a joint press conference with Andrew Robb on 11 December 2006, John Howard says:

“Bearing in mind the reaction of people to very extensive consultation carried out by Mr Robb over recent months, it's quite clear to me and to the Government that there is very strong support in the Australian community for the introduction of a citizenship test.” (Howard and Robb, 2006)

What this comment tells me is that the consultation process has been used by the government to create support rather than to use the input from respondents in the design of the policy. In the academic literature one can find that governments seek the public's input for several reasons: to share decision making, to obtain information, to obtain public acceptance or trust, or to enhance accountability. The public consultation process for the Australian Citizenship Test seemed to have been organized to obtain public acceptance. However, the 'misrepresentation' of the submissions by the government – presenting them in numerical form instead of textual – suggests that public acceptance should not be as easily portrayed as Howard does when saying there is 'very strong support'.

Newspaper reporting

In several newspapers across Australia people spoke out about how they felt about the initiative to implement a Citizenship Test. These responses were very mixed with some people being strongly against the implementation of the Test and some people being in favor. I used Lexis Nexis Academic to find and select news articles that expressed opinions from the wider public and society to get a feel about how the public responded (see chapter 3 for more detail on selection method). I found 87 news articles from Australian newspapers and press agencies which I analyzed on their content. I read through all of the articles and tried to segment them into in favor or against a citizenship test. Most of the articles I found expressed views that revealed opposition to the Australian Citizenship Test but this is not strange since it is more common that people express their critique through news media than that they express their approval. The arguments opposing the policy initiative vary greatly. In a number of news articles it was mentioned that a test is discriminatory towards would-be immigrants. Another often heard comment was that there is not one common set of Australian value that everyone agrees to and that is therefore wrong to think that applicants for citizenship can be tested on that. Some people argued that not even Australian-born citizens would be able to answer questions about Australian institutions, history or law and yet another returning remark was that the Australian Citizenship Test would seriously discourage people from taking up citizenship. One person remarks:

“A cooler analysis suggests the potential problem lies elsewhere: the test may have little positive effect and may discourage arrivals from taking out citizenship. It makes sense, as the discussion paper says, for citizenship to be seen as "a privilege, not a right". Robb doesn't want citizenship given away "like confetti". But he needs to be careful. The policy will fail if it discourages citizenship. In this sense the atmospherics must be welcoming, not discouraging.” (The Australian, 2006)

Other opponents of the Test pointed out that if the test was to test people's proficiency in English then that there at least needed to be English lessons available to the new comers, which was not part of the policy plans of the government. Others give examples from their own environment of how non-English speaking immigrants can be very good citizens. And another argument is that a Test does not do democracy any good. Some people suggested that the Howard Government was mainly launching the Test as a pre-election showcase to get more voters and some were saying that values should not only be taught to new comers but also to people already in the country. A few more comments were that the Test is a return to the White Australia Policy; that there is not an identifiable problem to which the

Test is a response; that a test does not per se encourage people to be good citizens; that there already is an interview that citizen applicants have to undergo; that a Test does not stop terrorism and that a Test could potentially widen the gap between the 'us' and 'them'.

Besides that there seem to be more people expressing their opinions in newspapers who are against the Test, there is also a number of people who express in newspapers that they are in favour of installing the Australian Citizenship Test. One of the much heard arguments is that people agree that it is a good idea to teach newcomers Australian values. Related to this argument is that some say that they think it is a good thing to Test immigrants proficiency in English because it is important for them to have at least a basic understanding of the English language. Other proponents agree with the Howard Government's message that Australian citizenship should be something that is highly valued and respected. A much heard comment both from the government and from proponents is that "citizenship is a privilege, not a right". Some people say that difficulties with migrants assimilation threaten social cohesion and that installing a test helps in dealing with that issue. Comments of other people expressing their support of the Government's plan are more difficult to group into a specific category. Most of the comments share that they in general express the positive attitude of the author towards a test. A reader of the Age we sent in an opinionative letter says:

"I am a will-be Australian citizen and I look forward to my ceremony on September 26. I feel honoured and excited and a citizenship test wouldn't change this in the slightest, but would just turn this milestone into an even bigger one for me. I think Australia should play more "hard to get"; it would just increase the honour of becoming an Australian. I would have benefited from a citizenship test and would probably have learned more about Australia that I don't know yet and should know." (Huntly, 2006)

"The test will encourage prospective citizens to obtain the knowledge they need to support successful integration into Australian society. The citizenship test will provide them with the opportunity to demonstrate in an objective way that they have the required knowledge of Australia, including the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship, and a basic knowledge and comprehension of English. [...] Citizenship is at the heart of our national identity, giving us a strong sense of who we are and our place in the world. [...] Becoming a citizen is a profound step requiring the individual to pledge their loyalty to Australia and its people. It involves a commitment to a shared future and core values. It means understanding the privileges that come with citizenship, but also being able to fulfil the responsibilities. We need to make sure that people are not only familiar with Australia and our values, but also able to understand and appreciate the commitment they are required to make. [...] The community also needs to be assured that migrants are able to integrate into Australian society. Maintaining broad community support for our migration and humanitarian program is critical. The ability to pass a formal citizenship test sends a clear signal to the broader community that new citizens know enough about our way of life and commit to it." (Andrews, 2007)

Bill discussion in Parliament

On 30 May 2007 the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship Kevin Andrews introduced the *Australian Citizenship Amendment (Citizenship Testing) Bill 2007* in the House of Representatives. The bill amends the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007* and provides for the official introduction of the Australian Citizenship Test. It is common in Australian politics for a minister to give a speech that accompanies the introduction of the bill.

The speech is an opportunity to explain the ideas behind the proposal. The speech by Kevin Andrews, summarizes in very broad terms the government's view on multiculturalism, integration and

immigration and then highlights why it is important to implement a Citizenship Test. The text in the text box is a part of the reading speech that highlights what the minister sees as the goal of the Test. The debates to discuss the government's proposal were in the House of Representatives held on 21 June 2007 and 8 August 2007 and in the Senate on 13 August 2007.⁶

The first parliamentary debate in the House of Representatives on 21 June 2007 in the House of Representatives was relatively mild in terms of how heavily the government's plan was questioned and opposed. The members of the House of Representatives of the opposition party – The Australian Labor Party – overall agree with the provisions contained in the legislation. Almost all of the Members of Parliament (MP's) for the Labor Party literally mention in their speech that Labor supports the proposal. An often repeated argument by MP's in this respect was that there already was a test – in the form of interviewing – and that they do not see why that testing shouldn't be formalized. The general approval of the proposal by the Labor Party does not mean however that there is no criticism, to the contrary some MP's made rather critical remarks about the proposal. A number of MP's for the Labor party for example commented that English testing of newcomers has to go hand in hand with English language education. Or as Michael Danby (2007) – one of the Labor Party MP's – puts it: *"If you are going to test, you first must teach."* Additionally, multiple MP's for the Labor party commented that they were appalled by the initial policy plans of the government and by the general discourse that surrounded it. As Craig Emerson, one of the MP's for Labor, puts it *"the provisions contained in this legislation are far more moderate than those originally foreshadowed by the minister"* (Emerson, 2007). I found it hard to find out to which initial 'appalling' ideas the Labor MP's were referring. My guess is that they were referring to the language used in the speeches that were made in the agenda-setting phase where multiple politicians put emphasis on terrorism and issues with the Muslim community. Another remark of one of the MP's is that the content of the test is not made available and hence it is difficult to judge the proposal. Tony Burke, MP for the Labor party and shadow minister for immigration, remarks in this respect that the bill is shell legislation because the implementation heavily depends on the determinations that the minister makes under the proposed legislation. The Senate Standing Committee for the Scrutiny of Bills that assesses legislative proposals against a set of accountability standards assessed the bill and expressed concerns about this too. A minister's determination is a legal instrument that gives the minister relative discretion in determining the content and implementation of the test. Michael Danby adds to the spectrum of comments a remark that was heard in the media too; he says that the proposal appears to be a political strategic choice in the run-up to the federal elections.

During the continued second reading debate in the House of Representatives on 8 August 2007 the Australian Labor Party still did not seem to oppose the proposal. Members of Parliament from both parties do continue to raise critical questions or make critical remarks but almost no one disapproves openly of the complete proposal. Surprisingly, the only MP who does firmly oppose the proposal is Petro Georgiou, a Member of Parliament for the Liberal Party; the party in government. The opening remark of his speech goes as follows:

"I believe that it [the bill] turns its back on Australia's tradition of inclusive citizenship and that it imposes a punitive test. I do not support the citizenship testing bill because there has been an utter failure to show that a new citizenship test is needed or that it will operate fairly. I don't support the bill because it sends a corrosive message to many people who would become citizens that they are undeserving of this status. I do not support the bill because the

⁶ It is common practice to not hold the Parliamentary debate about the bill at the same time as the introduction.

new test will prevent many meritorious aspiring citizens from full membership of the Australian community, and I believe this will diminish us as a nation.” (Georgiou, 2007)

To back his statement that the government failed in showing the need for a test, Georgiou brings up several arguments favoring a test and gives clear counter arguments that to him prove those arguments unfounded. Additionally he criticizes the public consultation process and the way the government used the results to support her proposal. Georgiou asserts that the presentation of the results are biased in favor of a formal test and that – as I have pointed out in the last section too – many of the questions or not answered by respondents or are not taken into account in the written inputs of individuals or organizations. Overall the main critique of Georgiou seems to be that the test is a fundamental shift away from inclusive citizenship policies and he ends his speech by openly saying that he does not support the bill and cannot commend it to the House.

On 13 August 2007 the Senate had its second reading debate about the bill. Two senators were rather critical about the proposed bill: Andrew Bartlett from the Australian Democrats and Kerry Nettle from the Australian Greens.⁷ Bartlett is very critical of the proposal and his main argument is that the policy is poorly thought through, does not have a clear rationale and is not based on any evidence. Bartlett says that he thinks multiculturalism is something that should be celebrated and promoted and that he wants to have a debate about how to increase the understanding and value of citizenship and the role that citizenship can play. However, the proposal to have a citizenship test is to Bartlett an attack on multiculturalism and could be a divisive, discriminatory and destructive measure. Bartlett expressed considerable critique on how the government was acting around the proposal. He said that the government insinuated that there is a problem with migrant integration but that that problem has actually never been named in any meaningful sense. Additionally, Bartlett says at one stage that the proposal is *“simply an example, once again, of the excessive control and secrecy which this government likes to put over so many things.”* At several stages in his speech Bartlett calls the test jingoistic⁸ and additionally he says that the consultation process was a sham that gives the word ‘consultation’ a bad name. Kerry Nettle was very critical of the proposal too. Her main arguments were that the legislation was unnecessary because there was no failure of existing immigration laws and additionally she comments that the two envisioned objectives of the test will not be achieved. Nettle says that to her it seems that the government has two objectives with the test: to improve English language skills of migrants and to improve the cohesiveness of the society. A large part of Nettle’s speech is devoted to assert why these two rationales will not be achieved by implementing a test. She says that instead of increasing cohesiveness the test rather separates people into those who are deserving citizens and those who are undeserving citizens. Another important argument that Nettle uses in expressing her disapproval of the test is that she thinks it sends a message to people with racist attitudes. She backs this idea by quoting from one of the submissions that was made during the consultation process by a group that calls itself Australia for Australians:

“[...] the test must make clear that they understand that in everyday life they are expected to dress and act like other Australians and that their cultural and religious practices and dress must be restricted either to private, ceremonial or religious occasions.” (Nettle, 2007)

⁷ Both the Australian Democrats and the Australian Greens political parties are minority parties

⁸ A jingo is a person who professes his or her patriotism loudly and excessively, favoring vigilant preparedness for war and an aggressive foreign policy; bellicose chauvinist

Similar to what Bartlett says, Nettle believes that the test is a step back from the support for multiculturalism. She literally says that The Australian Greens do not support the legislation. The Greens do propose a second reading amendment that calls on the government to increase funding and expand upon existing English language program. The Greens agree that proficiency in English helps to survive in Australian society but they do not think testing is the way to improve people's English.

Despite the criticism that came to the fore during the debates the legislation was approved by the House of Representatives on 8 August 2007, passed by the Senate on 12 September and officially launched on 17 September that same year. The first tests began on 1 October 2007. Soon after the actual first test took place the storm seemed to have gone lie down in terms of media attention and criticism from the opposition but with the federal elections on 24 November 2007 and the resulting change in power, the Australian Citizenship Test came under the attention again because the new government ordered a review of the test which I will discuss in the next section.

The analysis of the consultation process and the response to the proposal both in news media and in the Parliament reveal several things. The public consultation process yielded a lot of input – in favor and against the proposal – from all kinds of organizations and individuals in Australia. The government, however, in its response to the consultation process diminished the inputs by only presenting the input in the form of percentages of response to pre-determined questions. The government did not publish any documents or statements in which it said how the input from the consultation process would be or was used in the policy development. The main interest of the government seemed to be to use people's input to create a numerical overview of people supportive and unsupportive of the proposal and to use the percentage of people in favour – sixty percent – as proof of 'very strong support' for the introduction of a test. The analysis of newspaper articles revealed that not everyone agreed with the policy proposal. The concerns of people who are unsupportive of the test vary greatly but all hold in common that they relate to bigger community and migration issues. This is not strange since the Australian Citizenship Test is a policy tool that migrants encounter at 'the end of the migration journey' when they apply for Australian citizenship. The critique that was expressed in the news media did not seem to have had a big effect on the policy development. From the debates in the Parliament we have learned that the opposition party – the Australian Labor Party – supported the Citizenship Test legislation and was not very critical of the proposal. The speeches that were held during the two debates were by most Members of Parliament used to generally express opinions about immigration and citizenship and sometimes did not even had something to do with the Test. There were only three Members of Parliament who overtly expressed their disapproval of the proposal but nonetheless the legislation was passed through both houses because of the bipartisan support.

Policy Evaluation

In January 2008 the new Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Chris Evans, announced that the Labor Government would review the Citizenship Test. On 28 April 2008 Evans disclosed the appointment of an independent seven-member committee that would conduct a review of the Australian Citizenship Test. The review committee was chaired by Richard Woolcott, a former Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and personal friend of Kevin Rudd – the new Labor Prime Minister. In several news media people suggested that the results of the Test that were published in January 2008 were the reason that the Government required a review because the figures showed that there was a rate of 20% of people failing their first attempt. The Government and Evans himself, however, made it clear several times that the review did not have anything to do with the fail rate and that the review had to be seen as part of the usual process an incoming government

undertakes upon taking office. Evans said the following to media during the announcement of the review in January 2008:

“The Government supports the citizenship test, however a review of portfolio programs and undertakings – including the content of the test and the support services provided with it – is the normal process of any new government. If there are ways to improve service delivery or client interaction, we will consider them. [...] If people are not succeeding, we need to find out why, and how we can help to support them better. It's all about making the process work better for all concerned.” (Peters, 2008)

The message about the review being ‘normal procedure’ can be read too in the terms of reference that were given to the review committee. Additionally, the announcement indicates that The Australian Labor Party is still in favor of the Test; the same position as when the party was in the opposition during the bill discussion in 2007. The Government declared several times that the Citizenship Test would remain and that the need for a test was not open for discussion.

In August 2008 the 67-page report of the committee was published. The committee asked for input from the public during the development period of the evaluation report. In particular, they took great care in re-engaging those organizations and individuals who had contributed to the consultation process before the test was introduced in 2007. The objective of the review was to identify any unintended consequences arising from the introduction of a citizenship test, including any barriers which may have been created to the acquisition of Australian citizenship by migrants and refugee and humanitarian entrants to Australia and to make recommendations to address these. The review committee developed its ideas and recommendations in line with the results of the consultation process. It is highlighted in the summary of the report that during the consultation process it stood out that organizations linked to migrant support programs generally opposed any form of citizenship testing, while individual contributors tended to support some form of testing. Additionally, the committee remarks that most consultation meeting started off with firm opposition to any form of testing. Once it was clarified, however, that the government intended to retain some form of testing, people generally agreed on the need for a properly functioning and fair system of testing.

The results of the public consultations are not provided separately in the report but are interwoven in the text. In total the committee made 34 recommendations. In the summary it reads that the committee finds four ideas most important: to limit the testable knowledge for citizenship to the elements contained in the Citizenship Pledge and to make any questions public; to give meaning to the legislative requirement for a basic knowledge of the English language; to widen the groups who will be exempt from any requirement for citizenship testing; and to develop alternative pathways to testing for citizenship by conferral. More critical remarks of the review committee were that the Test discriminates; that applicants could get 95% of the questions right but still fail because of the mandatory questions; and that the questions of the test are often about topics you do not need to know about. The committee revealed that humanitarian and refugee groups stated that the test discriminated against those who are illiterate in any language but, because of their statelessness, have the greatest need for Australian citizenship to feel safe, secure and free. Related to this critical remark is that Richard Woolcott said in a press release that *“the booklet on which the test is based is way, way*

above basic English and discriminates very much in favour of people who have been educated in English as a first language.”

In November 2008 the government published an official response of five pages to the Woolcott review in which it states in the introduction that it agrees with the key recommendation to make the Pledge of Commitment the centrepiece of citizenship testing. After the introduction the response goes into the recommendations and indicates whether it supports or does not support the findings or recommendations. In its annual report of 2008-2009⁹ the Department of Immigration and Citizenship said it supported 23 of the 34 recommendations and gave in-principle support to another four. Later the government said it accepted all 27.

On 14 and 15 September 2009 the *Australian Citizenship Amendment (Citizenship Test Review and Other Measures) Bill 2009* was discussed in the Senate and on 16 and 17 September it was discussed in the House of Representatives. The discussions in the Senate and in the lower house mainly centred on the Woolcott review recommendations and how the government with the amendment wanted to install some of those recommendations. Additionally, both of the debates were by many speakers used to discuss broader immigration and asylum seeker issues and some speeches did not even go into the Australian Citizenship Amendment Bill 2009. In both houses the proposal did not raise considerable critique with MP's. This is not strange since the original bill that installed the Australian Citizenship Test in 2007 got bipartisan support. However, two Members of Parliament are very critical of the Test and the amendments. Petro Georgiou – a Liberal MP in the House of Representatives who in 2007 was one of the few who openly spoke out against the Test – again took the chance to disapprove of the Citizenship Test. He comments on how it was a handicap for the review committee that it was clear from the outset that the test would remain. Georgiou applauds the Woolcott committee for the work it did reviewing the test but again opposes the idea to have a Test in general. He also comments on how the government neglected to implement one of the to him most important recommendations from the review to install 'earned citizenship'. Georgiou says about this: *“This peremptory dismissal of well-considered suggestions of a very able group of people—a group selected by the government itself—is arrogant and its rationale is manifestly false.”* A senator for the Australian Greens, Sarah Hanson-Young, indicates too that the Green party has never been and is still not in favor of having a test. However, she does seem to be more supportive of the review than Georgiou is. The following quote from Hanson-Young's speech during the debate in the upper house is an indicator of this:

“To begin with, I would like to put on the record that, while the Greens do not support the premise of the citizenship test—we did not support it when it was introduced in 2006 and we do not support the principle of it today—we do acknowledge that this particular bill moves us towards improvements that we think are admirable.” (Hanson-Young, 2009)

Despite the disapproval of Petro Georgiou and Sarah Hanson-Young, the bill was passed through both houses on 17 September 2009 and short after the new citizenship test study book *Australian Citizenship: Our Common Bond* was published. On 19 October that same year the new tests were introduced.

⁹ The annual reports of the federal government reflect the Australian financial year which runs from 1 July to 30 June

Since the introduction of the new Test there have not been a lot of changes in the policy. I interviewed several public servants to learn more about how the Australian Citizenship Test policy was executed and to find out how they talked about citizenship. Several of my interviewees told me that the recommendations of the Woolcott review formed an important foundation on which the current, 'new' Australian Citizenship Test is still based. One of those recommendations that was implemented and that is often referred to by multiple interviewees is how the Australian Citizenship Test is strongly linked to the Citizenship Pledge. Interestingly, I found that most of my interviewees talked about citizenship and the Citizenship Test in a rather procedural and legal way. They talked about citizenship within the boundaries of what policy documents and legislation prescribe to them in their day-to-day work. This way of talking about citizenship is different from other actors in the policy process; while in the agenda-setting and development phase actors created persuasive policy stories about immigration and citizenship, the public servants at the frontline of the policy implementation mainly stuck to what documents, procedures and legislation prescribed for looking at citizenship. In the next chapter I will go deeper into the specifics of this 'bureaucratic frame'. For now it is interesting, however, to note that my interpretation indicates that the public servants seem to share a frame that is different than both the opponents and the proponents of the Australian Citizenship test; a frame that is much more pragmatic and less persuasive.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have highlighted the development of the Australian Citizenship Test policy. Throughout the process several actors or groups of actors have had influence or have tried to have influence on the policy. Three coalitions of actors seemed to have shared their approach of the Australian Citizenship Test: the group of actors from the Howard government who used strong persuasive stories about citizenship and immigration issues; the group of actors who opposed the Test for several reasons; and the public servants who approach the Test in a pragmatic way. The actors that seemed to have had the most influence on the policy story were the politicians who coined the idea to install a test. After the initial agenda-setting stage a discussion paper was published in which the government set out the initiative in greater detail. According to the rational model of policy analysis, however, there should have been a step in between these two phases to further develop the initiative that was coined in the agenda-setting phase; the so-called policy formulation or policy analysis stage. The rational-analytical process steps that mark this stage seemed to have been skipped or were – if they have taken place at all – not shared with the public. The story was not a coherent and rational story from which clear argumentation about why a test was needed was discernible. Nor was it made clear what the problem was to which the policy should be a response. Rather, the story that was presented in the discussion paper seemed to have come from nowhere. The agenda-setting setting stage seemed to have quickly turned into decision-making mainly because it was pushed by one group of actors; the political actors in the Howard government.

In the section in which I analyzed the public consultation process, the media response and the Parliamentary debates I showed that there was a strong opposition from people and organizations opposing the proposal. The critique on the Australian Citizenship Test was varied and came from different groups and people. There was however not one coherent opposition voice. During the public consultation process a lot of individuals and organizations submitted their input. From reading five of the organizational submissions I learned that they each had their own intrinsic value and that they did not necessarily followed the format that the government suggested for the submissions. To me this suggests that the other submissions probably had their own unique contribution too. However, the government decided to present the results of the consultations in numerical form with a focus on the question if Australia should have a test. The government subsequently used the results from the

submissions to claim strong support for the Test. Despite the critique on the proposal to install a citizenship test, the Australian Citizenship Test was launched on 17 September 2007 with much of how the Howard government envisioned it still intact. Two rational explanations for this are that the government did not seem to have used the public consultations to change the policy proposal to integrate the public's input and secondly because the bill gained bipartisan support in Parliament. Taken together, the dominance of the Howard government in pushing through its proposal and my interpretation that the evolution of the policy did not seem to have followed rational-analytical steps suggests that other 'forces' might have been at work in creating the Australian Citizenship Test too. The dominance of the Howard government in designing the policy and the lack of a clear problem definition and clear goals of the program points my attention to how the use of language by Howard might have contributed to a policy program that reflects how the key actors socially constructed the assumptions implicated in the Australian Citizenship Test. In chapter 6 I will turn to a more narrow focus on that use of language.

6. FRAME ANALYSIS

Introduction

In this chapter I zoom in on how several actors in the policy process were thinking and talking about citizenship. In chapter 5 I presented how the policy process overall looked like and what actors were involved. The policy analysis suggested that the Howard government was dominant in creating the policy story behind the Australian Citizenship Test and that the opposition did not have a lot of effect on how citizenship was framed. The analysis presented in chapter 5 also suggested that the way the Howard government framed citizenship and the Citizenship Test was made of several idea elements that related to 'big themes'. In the first two sections I go into how those big themes indeed seem to create the policy story that the Howard government used to justify the Australian Citizenship Test. After that I will discuss how people opposing the Test talked about the citizenship and how the new Labor government in 2008-2009 commissioned a review and consequently how that was related to how they framed citizenship. Finally, I will discuss how the public servants that I spoke to frame citizenship and the Australian Citizenship Test. Central in this chapter is the idea that language not only represents the way actors see reality but also in important ways creates reality. Especially in politics and policy the language that is used to describe social problems and policy issues has important consequences for the way a policy program is designed. So too in the case of the Australian Citizenship Test did language play an important role.

Framing in the Agenda-setting Phase

In chapter 5 I showed that in the agenda-setting phase a number of actors in the Howard government held speeches or wrote documents in which they presented accounts of what to them citizenship means and what it relates to. From these speeches and documents I tried to construct the frame that was used to talk about citizenship in the early phase of the policy process. I looked at three speeches that seemed to be important stories in which the Howard government expressed its position on citizenship and citizenship related issue. One speech is from Andrew Robb in April 2006 in which he announced that the government would look into the merits of a citizenship test. The two other speeches predate this speech and are by the Prime Minister John Howard in January 2006 and the Treasurer Peter Costello in February 2006. When I analyzed the three speeches and compared them I soon found that they had something in common: they highlighted certain key themes. Those key themes that all three politicians discussed were integration, Islam and Muslims, terrorism, common values and multiculturalism. The recurrence of these themes in all three speeches indicates to me that these three politicians share several idea elements that together shape a coherent frame that is advocated by all three of them. Additionally, all three speeches share that they do not presents or hint at a clear problem to which the Australian Citizenship Test would be a problem. The stories rather show the public a framed version of reality in which big words that are loosely linked, symbolism and the art of rhetoric prevail.

Costello's speech from February 2006 is called '*worth promoting, worth defending, Australian citizenship, what it means and how to nurture it*' and is the most outspoken of the three speeches. Costello begins his speech by telling the story of the great Dame Nellie Melba and how she became a famous singer. He highlights in this story that, despite that Dame Melba went onto fame and fortune among the sophisticates of Europe and America, she maintained her love for and loyalty to Australia. By starting a speech about citizenship with this story Costello implicitly relates citizenship – which is the topic of his speech – to pride of the country, to pride of being an Australian citizen and to loyalty. What Costello means with loyalty to Australia is not made explicitly clear in his speech. In common use loyalty means to be faithful to something or someone else with whom the 'sender' of loyalty has a

relationship. Costello talks about 'sharing certain beliefs' when he talks about pledging loyalty to Australia, so it can be assumed that loyalty to him has to do with sharing beliefs. When looking at other highlighted themes in Costello's speech I picked up on multiculturalism. Multiculturalism has a clear definition for Costello:

"Australia is often described as a successful multicultural society. And it is in the sense that people from all different backgrounds live together in harmony. But there is a predominant culture just as there is predominant language." (Costello, 2006)

Costello here recognizes that different cultures live together in harmony in Australia, but that Australia does have one overriding culture and one language. This 'yes, but' multiculturalism is something that various actors mention when talking about cultural diversity in Australia. Almost everyone – opponents and supporters – recognize that Australia is a country of migration and that the very nation as it is today is built on the concept of bringing multiple cultures together. This is clearly an image of Australia that is shared by multiple people in society and which surpasses the individual level of framing. Cultural beliefs in a society influence framing and that Australia is a country of migration seems to be one of those cultural beliefs. The Howard government, however, adds a 'but' to this image of Australia. John Howard was never a big fan of the word multiculturalism and in the early years of his command he banned the word from the government's vocabulary. The early position of Howard on multiculturalism is well portrayed in the following quote from an interview in 1989:

"The objection I have to multiculturalism is that multiculturalism is in effect saying that it is impossible to have an Australian ethos, that it is impossible to have a common Australian culture. So we have to pretend that we are a federation of cultures and that we've got a bit from every part of the world. I think that is hopeless". (Howard quoted in Markus, 2001)

A few years later, however, the government released a policy statement (see also chapter 4) in which multiculturalism was used in a different way and it was integrated again in the vocabulary of the government. This 'new' multiculturalism was clearly framed in terms of unity and harmony and is much in line with the above quote of Costello. In the foreword of the policy statement about 'new' multiculturalism the Prime Minister writes that: *"I commend this renewed statement of our multicultural policy and encourage all Australians to join the government in ensuring that our diversity continues to be a unifying force for our nation."* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2003). Costello in his 2006 speech seems to adhere to this view but even goes a step further than this. He mocks one of the officials who he heard speak at a citizenship ceremony that he attended. The speaker tells the audience that *"becoming an Australian did not mean giving up culture or language or religion or opinions and it certainly did not mean giving up the love of their country of birth."* (Costello, 2006). Costello says that the longer the speaker went on the more it seemed that in the view of the speaker, becoming an Australian did not seem to mean very much at all – other than getting a new passport. Costello clearly disagrees with this view and even calls it *"mushy misguided multiculturalism"*. By portraying the words of the speaker in such a negative way Costello implicitly makes clear that his way of looking at multiculturalism is far from what the speaker adheres to. It is a persuasive way of expressing that in his world the multiculturalism of the speaker is not acceptable.

In the January 2006 speech of the Prime Minister I found that the theme of unity is an important theme too. Diversity is accepted as long as the emphasis stays on the national overriding character:

“We’ve drawn back from being too obsessed with diversity to a point where Australians are now better able to appreciate the enduring values of the national character that we proudly celebrate and preserve. [...] So tomorrow let us indeed celebrate our diversity. But we should also affirm the sentiment that propelled our nation to Federation 105 years ago - one People, One Destiny.” (Howard, 2006)

The idea of ‘yes, but’-multiculturalism or diversity relates to one of the other recurring themes that I found to be important in the agenda-setting phase: common values. In his January 2006 speech, John Howard refers to ‘our national family’ a couple of times. Using the metaphor of a family he implicitly stresses that the people of Australia are bound by something, similar to how family members are bound by blood. Throughout his speech, it becomes clear that ‘that something’ that binds Australia’s people are their common values:

“Australia’s ethnic diversity is one of the enduring strengths of our nation. Yet our celebration of diversity must not be at the expense of the common values that bind us together as one people – respect for the freedom and dignity of the individual, a commitment to the rule of law, the equality of men and women and a spirit of egalitarianism that embraces tolerance, fair play and compassion for those in need. Nor should it be at the expense of ongoing pride in what are commonly regarded as the values, traditions and accomplishments of the old Australia.” (Howard, 2006)

The values he mentions are in the course of the policy process often repeated by multiple stakeholders and for the proponents of the Australian Citizenship Test there seems to be a general consensus about how these values represent core Australian values that are vital to successful integration. Costello in his February 2006 speech talks about migration and values in a rather normative or idealizing way by assuming that all migrants coming to Australia want to embrace Australian values. And although it is put in a generalizing way, this quote does portray an important part of his frame. By looking at what people assume or state as facts helps reveal where the boundaries of their frame lies. Costello said:

“People come to Australia and become Australian citizens because they want to embrace the things this country stands for. We should be proud that people from all over the world come here looking for Australian values – our values – and want to embrace them.” (Costello, 2006)

Andrew Robb’s speech from April 2006 is an interesting speech to approach holistically. The power of approaching a text holistically for frame analysis is that it helps to relate unclear or vague references or information to other parts of the text in order to help clarification. For Robb’s speech it is relevant to take the sequence of his story into account because he relates several parts to each other throughout the whole speech. There are three themes that come to the fore: integration, Islam and Muslims and terrorism. Robb starts his speech by saying that he recently had the pleasure to speak to students at a Melbourne high school about national identity and cultural diversity. By opening his speech with these words he implicitly relates national identity to cultural diversity, hence defining the concept of national identity in terms of multiculturalism, migration and ethnic diversity. He confirms this when he goes on about how, when he was looking at the School’s Honour Board, the rich history of migration jumped out with so many kids in the last sixty years being children of migrants from different background like Jewish, Italian, Greek, Indo Chinese, Eastern European and African. Robb talks about, similar to what John Howard was saying in his January 2006 speech, how the migration

history of Australia is a part of the unique Australian identity and how Australia has been very successful in integrating 'newcomers'.

The story he then tells is that integration of new migrant groups never goes without challenges. He gives the example of how early Italian migrants struggled with discrimination, with reconciling the homeland culture and the new culture and sometimes even with isolation. But, as Robb says, *"as a community we worked through it"*, indicating that the community as a whole was successful in helping the new migrants integrate. He then says that since the big wave of Italian migration different communities have moved to Australia and *"So, we must do what we have done before"* meaning that 'we' must help migrants integrate. In the next sentence he goes on by saying that *"people of Muslim faith have come to Australia [...] for a better life. But that quest for a better life has been seriously confounded by the evil acts of global terrorists."* What follows then is a story of how Muslims have been stigmatized unfairly but that problems with integration have always been overcome, mainly because of mutual respect. Referring to the latter, Robb says, *"much can be gained by seeking to put ourselves in one another's shoes."* Muslims have to understand that a lot of the Australian community is *"filled with anxiety and uncertainty about how to deal with the reality of random terrorist acts, ostensibly in the name of the Islam"*. And reversely, Australians have to understand that Australian born Muslims who are *"filled with a sense of alienation and helplessness about how to deal with the reality of random terrorist acts, by people purporting to be acting in the name of Islam."* Robb then says:

"In the end, helping Australian Muslims become integrated and connected to the mainstream community is the best way to prevent extremists getting a toehold in Australia." (Robb, 2006)

Further on in his speech Robb goes on by explaining how he thinks the government and the Islamic community can help Muslims to feel integrated and connected. A few of his suggestions are that Muslims themselves have to assume primary responsibility, that the community has to find a way to keep the Muslim youth connected, to give Imams local training and to put Islam into Australian context. The role of the government and the broader community in this respect to Robb is that:

"For our part, the challenge [...] is to help support the Muslim community to become fully integrated through education, employment and involvement with mainstream community activities." (Robb, 2006)

One of the statements that Robb makes in relation to integration is that proficiency of the English language is fundamental in quickly and effectively integrating into the community. He says that *"for this reason people have suggested that those seeking to take out citizenship should pass a compulsory test, a test which ensures that applicants have a functional level of English language skills, and a general knowledge of Australian values and customs."* He hereby sets the stage for what later become the two fundamental goals of the Australian Citizenship Test: to test for English and to test for common knowledge and values. Andrew Robb goes on by stressing how important a focus on common values is for successfully integrating people. He says that the integration practices in Australia over the past 200 years helped to *"successfully combine people from over 200 countries into one family, with one overriding culture – yet a family made up of very diverse and rich set of communities drawn together by common values."* Here we see again that Robb refers to the common Australian values that Howard and Costello referred to as well. Robb explains what to him those common values are:

“Values such as respect for the freedom and dignity of the individual, our commitment to the rule of law, our commitment to the equality of men and women and the spirit of the fair go, of tolerance and compassion to those in need.” (Robb, 2006)

Although it might seem that the above analysis of Robb’s speech is a bit of a tedious ‘and then he said this, and then he said that’ description, I found it important – as said – to show the complete sequence of Robb’s story. Robb goes from a success story of integration – that of the Italian community – to terrorism and then explains how the threat of terrorism makes it important for the Muslim community to integrate into ‘mainstream community’. This story highlights a couple of things that can only be revealed through approaching Robb’s story holistically. First, as other actors have pointed out and what seems to be a larger cultural beliefs is that Robb too highlights that Australia is a country of migration and has always been successful in integration. However, because Robb talks about the challenges with the Muslim community, he implicitly singles out the Muslim community as an example of failed integration. The speech builds up to the announcement that the government will explore the merits of a citizenship test and by giving the Muslim community such a central role in that speech he implicitly makes a link between the challenges with the Muslim community and the need to test for citizenship. Additionally, Robb clearly links integration with terrorism by saying that both Australian Muslims and ‘the rest of the Australian community’ are uncertain about how to deal with random terrorist attacks in the name of Islam. Integration seems to be the solution for this because *“helping Australian Muslims become integrated and connected to the mainstream community is the best way to prevent extremists getting a toehold in Australia.”*

What the analysis of the three speeches tell us is that all three politicians relate several bigger societal issues to citizenship and the Australian Citizenship Test. The stories that they tell are made up of a diverse set of claims and idea elements and become the “things” of the story – what the story is about. The features that are selected and named points the view of the politicians at one part of the issues surrounding integration, migration and citizenship and ignores other ways of looking at it. There is a relationship between frames of actors and their interests; interests are shaped by frames and frames may be used to promote interest. The politics of Howard seemed to have been influential in the way the policy issues are made sense of by actors in the government and by looking closer at what the politicians in the agenda-setting phase say this interpretation seems to be valid. The agenda of Howard was always to promote a shared Australian identity and to build a positive narrative about the Australian achievement. Patriotism and nationalism were recurring topics on the agenda of the Howard government during its term between 1996 and 2007 and the Australian Citizenship Test seems an extension of this body of thought. One of my expert interviewees – Professor Brian Galligan, who co-authored the book ‘Australian Citizenship’¹⁰ – suggested too that the Australian Citizenship Test was something in line with the ideas and vision of the Howard Government. He said:

“It [The Australian Citizenship Test] was something brought in by the Howard government and it was a... uhm, you know a reflection of Howard, sort of, conservative, sort of, championing of Australian national, national identity. [...] And he was also, he was very critical of multiculturalism and he initially refused to use the word and he banned senior Commonwealth public servants from using the words. And then it became something, they revised it, so that, they put out a new report which he finally signed off on that said that it sort of is Australian-with-a-capital-A-multiculturalism: the emphasis on Australian values.

¹⁰ See literature list for complete reference: Galligan, B. and W. Roberts (2004)

[...] So his thing was to give more Australian content to citizenship. Not just to have it, you know, in broad values terms.” (Prof Brian Galligan, personal communication, June 2014)

The emphasis in the lead up to the Australian Citizenship Test is very much on the idea of building and maintaining a shared sense of Australianness and acknowledging the common values that bind people together; ideas that are in line with the broader ideology of the Howard government. Howard, Robb and Costello encourage people to feel pride and loyalty for the shared identity. The emphasis in the story of Robb in which he announces the government’s intention to look into a citizenship test for Australia is more on the promotion of the image of Australia as a joint family than that it is on presenting a clear rationale for the need of a test. It is difficult to discern clear arguments for the need of the test but the holistic approach of Robb’s speech does point at a strong focus on integration. How exactly citizenship and the citizenship test are linked to integration is only to be guessed at but that does not seem to be an issue to Robb. In the next section I will look at how in the further development of the policy initiative the issue was framed.

Framing in the Developing Phase

After the agenda-setting phase the proposal to implement a citizenship test was further developed, the public’s input was asked and finally the proposal was introduced in Parliament. During these process steps several documents, speeches and press releases point out how the policy story for the Australian Citizenship was shaped and which features were highlighted. A principal document in the analysis of the frame used to introduce the Australian Citizenship Test is the discussion paper. I found that three out of the five themes that were emphasized in the agenda-setting phase recur in the discussion paper. Additionally, I found that a few other themes were accentuated too. One of those ‘new’ themes added was that citizenship is a privilege and not a right. This idea or catchphrase seems to be a very important message but it proves difficult to discern what is exactly meant with the message. It seems that there are two related but separate messages hidden in this idea. One of the messages is that Australian citizenship is something beautiful, something that can add value to your life and creates many opportunities to benefit from. Sometimes this message was expressed in a more negative tone of voice by highlighting that Australian citizenship should not be taken lightly or that Australian citizenship is not merely a ceremony or a passport. An example of this message expressed in a more negative spirit is the infamous and often repeated catchphrase *“citizenship is scattered around like confetti”*. Andrew Robb made this remark while talking to media at a press conference that was held at the time of the publication of the discussion paper. In the discussion paper itself we read about enhancing the value of citizenship in a more positive way:

“Becoming an Australian is much more than a ceremony. It is an opportunity to fully embrace the Australian way of life, to broaden education options and employment opportunities, to vote and to have a voice in the country’s future.” (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006)

This message seems to be very much in line with what Costello said in his February 2006 speech that he was appalled by the official who spoke at a ceremony and seemed to say that *“becoming an Australian didn’t seem to mean very much at all – other than getting a new passport.”* The other message that is incorporated in the ‘citizenship is a privilege not a right’ idea is that Australian citizenship comes with both privileges and responsibilities. Although the word privilege is in the catchphrase used in opposition with the word rights, in the discussion paper examples of privileges are described in terms of rights and both words are used interchangeably. The privileges of citizenship are portrayed as the legal rights that come with citizenship, while the catchphrase says the exact opposite: citizenship is a privilege (a benefit) and not a right. Because the ‘citizenship is a privilege and not a

right' depiction is confusing I will detach the two messages hidden within it and treat them as separate frame indicators. The first message – that the value of citizenship should be enhanced and not scattered around like confetti – is repeated by a couple of other actors. Costello for example had earlier said that *“no one is going to respect a citizenship that is so undemanding that it asks nothing”*. And Alan Caldman, MP in the House of Representatives for the Liberal Party, gives an example during the Parliamentary debates of how he finds it regrettable that he has observed people at citizenship ceremonies who left – to his liking – the ceremony too soon. Indicating that these people do not value the meaning of the citizenship ceremony.

The idea that citizenship comes with both responsibilities and privileges is something that is often repeated by stakeholders in support of the test. In the second reading speech by the Minister of Immigration and Citizenship – Kevin Andrews – he says that:

“People living in Australia enjoy many rights, including equality before the law, and freedom of religion and expression. [...] We also have responsibilities. We must obey Australia’s laws, accept the common values and respect the rights and freedoms of others.” (Andrews, 2007)

Gary Hardgrave, one of the MP’s in the House of Representatives for the Liberal Party approbates this idea by emphasizing that taking out citizenship is not only signing up for the rights but also the responsibilities.

“I make the point that there is a real ambition by the government to draw everyone together under the reasonable challenge of signing up not just to the rights but to the responsibilities. The citizenship ceremony is a public statement of signing up to the responsibilities of being an Australian citizen.” (Hardgrave, 2007)

In the resource booklet that the Government published in 2007 the rights and responsibilities of Australian citizenship take up a prominent place. In the first chapter that is called *“What does being an Australian mean?”* all the privileges and responsibilities of Australian citizenship are summarized. See the matrix on page 54-55, in the row ‘rights and responsibilities’ and column ‘examples for a complete list’. It is difficult to find elaborations on what exactly is meant by the privileges and responsibilities theme beyond the specific list. This could be the case because the list seems to be rather straightforward and mainly referring to legal responsibilities and privileges. Even a straightforward list like this is however still a representation of how the Howard government sees citizenship. The list of legislative requirements and privileges of Australian citizenship is actually more complex or vague than the actors might make others believe.¹¹ Governments and politicians often make believe that policy issues or elements – like the list of rights and responsibilities – are facts. Looking a step beyond those ‘facts’ discloses however that facticity is subjective.

Another theme that is mentioned by a couple of actors in relation to citizenship and the Australian Citizenship Test is participation. Some actors refer to it as contribution or involvement but it seems to mean the same thing: taking part in the society or the community. In a media release on the

¹¹ Sangeetha Pillai (2014) examined the extent to which the claims about responsibilities and privileges accurately describe the legal implications of citizenship. Looking at purely the legislative framework she found that the obligations of Australian citizenship are rather ambiguous. One of the examples that Pillai (2014) gives is that lack of citizenship or permanent residency does not protect a person against being conscripted in the army. In a time of war, any person between the ages of 18 and 60 years who resided in Australia for six months or more can be called upon by proclamation of the Governor-General to serve in the Defense Force for the duration of the war. See Pillai (2014) for more legally framed arguments

government's website in which the Test is announced Andrew Robb states that *"The Government is concerned to ensure that migrants to Australia integrate successfully and contribute to our national progress."* In the discussion paper, the word participation is mentioned a couple of times too: *"Citizenship provides an opportunity for people to maximise their participation in society and to make a commitment to Australia's common values."* And *"It is also clear that being employed is one of the best pathways to active participation in Australian society, greater interaction and involvement with the broader community and more successful and quicker settlement."* Unfortunately, beyond these one-liners there is not a lot of explanation of what participation or contribution exactly means to the actors. According to the dictionary participation is 'to take or have a part or share, as with others; partake; share'. And the core idea in the documents and speeches I analyzed is that participation takes place in the society. But how that is exactly envisioned is left open. If taking part in the community is a societal-centred phenomenon in which citizens have to be an active member of their local community by for example helping an old lady crossing the street or correcting the neighbourhood kids when they are bullying someone; or if taking part in the community is a more liberal concept in which taking care of yourself is central and hence participation in the workforce is important – that is left for the observer to fill out.

Finally, another theme that pops up in several of the speeches or documents in the policy development phase is that of commitment and loyalty. By taking up citizenship, by taking the pledge and by passing the Australian Citizenship Test, prospective citizens are committing to everything that Australia stands for. Committing to Australia seems to be one of the most important themes in the development phase because almost every document or speech that I analyzed from that phase mentions in one way or another that taking up citizenship is committing to something. It is therefore not surprising that the title of the resource booklet that prospective citizens use to prepare themselves for the test is *'Citizenship, your commitment to Australia'*. There are a lot of variations to this idea used by several actors who frame the citizenship test in terms of commitment. In a press conference the Prime Minister says that he wants migrants to commit to the future of the society: *"The country wants a unifying commitment to the values and the future of this society"*. Michael Ferguson (2007), MP in the House of Representatives for the Liberal Party says: *"In closing, let me say that a formal citizenship test is a way to ensure that migrants are absolutely committed and ready to participate in the wider community."* And the Minister of Immigration and Citizenship himself says that new citizens need to commit to the Australian way of life: *"This bill will ensure that new citizens have the necessary knowledge of the Australian way of life to which they are required to commit and will aid their successful integration into our society."* It is a couple of times mentioned that citizenship applicants are taking a commitment when they taking the pledge as part of the application process and the Citizenship Test can help prospective citizens to fully understand the commitment they are making by taking that pledge. In the discussion paper it reads that: *"Given its significance, it is vital that those who make the pledge fully understand the commitment they are making and the inherent privileges and responsibilities that come with Australian citizenship."* Similar to participation, it is not made explicit what committing to Australia, the future of the society, the Australian way of life or Australian values mean. Committing is highlighted by many actors though and hence is an important construct in framing the Citizenship Test. I think it is therefore implicit in the story that commitment is central to taking up citizenship; it is a serious and meaningful engagement.

The analysis of both the agenda-setting phase and the phase after that demonstrates that the frame that actors in the Howard government used to think and talk about the Australian Citizenship Test is made up of certain key idea elements. Although these different themes are different from each other, as a whole they represent a coherent framework through which the actors approach the policy issue.

For an outsider who has a different frame it might be strange to talk about loyalty in relation to the Australian Citizenship Test but to the users of the frame it is their way of looking at the picture. Gamson and Lasch (1983) created the signature matrix as an analytic tool to lay out the specific elements of a set of texts and spoken words. The entries in the matrix are the signature elements of the frame – hence the name of the matrix. The different signature elements in the frame of the Howard government mutually support and reinforce each other. I used the signature elements in a slightly different way than Gamson and Lasch because I used two levels instead of one level in displaying signature elements. The two tables on page 54 and 55 represent the one frame of the Howard government. The rows represent the different key themes that were used by many actors in relation to the Australian Citizenship Test and the columns display what Gamson and Lasch call ‘symbolic devices’. The goal of using the signature matrix is to direct attention to how different idea elements are deployed in an integrated way. And although actors in favour of the Test in the early stages of the policy process sometimes framed citizenship in terms of the one key theme and sometimes in terms of the other, in the end, the signature matrix shows that the themes taken together provide a coherent citizenship frame of interwoven ideas and thoughts. Two themes that are left out of the signature matrix are terrorism and Muslims and Islam. It was only in the early agenda-setting phase that these themes were mentioned but later when the government formalized its proposal with the discussion paper terrorism and Muslims were not taken into account anymore when actors were talking about the Australian Citizenship Test. I have interpreted this as that those two themes are not part of the overall policy story but that they are important contextual factors that surely had some influence on the framing of citizenship, albeit being it in the background.

Framing by the Opposition

There was considerable critique on the Australian Citizenship Test from various actors. The opposition to the policy did not come from one specific group or party but came from numerous different parties. There was not one coherent voice that rose from which a clear story was discernible. What all opponents share however is that they either oppose the idea of having a Test or that they question if the outcomes of the Test will be achieved. The criticism of all opponents are first and foremost views or counter arguments that were a clear response to the policy proposal. The first objective of people speaking up against the proposal was to try and express why they were against the policy. It therefore proves to be difficult to determine the frames of people beyond that they are opposing the Test. An often seen frame element is however that the policy proposal would not do multiculturalism or the divide between us and them any good. Some people say that the test is discriminating, could send a message to people with racist motives, that the test is a return to the White Australia Policy or that it is a shift away from inclusive citizenship. While the Howard government links multiculturalism to unity and common values, the opponents seem to frame multiculturalism more in terms of diversity and different categories of people. The Howard government seems to want to promote unity amongst different people while actors opposing the Test seem to be afraid it will cause division amongst people. Another set of arguments that multiple actors raise has to do with how the Test does not have enough procedural or institutional grounds. The three Members of Parliament that spoke out against the Test during the debates in June and August 2007 all three pointed at how they thought the Howard government had not presented a clear problem to which the policy would be a solution. Other arguments in line with this idea were that there was no clear argument of how the Test would produce the desired outcome, that there was no failure of existing immigration law and some people said that there already was a testing tool in the form of an individual interview.

Symbolic device Key theme	Metaphors or Depictions	Catchphrases	Visual images	Roots	Consequences of the citizenship test	Appeals to principle	Exemplars
Multiculturalism & Cultural diversity	Different people combined into one family	United in diversity	In 2007 the name of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs was changed into the Department of Immigration and Citizenship	Diversity is a strength / Australia is built on different cultures	It is not expected that people will leave their own traditions behind but the Test will help them to understand and accept the commitment they are making to Australian values and the Australian way of life		He asked her [a Uruguayan Australian] where she came from, and she replied, "I come from Uruguay to Australia twenty years ago." The reporter said, "So you're barracking for Uruguay?" The woman was outraged. "No!" She yelled back at him. "I go for Australia !"
Common values	A sense of shared values is our social cement	One people, one destiny / Australia has successfully combined people into one family with one overriding culture, based on a set of common values	In the section on Australian values in the old resource booklet the value of freedom of religion is accompanied by a picture of what seems to be a Buddhist monk and a Christian priest chatting amicably	There are some beliefs, some values, so core to the nature of our society that those who refuse to accept them refuse to accept the nature of our society	The Citizenship Test is a way to help understand new Australians the Australian values / I suspect there would be more respect for these values if we made more of the demanding requirements of citizenship	We are asking all our citizens to subscribe to a framework that can protect the rights and liberties of all. These are Australian values. We must be very clear on this point. They are not optional. We expect all those who call themselves Australians to subscribe to them	By embracing their convict past, Australians have shown they believe that this is a better place than the 'old world' evidenced by the fact that people driven to crime in Britain could make a fresh start here. Australians have also become a people who don't care much about a person's family background or past behaviour, people tend to be judged by what they are / There are countries that apply religious or sharia law – Saudi Arabia and Iran come to mind. If a person wants to live under sharia law these are countries where they might feel at ease. But not Australia.
Integration & Cohesion	It is about bringing people together	Integrating newcomers into the mainstream of Australian society		Integration takes place through education, employment and involvement with mainstream community activities	The Citizenship Test will encourage prospective citizens to obtain the knowledge they need to support successful integration into Australian society		Few newcomers spoke English, especially the older immigrants, but their children, whilst maintaining their European ways, quickly adopted the new environs of football, meat pies, kangaroos and Holden cars. We also changed: our chops and three veg were interspersed with spaghetti bolognese, osso bucco and minestrone soup.
Participation, Involvement & Contribution	You have chosen to make a contribution to Australia's future by seeking to become an Australian citizen	The government is concerned to ensure that migrants to Australia integrate successfully and		And all these immigrant communities have made successful contributions to Australian life	A formal Citizenship Test is a way to ensure that migrants are committed and ready to participate	We [Australian citizens] have responsibilities. We are encouraged to become involved in the community to	The Succoh family have made a tremendous contribution to our community in northern Tasmania and they are exemplars of the African community which they represent. They

		contribute to our national progress			in the wider community	help make Australia an even better place.	have opened a business; they are an enterprising family
To enhance the value of citizenship	Citizenship is scattered around like confetti	It is not to be taken lightly / It's something worth striving for	The title of the discussion paper is 'Australian Citizenship: Much more than a ceremony'	People migrate for a chance of a better life, for a chance to benefit from the opportunities in the new country	A practical, common sense test will serve to enhance the value of Australian citizenship as something worth striving for	No one is going to respect a citizenship that is so undemanding that it asks nothing. In fact our citizenship is quite a demanding obligation	One of the most regrettable factors in citizenship ceremonies that I have observed – not in all of them but in a considerable number – is the wish of those gaining citizenship to grab the certificate and leave the hall as quickly as possible
Rights and responsibilities	With these words, new citizens become part of the Australian community. They share freedoms, responsibilities and privileges.	People living in Australia enjoy many rights but we also have responsibilities. / We have a sense of reciprocal obligations		Australian citizens have privileges but responsibilities too. It is a mutual obligation where you give and take	By taking up citizenship people are signing up not just to the rights but also to the responsibilities of Australian citizenship		The privileges: to vote, to seek election to parliament, to apply for an Australian passport and to enter Australia freely, to register children born overseas as Australian citizens by descent, to seek full consular assistance from Australian diplomatic representatives while overseas and the seek the full range of employment opportunities in the Australian Defence Force and the Australian Public Service. The responsibilities are: to vote in federal, state and territory elections and at a referendum and to serve on a jury if called on to do so, to defend Australia should the need arise
Committing to Australia	Helping new Australians understand the commitment they are making	The country wants a unifying commitment to the values and the future of this society / United by an overriding and unifying commitment	The title of the 'old' resource booklet is 'Citizenship, your commitment to Australia'		A citizenship test will ensure a level of commitment to these values and way of life from all Australians		I have a strong affection for our migrant community in northern Tasmania. We have an excellent community of people who have a commitment to Australia and to Tasmania and, while there are pulls and attractions to move closer to some of their fellow countrymen interstate in some of the bigger cities, the ones who choose to stay in Tasmania really love the place.

Beyond these three shared views on the Australian Citizenship Test it is difficult to establish a clear shared frame or frame coalition for people opposing the test.

One way of looking at the opposition of actors to the Test is by thinking of it as a frame clash. To the Howard government it is normal to think about citizenship by conferral as a step in which a new citizen pledges his or her loyalty to Australia, to its people and to shared core values. New citizens need to understand the privileges and responsibilities that come with being an Australian citizen. To opponents, however, citizenship by conferral does not mean the same. Petro Georgiou for example said during the parliamentary debates in 2007 that he would not support the Test because he thought it would send a harmful message to new citizens about how they do not deserve the status of citizenship. He believes that citizenship should be inclusive and that it should be open to all aspiring citizens to become full members of society. In these two examples you can see that both parties use very different language when talking about citizenship: pledging loyalty, shared core values and privileges and responsibilities are very different words than inclusiveness, full memberships and deserving of the status. Both parties see the reality of citizenship by conferral and the effects that the Australian Citizenship Test would have in very different ways. It is a conflict in frames. However, because it is difficult to construct a shared frame for all the opposing parties taken together it is difficult to speak of an actual conflict between two frames. A thorough analysis of the frames that actors against the Test used to think of citizenship and the Australian Citizenship Test would require me to go down to the individual level of frame analysis and that is beyond the scope of this research. What however can be concluded is that the people opposing the Test did not seem to have had a large effect on the policy. I showed that the response to the initiative was not used by the Howard government to change or alter the policy but that the Test was created in line with the interests of key political figures. What did seem to have influenced the current 'new' Test, however, was the review of the policy that was ordered by the Labor government in 2008. I turn to that part of the story in the next section.

Framing during the Evaluation

As I showed in chapter 5, when there was a change of power in late 2007 the new government ordered a review of the Test and subsequently changed the test in line with those new recommendations. The frames used to talk about citizenship and the Australian Citizenship Test seemed not to be very different from the Howard government. The focus was more on improving an already running program than on expressing political ideas about citizenship. When the Labor government commissioned a review of the Australian Citizenship Test they made it clear from the outset that the need for a test would not be open for discussion. Several times the Labor government underlined that the review was only normal procedure of any new government. In a news article in *The Age* Chris Evans – the new Labor minister for Immigration and Citizenship – was quoted for saying that the content of the Test and the support services provided would be reviewed and that if there were any ways to improve service delivery or client interaction, that they would be considered. The Labor government was very clear in that it supported the Test. In a news article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* Evans was quoted for saying: *"Remember we backed this in opposition, that having a test with appropriate questions was the right way to go"*. The Labor government seemed to position itself with these remarks as not opposing the Australian Citizenship Test and therefore possibly also not opposing the assumptions implicit in the Test. This latter interpretation is backed by my finding that the Labor government did not often express their view about citizenship in relation to the Citizenship Test and when they did it seemed not to divert much from how the Coalition had framed citizenship and the Citizenship Test in 2007. When Chris Evans announced the review he said:

“Australian citizenship is a very important step which thousands of migrants take every year and my message to them is to encourage them to become Australian citizens. [...] Part of that process requires that they learn about Australia and our way of life to enable them to fully participate in the community.” (Evans, 2008)

Evans underlines here that part of becoming an Australian citizen to him is learning about Australia and the Australian way of life. This is much in line with what the Howard government included in their policy story too when they developed the Australian Citizenship Test. During the second reading debates in 2009 Laurie Ferguson – the then Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services – spoke about citizenship in a similar fashion:

“The government wants a citizenship test that is part of a meaningful pathway to citizenship for all those aspiring to become Australians. It should fill our new citizens with confidence about their role in this society and about how they can contribute to making this nation vibrant and strong. [...] The government is committed to ensuring that new migrants have the best possible chance of understanding their responsibilities, rights and privileges as an Australian citizen.” (Ferguson, 2009)

The only difference from the initial policy frame that was used by the Howard government seemed to be that the Australian Citizenship Test was framed like something that should not pose any barriers to disadvantaged people.

“The government is committed to ensuring people who have a commitment to Australia, and who have a strong desire to become Australian citizens, have the opportunity to do so. To address this issue the government will develop a citizenship course which will provide an alternative pathway to citizenship for a small group of disadvantaged people whose literacy skills will never be sufficient to sit and pass a formal computer test, even though they understand English.” (Ferguson, 2009)

Additionally the focus seemed to be even more on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. This idea was also part of the original Howard government frame but the Labor government seemed to enhance this focus by linking the Test to the Pledge:

“By focusing on the pledge of commitment the government has placed democratic beliefs, responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship, and the requirement to uphold and obey the laws of Australia at the heart of the citizenship” (Ferguson, 2009)

The new government did not disassociate itself from the policy story that the Howard government created. From the beginning of the evaluation phase the Labor government made it clear that they still supported the Test and that the evaluation was aimed to improve service delivery, the content of the test, the support services and the client interaction. The few times that the government spoke out about what citizenship to them was showed that the views were in line with frame elements of the Howard government. The only additions were more attention to disadvantaged people and a stronger focus on rights and responsibilities. This latter change was complemented by linking the new test to the Pledge of Commitment that prospective citizenship make at their citizenship ceremony. Comparing the two resource booklets the information for prospective citizens has not changed much either. All the information that is part of the new version was also part of the old version. The only change was that some information from the old version was marked as non-testable (see Appendix 3 on page 76

for an overview of topics covered in both resource booklets). What the approach of the Labor government in the evaluation suggests is that they kept the initial policy story behind the Australian Citizenship Test intact. Although the actors in power, the Australian Citizenship Test legislation, the content of the booklet, the Test itself and the procedure changed the assumptions implicated in the Test did not change. The Labor government did express a few times how they framed citizenship and the need for the Australian Citizenship Test but there was a lot less political talk and persuasive use of story because than when the initiative was initially introduced by the Howard government in 2007. The focus in stories surrounding the Test shifted from political interests to procedural and legislative improvements.

Framing in the Implementation

To find out how citizenship in the Australian Citizenship Test was framed by the government I talked to several public servants in the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP). When I had my first interview in the Department my interviewee – who is the head of the section in which I had more interviews – started the interview by saying that I had to be aware that the Australian Citizenship Test was only a small portion of the citizenship positioning of the government. With this comment she was responding to the summary of my research purposes which she had read. She said: *“When you have mentioned that the Test being sort of the forefront of the positioning of the views on citizenship in Australia...I guess from the departments perspective the test is one, just one component of something much bigger with citizenship.”* She then goes on by saying that I will find more about citizenship in the Australian Citizenship Act 2007 and other supportive documents.

“In terms of the process of, uhm applying for. It’s not simply a transaction where you apply for something and you get it. Uhm, you need to meet certain criteria under the Australian Citizenship Act 2007 which we have got a copy of here for you. And when you have a look through the act and some of the supporting documentation, particularly the preamble and all sorts of those things, you’ll see where citizenship is positioned if you like.” (Departmental officer 1, personal information, 27 May 2014)

By saying this my interviewee framed citizenship in terms of the citizenship legislation. Although she almost ‘corrects’ me for doing research into citizenship framing in the Australian Citizenship Test policy, she does point me in the direction of where I should look to find how citizenship is positioned: The Australian Citizenship Act 2007. Later in the interview I ask her if she could summarize what she thinks the message is that the Australian government sends with the test and with the resource booklet and she gives me an answer that is consistent with the idea that she frames citizenship as being what the Citizenship Act prescribes:

“Look I think it’s very consistent with the act. It’s very much saying we are a country that is built through generations of migration. [...] The message is very much uhm, we want people to become, so it’s very welcoming, uhm we want people to become Australian citizens, if they are eligible. To become citizens uhm. And, we very much, the government would very much want for them to understand the parts of the act that they will be assessed against. So understanding Australia, knowing what it’s like to live here, knowing what the values of Australians are.” (Departmental officer 1, personal information, 27 May 2014)

The interviewee does go a bit beyond framing citizenship only in terms of citizenship legislation. She says that Australia is a country of migration, something that I have earlier indicated to be a cultural

belief that is shared by many Australians. However, she does point at the Australian Citizenship Act as being an important part in the process of becoming a citizen.

In another interview with two departmental officers I come to talk about the pledge. I wanted to discuss with them how the Woolcott review had influenced that Test and wanted to hear what they had to say about the relationship between the resource booklet and the Pledge. I ask my interviewees about this connection and one of them explains to me how the resource booklet is indeed interlaced with the Pledge of Commitment:

“You would see in the resource book how it’s set out and how they’ve drawn out the meanings of it [the pledge]. So you know, when we talk about democratic believes we are also talking about people. In order to do that people need to understand what we think of government for example. So in the resource book basically it says, you know, the different levels of government and how it actually works and what do we mean when we talk about people’s rights and liberties. Uhm and it goes into things like, you know, basically things like domestic violence are not acceptable in Australia and those sorts of things. And so it puts it into a very community-based uhm... everyday life kind of practical aim.” (Departmental officer 3, personal information, 26 June 2014)

The way this interviewee talks about and thinks of the Australian Citizenship Test and citizenship is influenced by the design of the new Test; the resource booklet is clearly linked to the Test. You do see in the quote above – as with the interviewee who talked about the Citizenship Act as being a defining factor – that she touches upon some of the themes that we saw in the Howard frame. Themes like people’s rights and liberties and community-based citizenship. However, this line of thought is all within the framework of the pledge, the resource booklet and the Woolcott review.

When I talked to another departmental officer who is responsible for citizenship ceremonies I asked her what the deeper meaning is of the Pledge. In the agenda-setting phase there was a lot of talk about how new citizens were committing to the Australian way of life, how they were pledging their loyalty to the country and how taking up citizenship is a choice to make a contribution to Australia’s future. The citizenship Pledge at the ceremony is the last step in the citizenship application process and marks the transformation of people from being a permanent resident to becoming a citizenship. So when I asked the departmental officer what the pledge means I was implicitly referring to that transformation and actually also expecting to hear some of the ‘big words’ that were used by actors from the Howard Government. The interviewee responded to my question:

“That they agree to uphold the laws of Australia. Yeah, and you know. Respect the law and obey and all of the obligations that go with that, to vote and... yeah upholding the law.” (Departmental officer 4, personal information, 26 June 2014)

To this interviewee, the meaning of the pledge – which marks the transformation of residents into citizens – is related to citizenship legislation and the responsibilities that flow from that. She does not talk about the pledge in a similar fashion as we saw actors do in the agenda-setting and development phases. To her new citizens pledge to agree to uphold the law and nothing more.

In the citizenship frame of actors of the Howard Government the causal reasoning is – although sometimes implicit – that the Australian Citizenship Test will help applicants to understand Australian

values, that it will encourage prospective citizens to obtain knowledge they need to support integration and that the Test ensures that applicants are committed to Australia. The actors who thought in this fashion envisioned a certain outcome of the Citizenship Test. I am interested to find out how the head of the section in which I had multiple interviews thinks about this so I ask her what she thinks that the outcome of the Australian Citizenship Test is. She answers: *"It is meeting the requirements of the act. That's all it's there to do."* (Departmental officer 1, personal information, 27 May 2014). Judging from her concise answer, she does not think in terms of the outcomes that actors in the agenda-setting phase envisioned but merely in terms of citizenship legislation.

Via the respondent who is responsible for citizenship ceremonies I got in touch with a woman working for the communications branch of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. I was interested to talk to her because I wanted to find out how marketing and communication about the Australian Citizenship Test is organized and how and which image or vision of citizenship the department wants to communicate to the public. When I ask her to tell me something about the past and the present of citizenship communication she answers:

"I think the messages that have been used to promote citizenship haven't necessarily changed too much over time. We still try and reinforce that, you know, as an Australian citizen you have responsibilities but you also have benefits. But I think more importantly what has changed has been how we communicate to the public." (Departmental officer 5, personal information, July 2014)

After she gave me this answer I asked her if she thinks there are other messages that are transmitted through the government's citizenship communication besides the responsibilities and benefits she is referring to. She says that her branch is not only informing permanent residents who want to become a citizen but that they are also communicating with existing citizens about what it means to be a citizen or to be a good citizen. After I listened to her answer I ask her if she could explain to me what she is thinking of when she says that the government communicates to citizens about what it means to be a citizen.

"Well just talking about, we've got information about, you know, Australia's democratic beliefs, rights and liberties. Uhm so, you know, as an Australian citizen these are the things we believe, this is what we are free to do, all Australians are equal, things like that. Australian Citizenship Day in particular is about being a good citizen which, you know, is being a good neighbor and various things like that so just trying to communicate the general ethos of what it means to be Australian." (Departmental officer 5, personal information, July 2014)

The part of her answer where she talks about being a good neighbor is interesting to me because it is the first time I hear her say something about citizenship outside of the definition that is provided in supportive documents like the Citizenship Act or the resource booklet. However, when I ask her what she means with being a good neighbor she explains that it is about asking people to translate democratic beliefs – like living peacefully, respecting individuals regardless of their background and compassion for need – into their daily lives. The three democratic beliefs she mentions are three out of a total of five democratic beliefs that are included in the resource booklet. What this means to me is that she frames citizenship in a way that is consistent with the citizenship view in the resource booklet.

When I ask another of my interviewees – a public servant who is responsible for a citizenship application processing centre in Victoria – what he thinks the underlying idea about citizenship in the Test is he says: *“From our point of view, the test is just one part of the process and we probably judge more by people’s attitude on it and throughout the processing and at a ceremony then how they are actually feeling what they are doing during the test. It’s difficult to isolate it from the whole process.”* (Departmental officer 6, personal information, July 2014). He then goes on by saying that he thinks that the emotional connection that people have with the country is an important factor in making the decision to apply for citizenship. This particular public servant is one of the few that I speak who is more open about the individual emotional aspect of citizenship. He recognizes, though, that besides the emotional aspect of becoming a citizen a lot of the meaning from citizenship for applicants is also derived from functional reasons.

“So there’s the emotional ties to the new country and with some people you can really see that, at a ceremony in particular. But you also, at the other end of the spectrum, you see people for whom it is purely a functional, it’s there for a reason and it’s to get one of those things that citizenship, so a passport or whatever. They may be less involved in the ceremony, they go and get their certificate and then they go home. They don’t hang around for the refreshments or whatever. That’s all fine. You know, they’re eligible to become citizens and there’s no drama with people wanting the benefits of citizenships because they are entitled to them.” (Departmental officer 6, personal information, July 2014)

I find the thought process of the interviewee very interesting because he almost says the opposite of what the Howard Government argued was one of the reasons to establish the Citizenship Test: people should be aware that they are signing up not only for the benefits but also for the responsibilities. But what the interviewee says here is that to him it is ‘no drama’ when people are less involved in the ceremony, mainly have functional reasons to want citizenship and hence are primarily interested in those kinds of benefits that come with citizenship. It is the opposite of the idea element of the Howard government’s frame which focusses on enhancing the value of citizenship. One of the experts – the migrant agent – who I interviewed in the orientation phase of my research talked about functional reasons to take up citizenship too. When I asked her about what she thinks the added value of citizenship by conferral is in relation to permanent residency she says it is the passport. She says that she always recommends her clients to get their citizenship as soon as they can to avoid that their eligibility is affected by changes in law. According to her, citizenship legislation can change in such a way that it can impose new procedural barriers to acquiring citizenship and hence could cause a lot of difficulties for people trying to get Australian citizenship and an Australian passport.

Another interesting insight from the manner in which the interviewee from the processing centre talks about citizenship, is that he links citizenship to individual people. Actors from the Howard Government mainly talked about citizenship in relation to the wider community. ‘One people, one destiny’, ‘integrating newcomers into the mainstream of Australian society’ and ‘reciprocal rights and obligations’ are all catchphrases used by actors in the agenda-setting and development phase and hint at a frame in which citizenship is viewed from a macro-perspective. In contrast, though, when I ask my interviewee – who works at the front-line of citizenship application processing – about special cases of citizenship applications, he adopts a micro or personalized perspective and tells me about a few individual cases his staff dealt with. He tells for example the story of a Hungarian weight lifter who wanted to compete internationally for Australia but was not eligible to become an Australian citizen. The Hungarian weight lifter was likely to win a medal and therefore Australia was happy to make an

exception for him and rather easily gave him Australian citizen. In fact, the Australian Citizenship Act amendment from 2009 provided for a special exemption for athletes that allows for a less strict and more lenient process of acquiring citizenship.

Asking my interviewee about examples of special cases is a method to get him to talk about citizenship through story telling. Stories and examples reveal much of how people frame specific concepts or phenomena. The public servant, by giving me these examples, relates in my perspective the application for citizenship very much to the personal situation of individuals. He frames citizenship in terms of the application procedure but that is not a surprise since his work is managing the citizenship application process. But he also frames citizenship in a way that it can mean different things for different people in different situations. This interviewee was the only public servant I spoke to, however, that worked on the frontline of citizenship application processing and I can therefore not consider his way of talking about citizenship as a shared way of framing the Australian Citizenship Test. The other public servants did share a similar way of framing in that they mostly related the Test to existing legislation, procedures or documents. Their frame is clearly different from the more persuasive and rhetoric frame that was used by the politicians in the agenda-setting and development frame. I suspect that the difference in framing has to do with the difference in roles between politicians and public servants; an interpretation that I will further explore in the conclusion.

Conclusion

When the idea to have a citizenship test emerged on the political agenda politicians consequently framed citizenship and the Australian Citizenship Test in terms that were consistent with the political interests of John Howard and his followers. The language in the agenda-setting and development phase was used to put forward a specific ideology and the policy seemed to have evolved as a set of responses to a spectrum of political interests in which persuasive use of story prevailed. From 1996 until 2007 John Howard was the Prime Minister of Australia and his ideas about multiculturalism, national identity and community harmony clearly left their mark on politics, policy and society. Multiculturalism to Howard was less about the rights of immigrants than it was about ensuring social cohesion and unity among a diverse population. And it is exactly that idea that permeates through the story that was created around the Australian Citizenship Test. By zooming in on what was being said and written by politicians in the early stages of the development of the Australian Citizenship Test I was able to disclose the different idea elements about citizenship, immigration and integration that taken together shaped an integrated story of the Australian Citizenship Test. The idea elements were all named and framed in a specific way and contributed to a shared frame that the actors used to look at the world. That story that introduced the Test to the political agenda was about how the people of Australia were bound by a common language, a common culture and a set of common values. Yes, Australia was built on the very concept of diversity and people from different backgrounds contributed to the great nation that Australia is today. But that diversity should be a unifying force that keeps the people of Australia together as one family. One people, one destiny. And newcomers should be helped to integrate in this family by ensuring that they have a functional level of English and a general knowledge of the Australian identity, values and customs. In the speech in which Andrew Robb announced that the government would look into the merits of a citizenship test for Australia, the focus was more on the promotion of this particular story or image of Australia than that it was on presenting a clear rationale for the need of a test.

Later when the policy initiative was further developed the policy story was supplemented with a couple of new idea elements. It was emphasized by many actors that were involved in developing the policy that citizenship should not be taken lightly or should not be 'scattered around like confetti'. Australian

citizenship should be valued and immigrants and prospective citizens should appreciate it as not merely a formality or a procedure through which they get a passport. It is something beautiful that can add value to your life and creates many opportunities. Migrants and prospective citizens should contribute to the society and greater interaction and involvement should help them successfully integrate. By taking up citizenship, by passing the Citizenship Test and by making the Pledge of Commitment new Australian citizens are committing to everything that Australia stands for. The Citizenship Test will help people to understand the commitment they are making when they are taking up citizenship and consequently understand the inherent privileges and responsibilities that come with it. The story elements together with the highlighted features in the agenda-setting phase represent a coherent framework through which the Howard government approached the policy issue. Although the different frame elements for outsiders who used a different frame to look at citizenship and testing of migrants might not be logically connected, to the Howard government actors this was the reality of the Australian Citizenship Test. The different signature elements mutually support and reinforce each other and are deployed in an integrated way. On page 54-55 I presented a matrix that contained all the signature elements of the ideas and thoughts. The elements are related and interwoven and together direct attention to how different idea elements were deployed in an integrated way.

When the Australian Citizenship Test was evaluated by the Labor government the new political leaders did not disassociate themselves from the assumptions and the views on which the Test initially was created. The Labor government stressed that they still supported the Test – just as they did during the time it was introduced and Labor was in the opposition – and they emphasized that it was only normal procedure to review the Test. Their focus seemed to be more on improving an already running program than on expressing political ideas about citizenship. The opponents of the Test did seem to have a different frame than the Howard and Labor government but the voices of their opposition were too scattered and their views on why the Test was not a good idea were too different amongst actors to actually be able to speak of a frame coalition. Additionally, in chapter 5 I showed that their opposition did not have much effect on how the story of the Australian Citizenship Test was created and hence no further attention will be paid to their specific frame. The framing of the Australian Citizenship Test by public servants did seem to be a shared social construction and interestingly it was very different from the rhetorical frame of the Howard government. Their frame did not necessarily affect the assumptions implicated in the Test but their framing indicated a separation between political talk about a policy issue and bureaucratic talk to deal with the policy in its implementation phase. In the conclusion I will further elaborate on this interpretation by linking it to framing theory.

7. CONCLUSION

What frames were used by actors in the policymaking process of the Australian Citizenship Test and how did those frames affect the Test?

Main research question

Theoretical Generalization

In chapter 5 I showed that the policy process of the Australian Citizenship Test did not follow a specific process logic. I used the stages of the rational policy cycle model to structure the analysis of the process and found that the step in which multiple policy alternatives or options could have been identified and tested – often referred to as the policy formation or analysis stage – was disregarded. Between the agenda-setting of the issue and the publishing of the discussion paper there was no clearly identifiable stage in which actors in the government did an ex-ante analysis to develop reliable and objective information about the policy problem, the causes of the problem, the goals, the means, the implementation, the outcomes and the outputs. The policy proposal set out in the discussion paper and explained in the second reading speech did not contain a clear problem definition and rational. Rather, the proposal seemed to have come out of nowhere and the Howard government seemed to have pushed the process for quick decision-making. While the government said that the discussion paper was the kick-off of a public consultation process, in the end the input of the public was only used to legitimize their policy initiative. The consultation process but also the discussions in Parliament showed that the Howard government was a dominant coalition in the policy process of the Australian Citizenship Test. The opposition had no influence. This conclusion led me to in chapter 6 have a closer look at what exactly was said by actors in the Howard coalition about citizenship and the Australian Citizenship Test. The absence of any clear rational-analytical steps hinted at other ‘forces’ at work in progressing the policy process. Although, the degree to which the actors from the Howard government had influence on the policy process and program could be partially explained by the bipartisan support that the Australian Citizenship Test received in Parliament; the way in which the Howard government perceived of citizenship (related-)issues and the Test implied that their discursive construction of the policy story might have had an influence too. Looking at the way the Howard government framed the policy made way for explaining the policy process by emphasizing how the process is decided by the social construction and meaning giving of the policy issues. It places analytical emphasis on how the language about the policy issues is in important ways political reality itself.

In chapter 6 I disclosed the different idea elements about citizenship, immigration and integration that taken together shaped an integrated story of the Australian Citizenship Test that was created by the Howard government. The idea elements were all named and framed in a specific way and contributed to a shared frame that the actors used to look at the world. To me as an outsider the ideas of the Howard government seemed not very well substantiated or consistent. The story that was created to justify the policy initiative left a lot of its elements vague, implicit and not clearly defined. A lot of the ‘big words’ that were used to create the story – like participation, commitment and integration – were not clearly explained. Even the roots and the consequences of specific idea elements were not made very clear and I had to often guess or read in between the lines to come up with an entry for the signature matrix (see p. 54-55). What I will stress again though, is that I am an outsider and not part of the frame coalition in which this story was initiated. Discursive construction of reality can take numerous forms and no form is necessarily privileged. This is because frames work in a self-sustaining

way. A frame limits the ability of a frame user to look at social reality in other ways than the frame allows. For people who see refugees as uninvited beneficiaries, for example, putting them in detention centres is not a problem. Similarly, although the story about the Australian Citizenship Test might not seem substantiated to an outsider like me, to the Howard government it made perfect sense because it portrayed their way of looking at the world.

The dominance of the Howard government in the policy setting of the Australian Citizenship Test points at how political interests, ideology and framing interact in jointly constructing a policy program and its underlying assumptions. Policy and politics are arenas where actors struggle and compete to put forward their ideologies and normative perceptions on the 'good society'. Where in normal everyday life ideologies do not play a very important part in the context of discursive constructions; in politics it is one of the most important fundamentals on which constructions of reality are built. It works two ways though; ideologies do not only shape the frames through which people perceive reality – frames can also promote or progress certain ideological principles. My finding that the story around the Australian Citizenship Test was consistent with the political interests of John Howard and his supporters fits with this latter idea. The politics of Howard on multiculturalism, national identity and community harmony shaped the boundaries of the frame through which the Australian Citizenship Test was approached. Multiculturalism to Howard was less about the rights of immigrants than it was about ensuring social cohesion and unity among a diverse population. And it is exactly that idea that lies at the heart of the story that was created to legitimize the Australian Citizenship Test. The actors involved in creating the policy story approached the citizenship test issues through the concepts, axioms, and principles that were available to them. And those available frame elements are for political actors largely influenced by the ideological presumptions of their political context. Frames are not easily separated from the interests that are expressed through them but that all the more implies how important it is to include social, political and cultural context in frame analysis. If one is not familiar with the background to which a particular frame originated than it is more difficult to separate interests or intent from the actual frame. The political actors that constructed the policy story were both influenced by the nationalistic ideology that characterized Howard's politics but their construction also furthered this view by shaping the policy story in line with their ideological position. Frames in a political context become a powerful 'tool' in articulating specific social and political interpretations that legitimize a desired course of action. The language of a policy story becomes the political reality itself; a reality in which ideas, events, actions and consequences emphasize and enhance the scripts of its discursive construction. Applicants for Australian citizenship have to proof via a test that they adhere to a common set of Australian values, that they have sufficient knowledge of Australia and its people and that they understand – in the broadest meaning of the word – what it means to become an Australian. That is what the Australian Citizenship Test is; it is a policy story that enhances the reality that was once constructed by a dominant political frame coalition.

Taking the idea of the political reality of a policy story a bit further makes one look at how certain interpretations can easily be represented as facts. In my introduction I started with two stories related to citizenship issues. Both stories were my representation of how I thought that the stories related to citizenship. The same goes for policies and politics; they are merely representations of how people advancing the political or policy stories perceive of the issues included in the story. Governments and politicians, however, often make believe that policy issues or elements are facts. My research contributes to an awareness that those political and policy facts are actually subjective. Policy

programs often become a free-floating reality on their own after they have been established; they are just there, people work with them, are affected by them and preferably they make society a little bit better or saver. What we often forget though, is that those programs – regardless of the degree to which they have been entrenched – hold presuppositions about the reality in which they operate. The presuppositions of a policy program – or what I often called the policy story – hold important information about how the policy issue, the target population, the goals and all the other elements of a program were socially constructed by its founders. Other countries that have citizenship tests run completely different programs. The naturalization exam in the Netherlands for example (which is called ‘inburgeringexamen’ in Dutch) has next to a Dutch language component questions about social interactions in Dutch society. In this latter component applicants have to answer questions about what the right course of action is in a particular social situation; what do you need to do when you are at a scene where emergency services are operating; or when you want to buy a house and need information; what do you do when your children are changing schools and you have to help them make a decision; or what do you do when someone is offending you or when you are having an argument with your neighbor? These questions are all created on the fundamentals of a particular way of looking at citizenship issues that was available and relevant to the actors in The Netherlands. That world view was probably different than the social constructions underlying the Australian Citizenship Test. So although Australia and The Netherlands both have a similar policy tool, the execution and content is different and that is mainly because they were both constructed through different frames that emphasized different objectives, actors and outcomes.

Rhetorical and Action Frame

The dual character of my main research question has enabled me to not only look at the dominance of frames that influenced the Australian Citizenship Test but to also look at how other less dominant frames were used to talk about the policy and that made that I came to an interesting finding: that public servants talked about the Australian Citizenship Test rather differently than the politicians in the agenda-setting and development phase did. Interestingly this difference is much in line with what Rein and Schön call the difference between the rhetoric frame and the action frame. Rhetorical frames underlie the persuasive use of story and argument in political debates. These frames serve the rhetorical functions of persuasion, justification and symbolic display. This is in line with what I found about how the Howard government framed citizenship; it was a lot about persuasion and justification of the Australian Citizenship Test. Action frames on the other hand inform policy practice. In this setting policy stories influence the shaping of laws, regulations, allocation of decisions, institutional mechanisms, sanctions, incentives, procedures, and patterns of behavior that determine what policies actually mean in action. The view of citizenship by the public servants have to carry directions for action in the execution of the policy and does not necessarily relate to ideological underpinnings of the policy concepts. Public servants seem to create for themselves a story too which helps them to explain certain policy instruments and justifies their work in that policy. While for political framing it is the opposite. Political framing of citizenship seemed to be much more about sending a particular message or creating a particular image that persuades rather than creates a view that aids implementation. It is a difference between operational and ideological views. Rein and Schön suggest that the action frame of public servants influences the shaping of regulations and procedures. I found, however, that the frame of the public servants that I interviewed did not necessarily have that influence on the Australian Citizenship Test. What my finding indicates is that their framing made their work easier by clearly delineating the program in terms of procedures and not by influencing the procedures. My theoretical

expectation is that a lot of this interpretation could have to do with the politics-administration dichotomy.

The divide (or non-divide) between administration and politics is in public administration much debated. In the traditional way of thinking about the divide, public servants need to be neutral and rational and need to focus on efficiency and details. This view seems to be consistent with that most of the public servants that I spoke to did not talk about the Australian Citizenship Test in an emotional, persuasive way or had a lot of power in deciding about it. This could be interpreted as that the topic was too political for them. When I asked one of my interviewees about the influence that the Howard government had on the policy program I noticed that he struggled with answering this question. My interpretation of this was that he mainly found it difficult because he wanted to stay impartial. And this impartiality could play a role in not talking or not wanting to talk about a policy program in a more ideological or persuasive way. It could be that the public servants that I spoke to refrained themselves from talking 'politically' about the Australian Citizenship Test because they might have been aware of how controversial and politically sensitive the topic is. Not everyone agreed with having a citizenship test in Australia and hence the public servants might have not wanted to touch upon that debate by merely framing the policy program in terms that are relevant for their day to day work. However controversial or politically sensitive the topic might have been, my finding does indicate that there is a difference between framing of issues between politicians and public servants. The one interviewee who I spoke to who worked at the citizenship application processing centre showed another divergence from both the rhetorical frame and the action frame. He framed citizenship in relation to individual and personal experiences of clients. My interpretation here is that his day to day contact with clients probably contributes to this way of framing the policy situations. This finding holds interesting ideas for further research on how framing shapes actions and processes in the street-level bureaucracy.

Although my analysis points at the importance of recognizing the degree to which language structures our understanding of policy, it is not the sole aspect in explaining how a specific program is constructed. The more 'rational' analysis of the policy process revealed that the Howard government was able to push relatively quickly for a policy decision. A large part of this effectiveness came from the bipartisan support that the proposal had in Parliament. So even though politics is about the social meaning of problems and policies, it is also still about legislative power, controlling bureaucracies, coordinating action and sometimes even about coercion or intimidation. The value of my contribution is, though, that I have showed the power of the communicative side of politics and policy by portraying the policy story of the Australian Citizenship Test in its full breadth and depth. The exposed and unpolished story I constructed in chapter 6 gave in depth knowledge of an interwoven set of ideas, beliefs and principles that were hidden in the policy process. The value of such an analysis lies in exactly the representation itself; in how well it succeeds in presenting the discursive construction of reality. Frame analysis in policy research is often focussed on how particular elements of a policy are socially constructed, especially social problems and target populations get overriding attention in the literature. My analysis however showed that, although there was no clear problem definition and no overtly construction of a specific target population, the social construction still had a lot of impact. Even when the presuppositions underlying a policy program are vague, do not contain clear definitions of constructs and are not well substantiated, language can still have in important ways a large impact on how the reality of a policy program is constructed.

Reflection on the Research Project

As I have said before, this research project was one big learning journey in which I got very familiar with the challenges of doing interpretive research and frame analysis. Looking back and with the learning experience I have gone through there are a few things that I would have done differently. The frame analysis technique was very new to me and I did not always know how to apply it in my data generation and analysis process. In my interviews for example I could have had a better frame analysis mindset. Frame analysts have to immerse themselves in the beliefs, ideas, values, feelings, and meanings of the participants and they have to constantly ask themselves how participants are looking at social reality through their available frames. You have to try to get inside the head of the particular interviewee in an effort to figure out the thinking behind the actions at issue. In my data generating, however, I put the weight more on the policy analysis and it was only later when I started analyzing the transcripts and the documents that I started paying more attention to the frames. Another challenge in my research was that I often struggled with what to include and what not. This goes for both the data itself as for constructing a story that is readable for my readers. I often included quotes from texts or interviews which I thought were relevant, but in the first version of this report that resulted in too much data and too less of an actual story. Similarly, there is so much to tell about the policy process of the Australian Citizenship Test that I sometimes struggled with what to include and what not.

One of the reasons why I found it difficult to do a frame analysis is because it is a research technique that is pragmatically not very advanced. Theoretically it is rather strong but there are hardly any handbooks or guidelines on how to do frame research in practice. As I showed in chapter 3, the methods section, I did find a way to operationalize frames and my theoretical study of frame analysis also contributed to some guidelines. A particularly interesting element of a frame is what Johnston (1995) called the pragmatic intent of a frame. He asserts that a speaker or writer always tries to accomplish something with his or her words and taking that into account tells you something about the frame. I have not paid attention to this element in my actual frame analysis of the conclusion but I think that in a policy setting it is important to take the pragmatic intent into account. The story of the Australian Citizenship Test that was told in the beginning can for example be linked to the intention to push the policy proposal rather quickly for decision making. This intent puts emphasis on how rhetoric, persuasion and power played important roles in shaping the story and hence were elements feeding into the frame. Later on in the process, however, the Test was evaluated and there was not much attention paid to creating a persuasive policy story. This could be explained because of a different pragmatic intent. In this stage the intention of the government with the program was to evaluate it, to look at an already running program and to try and improve it where possible. These two examples show that the pragmatic intent that is linked to a message or a frame is important to take into consideration. Other elements of frames that proved to be useful for my analysis were the role of a frame user – which I elaborated on in the section about rhetoric and action frame. Additionally, the role that context plays in framing has been highlighted throughout my whole discussion because of my finding that the political ideology of John Howard and his followers played an important role in shaping the policy. Finally, I wish to pay attention to the most important part of frame analysis in my research; that communication and social interaction holds a lot of taken for granted knowledge. The key to do frame analysis is constantly asking “okay, he or she is saying x and y, but what is he or she actually saying with that?”. If someone says that they like apples what does that actually mean in that context?

Do they want an apple? Is the liking related to apples as food or is it related to their aesthetics? Is apples maybe the name of a cat? The role of the frame researcher is to find an answer to these questions to create the starting point of uncovering a frame.

An important consideration in interpretive research in general is the role of the researcher herself. No one is exempt from framing and the story in this paper is therefore a representation of how I framed my research reality. The advantage I have, though, as being a frame-researcher is that I am aware of my own assumptions and beliefs. I tried throughout the research project to portray as many sides of the story that I could. Still, the account I created is shaped and reshaped in ways that I thought were right for the research project and the research conclusions. My conclusion that the Howard government had a large influence on the presuppositions of the Test and that their social constructions of the policy issues were in line with the political ideology, influenced how I presented the story. The interpretations of my data had to logically contribute to the overall conclusions and hence I presented my empirical data in a way that was consistent with my academic view on it. I tried throughout the research project to let my own beliefs not stand in the way of doing the analysis. I was most of the time able to achieve this by thinking that no frame is right or wrong. I think in frame analysis it is important to hold on to that thought because often people respond or act in ways that they know and are familiar with without know other ways to approach social situations. That does not say however that I do not have personal beliefs and ideas about what is right and what is wrong. Sometimes it was difficult for me to analyze views that are very far from my own beliefs. For example when Costello said that *"People come to Australia and become Australian citizens because they want to embrace the things this country stands for. We should be proud that people from all over the world come here looking for Australian values – our values – and want to embrace them."* I couldn't stop thinking but that it was a hoax what he said. I feel that people can have very different reasons for moving to a country and that it is not necessarily the case that they want to move to a country to embrace the values of that country. But that is of course judged from my frame and I was able to accept that his frame was different. And that is the basis of frame research; social reality is perceived through as many different frames as there a different people.

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APPENDIX 1: POLITICAL SYSTEM IN AUSTRALIA

Australia is a constitutional monarchy with a federal division of powers. Queen Elizabeth II is the current sovereign of Australia. The political system in Australia is formed according to the Westminster system of parliamentary government but over the years has shaped its own distinctive Australian elements. The queen is represented by the governor-general and in each of the states by a governor. The Parliament of Australia is one of the most important political institutes in Australia. The Parliament is also referred to as the Commonwealth Parliament or the Federal Parliament. The Parliament is the legislative branch of Australian government and consists of three elements: the Queen, the Senate (upper house) and the House of Representatives (lower house). The two houses are elected and consist of respectively 76 members and 150 members. The number of members is not fixed. The seat of the government in Australia is in the country's capital: Canberra. The other two branches – next to the legislative branch – are the executive branch formed by the Federal Executive Council and the judiciary branch which constitutes the High Court of Australia and other federal courts. The power of the Federal Executive Council is mainly used to enact the decisions of the Cabinet which has no de jure authority. The Cabinet of Australia is the council of senior ministers responsible to the Parliament. The Prime Minister of Australia is the highest minister, leader of the Cabinet and head of government. The office of Prime Minister is the most powerful political office in Australia. The Prime Minister is always the leader of the political party that has majority support in the House of Representatives. Australia has two major political parties that usually form government: the Australian Labor Party and the Coalition which is a formal alliance between the Liberal Party and the National Party. Australia has compulsory voting for all citizens 18 years and over and has federal elections for both chambers normally every three year. Senators in the upper house have overlapping six-year terms except for those from the territories and half of the senators from the states.

The six states of Australia are Western Australia (WA), South Australia (SA), Victoria (VIC), New South Wales (NSW), Tasmania (TAS) and Queensland (QLD). The two territories are the Northern Territory (NT) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) – also called the mainland territories. Additionally there are six island territories who are directly administered by the federal government – except for Norfolk Island. All states have their own and the mainland territories have their own parliaments and administer themselves. The head of government in each state is the Premier and in the territories the Chief Minister. The states are sovereign entities but are subjected to certain influence of the federal government as defined by the constitution. Certain key matters like education, health, property rights and criminal law are primarily state matters, while immigration, foreign affairs, national security and communications are mainly Commonwealth matters.

APPENDIX 2: TIME LINE

November 2004	Federal elections with as result the re-election of The Coalition and Prime Minister John Howard
27 April 2006	first formal announcement of Citizenship Test by Andrew Robb MP and Citizenship Parliamentary Secretary
17 September 2006	Discussion Paper asking for submissions responding to the paper
17 November 2006	Closing of consultation period
30 January 2007	The Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs changed its name into the Department of Immigration and Citizenship
30 May 2007	<i>Australian Citizenship Amendment (Citizenship Testing) Bill 2007</i> introduced to the House of Representatives
21 June + 8 August 2007	Second reading debate in the House of Representatives
13 August 2007	Second reading debate in the Senate
17 September 2007	Royal assent and launch of the <i>Citizenship Act 2007</i> (including the <i>Citizenship Testing Amendment</i>)
1 October 2007	First Citizenship Tests
24 November 2007	Federal elections with as result the election of the Labor Party
3 December 2007	Inauguration of Labor Prime Minister Kevin Rudd
January 2008	Rudd government announces it will review the Test
28 April 2008	The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship announces the appointment of an independent committee to conduct a review
5 August 2008	Release of the report by the Australian Citizenship Test Review Committee: ' <i>Moving forward... Improving Pathways of Citizenship</i> '.
November 2008	Government response to the report by the Australian Citizenship Test Review Committee
14 + 15 September 2009	Second reading debate in the Senate
16 + 17 September 2009	Second reading debate in the House of Representatives
17 September 2009	Publication of the revised citizenship test study book <i>Australian Citizenship: Our Common Bond</i>
19 October 2009	Introduction of a revised citizenship test
18 September 2013	The Department of Immigration and Citizenship changed its name into the Department of Immigration and Border Protection
2014	65 th anniversary of citizenship

APPENDIX 3: THE AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP TEST EXPLAINED

	Old version	New version
Title of resource booklet	Becoming an Australian Citizen. Citizenship, Your Commitment to Australia	Australian Citizenship: Our Common Bond
Content resource booklet	All information is testable	Testable and non-testable section and focus on the Pledge
Summary of topics covered in testable section	All of the topics in the new version + the land & the environment, sports, Nobel laureates, economy, settlement history, currency, national holidays, the Anzac legend****	Indigenous Australia, European settlement, federation states & territories, traditions & symbols, national anthem, democratic beliefs, freedoms, equality, responsibilities & privileges, government & the law
Different types of tests	Assisted test*; computer based standard test	Assisted test*; course based test**; computer based standard test
Pass mark***	60 %, or 12 out of 20, plus all three mandatory questions correct	75 %, or 15 out of 20
Language of the test	English	English (basic)
Process	Sitting the test and citizenship application in separate appointments	Sitting the test and citizenship application in one appointment

* For those people who require assistance because of low English literacy skills, low levels of computer skills or people with a disability an officer can help by reading the questions and possible answers aloud.

** The course based test is a course of several weeks in which applicants will cover all the information in the testable section with the help of a teacher

*** There is no limit to the number of times a person can sit the test – both in the old and in the new version

**** A lot of the information that was taken out of the Test in the new version was still incorporated in the new resource booklet in the non-testable section. All of the mentioned topics in the old resource booklet were still in the new booklet in the non-testable section

APPENDIX 4: EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

Example questions from 'old' resource booklet: Citizenship, Your Commitment to Australia	Example questions from 'new' resource booklet: Australian Citizenship: Our Common Bond
<p>1. In what year did Federation take place?</p> <p>2. What date is Australia Day?</p> <p>3. Who was the first Prime Minister of Australia?</p> <p>4. What is the first line of Australia's national anthem?</p> <p>5. What is the floral emblem of Australia?</p> <p>6. What is the population of Australia?</p> <p>7. In what city is the Parliament House of the Commonwealth Parliament located?</p> <p>8. Who is the Queen's representative in Australia?</p> <p>9. How are Members of parliament chosen?</p> <p>10. Who do members of parliament represent?</p> <p>11. After a federal election, who forms the new government?</p> <p>12. What are the colours on the Australian flag?</p> <p>13. Who is the head of the Australian Government?</p> <p>14. What are the three levels of government in Australia?</p> <p>15. In what year did the European settlement of Australia start?</p> <p>16. Serving on a jury if required is a responsibility of Australian citizenship: true or false?</p> <p>17. In Australia, everyone is free to practise the religion of their choice, or practise no religion: true or false?</p> <p>18. To be elected to the Commonwealth Parliament you must be an Australian citizen: true or false?</p> <p>19. As an Australian citizen, I have the right to register my baby born overseas as an Australian citizen: true or false?</p> <p>20. Australian citizens aged 18 years or over are required to enrol on the electoral register: true or false?</p>	<p>1. <i>What do we remember on Anzac Day?</i></p> <p>a) The landing of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps at Gallipoli, Turkey</p> <p>b) The arrival of the first free settlers from Great Britain</p> <p>c) The landing of the Fir Fleet at Sydney Cove</p> <p>2. <i>What are the colours of the Australian Aboriginal Flag?</i></p> <p>a) Black, red and yellow</p> <p>b) Green, white and black</p> <p>c) Blue, white and green</p> <p>3. <i>Which of these statements about Australia's system of government is correct?</i></p> <p>a) The Queen of Australia chooses people to form the Australian Parliament</p> <p>b) The government is elected by the people</p> <p>c) The Prime Minister chooses our Members of Parliament</p> <p>4. <i>Which of these is a responsibility of Australian citizens aged 18 years or over?</i></p> <p>a) To do local community service</p> <p>b) To carry a passport at all times</p> <p>c) To serve on a jury if called to do so</p> <p>5. <i>Which of these is an example of freedom of speech?</i></p> <p>a) People can peacefully protest against government decisions</p> <p>b) Men and women are treated equally in a court of law</p> <p>c) Australians are free to not follow a religion</p> <p>6. <i>Which of these statements about voting in Australian elections is correct?</i></p> <p>a) People are free and safe to vote for any candidate</p> <p>b) Voting is by a show of hands</p> <p>c) People must write their name on their vote</p> <p>7. <i>What happened in Australia on 1 January 1901?</i></p> <p>a) The Australian Constitution was changed by a referendum</p> <p>b) The Australian Constitution came into effect</p> <p>c) The Australian and New Zealand Army Corps was formed</p> <p>8. <i>Which arm of government has the power to interpret and apply laws?</i></p> <p>a) Legislative</p> <p>b) Executive</p> <p>c) Judicial</p> <p>9. <i>Which of these statements about state governments is correct?</i></p> <p>a) All states have the same constitution</p> <p>b) Each state has its own constitution</p> <p>c) The states have no constitution</p>
<p><i>Answers not provided</i></p>	<p><i>Answers: 1a, 2a, 3b, 4c, 5a, 6a, 7b, 8c, 9b</i></p>