NATO and Russia:
A discourse analysis of NATO´s enlargement policy and its effect

Anna Pettersen Hjelmevoll

International Relations

The Department of International Environment and Development Studies, Noragric, is the international gateway for the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU). Established in 1986, Noragric's contribution to international development lies in the interface between research, education (Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes) and assignments.

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Declaration

I, Anna Pettersen Hjelmevoll, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature…………………………..

Date…………………………………

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Abstract

In 1997 NATO formally announced that they were going to proceed with Article X in the North Atlantic Treaty. This gave NATO the opportunity to enlarge their membership based on consensus in the alliance. Even though the relationship between NATO and Russia has seen its ups and downs over the years, NATO chose to continue with its intended policy with promises of a more stable continent. The promises from NATO did not convince Russia and they insist that NATO´s enlargement policy is actually destabilizing the continent. How, then, can this type of policy shape the relationship between two major players on the European arena and possibly the security environment? This thesis sets out to analyze NATO and Russia´s discourse on the enlargement policy in 2008, 2014, and 2017 through discourse analysis. Changes in the discourses and the meaning attributed to the language chosen to describe the policy shows how the relationship between the two actors have changed over the three periods. Through the representations of the discourses it becomes clear that the two actors are on opposite sides, and a reconciliation is not plausible. NATO is pushing for the benefits of the policy for everyone in Europe, while Russia has deep concerns that the policy is decreasing their security and interests. The relationship between NATO and Russia has suffered from the enlargement policy and the European security environment can become destabilized as well.

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1. Introduction

The relationship between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Russian Federation (Russia) have raised issues on the European continent since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and recent events show no improvement between the two actors. There has always seemed to be an element of uncertainty between the two. A relationship between two major players on the power arena has the potential to destabilize security; the relationship between NATO and Russia has this potential on the European continent. There have been ups and downs in the relationship between the two actors, and recently the relationship has threatened the security environment on the continent. In 1997, NATO announced that they were going to implement the enlargement policy and open the alliance for possible new members (Smith, 2010), this policy has made the uncertainty between the two actors greater. Several former Soviet Union republics have stated that they are interested in the opportunity to join the Alliance for several reasons and this can be problematic for the relationship between NATO and Russia. On one side, Russia has continuously persisted that the enlargement policy is taking away from its interests and creating an insecurity for them. On the other side, NATO advocates for the policy and its benefits. So how can this policy impact the security environment in Europe?

There have been many studies done on NATO´s enlargement policy and the relationship between NATO and Russia, and this thesis intends to study how NATO´s enlargement policy has shaped the relationship between the two actors and what implications this might have on the security environment in Europe. It will look at how the language each actor uses to describe the policy is and how they ascribe meaning to the description. The enlargement policy has been partly at fault for the divide between NATO and Russia in the past with the Russo-Georgian War in 2008 and the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, as some examples. This thesis will use the theoretical framework of poststructuralism and the methodological framework of discourse analysis to find the representations used by each actor to describe the enlargement policy through three periods; 2008, 2014, and 2017. Through discourse analysis it will be possible to analyze and study the changes in representations and how these representations impact Russia´s foreign policy and NATO´s choices. Or how representations can be a result of political choices that have already been made. The language

that each actor use to ascribe meaning to the policy will help guide the analysis to what discourses each actor ascribe to the enlargement policy. This analysis will study the changes in the representations and how this impacts foreign policy. Within poststructuralism, as opposed to other mainstream theoretical frameworks, one usually does not look at cause-effect relationships, but for this analysis I will be looking at the representation´s effect on foreign policy as part of discourse analysis. The language that each actor use to describe the enlargement policy in connection with each other will also illuminate the identity of the Self and the Other that each of them presents. The identity of the Self and Other will help illuminate the relationship between the two actors and how the enlargement policy might shape NATO and Russia´s relationship.

As the enlargement policy is aimed at including potential members from Europe, former Soviet Union republics are prime targets for the policy. As such this thesis also intends to study how one country´s possible accession can change the relationship between NATO and Russia. It will analyze NATO and Russia´s discourse on Georgian accession to the alliance in connection with the discourse on the enlargement policy. The conflict between NATO and Russia concerning Georgia´s association with NATO and its possible accession to the Alliance will be the case study in this thesis. This type of discourse will lead to more understanding of how one single country´s possible accession can shape the relationship between the two actors as opposed to the policy itself; the policy in action if you will.

1.1 Research question

In this section the research questions guiding the analysis will be presented followed by a description of how the research questions will be treated within the framework of discourse analysis. The research questions that are going to guide this thesis are:

- How has the NATO Enlargement policy shaped the relationship between Russia and NATO, and the security environment in Europe?

- How has possible accession of Georgia to NATO shaped the relationship between NATO and Russia and how will this affect the security environment in Europe?
- How has NATO legitimized their enlargement policy as a stabilizing agent in Europe?
- How has Russia delegitimized NATO´s enlargement policy as destabilizing the security environment in Europe?

As this thesis is considering how NATO´s enlargement policy has shaped and can shape the relationship between NATO and Russia, the first question will be answered through mapping the representations of the discourse on the enlargement policy from both NATO and Russia, as well as documenting the dominant representations. Representations are practices that are "socially reproduced […] literally re-produced" (Neumann, 2008: 61) through language to create meaning to objects, in this case NATO´s enlargement policy. For this thesis, the practices will be words and expressions used by NATO and Russia to give meaning to their discourse on NATO´s enlargement policy. Mapping and documenting the dominating representations over three different periods will illuminate the difference between the representations in times with high tension and times with low tension. Even though there are only three periods chosen for this thesis, these will reveal any changes in the representations nonetheless. Changes in tendencies of the representations will illuminate how the enlargement policy can shape each actors' representations, their foreign policy, and how they identify the Self and Other. This will reveal partly how the policy have affected the representations and thereby the relationship between the two actors. How the two actors represent their discourses over time, will give us insight to how the relationship might look in the future.

As NATO´s enlargement policy is a policy concerning new members being invited into the Alliance, one important aspect is to look at specific countries´ possible accession. This will illuminate how one country´s possible accession might shape the relationship between NATO and Russia, and how the application of the policy shapes the relationship as opposed to the policy in theory. The second research question will guide this process. By mapping the representations found to describe each actors discourse on NATO´s enlargement policy one can assume these representations will be relevant when looking at one country´s

possible accession to the Alliance. The discourse on Georgian membership has been chosen because it has been the root of issues between NATO and Russia in the past. Mapping the representations on the discourse of NATO´s enlargement policy while keeping in mind the Georgian case will help answer this research question. Analyzing how the discourses change when looking at one specific country can show how an accession could shape the relationship between NATO and Russia, instead of just looking at how the policy itself affects it.

The last two research questions will help guide the mapping process. By looking at what words and expressions NATO and Russia are using to delegitimize or legitimize NATO´s enlargement policy one can see what meaning each actor ascribe to the language they use when talking about the policy. By answering these questions, the representations NATO and Russia use to present their discourse will become apparent. It will also lead to more understanding to what kind of meaning each actor gives the language they choose to use when talking about the enlargement policy. This will lead to a better understanding of the discourse each actor ascribes to the policy. These types of words and expressions will also illuminate how NATO and Russia identifies the Self and the Other.

1.2 Outline of the thesis

This thesis is divided into four chapters excluding the introduction. **Chapter 2** starts with briefly presenting NATO´s history and then moving into a presentation of the case study: why Georgia´s accession is a good case for this thesis, the reasons for Georgia´s desire to join the Alliance, and how this has or might shape the relationship between NATO and Russia. The chapter ends with a presentation of the historical elements of the relationship between the two actors and how this has changed over time, and it presents some historical reasons for the continual mistrust and unstable relationship between the two. In **Chapter 3** the theoretical and methodological framework is presented. The theoretical perspective that is discussed is poststructuralism, and the chapter shows how his theoretical framework will be suitable for this thesis. The methodological framework that is presented is discourse analysis because this will help the analysis discover how the different actors put meaning to the words they choose to use to describe NATO´s enlargement policy. Chapter 3 also presents the methodological

choices that were made. **Chapter 4** starts with a discussion of the representations found in NATO and Russia´s data, and then moves into a discussion of these. The chapter ends with a discussion of NATO and Russia´s discourse on the enlargement policy with Georgia as an example of a country that wants to join the Alliance. **Chapter 5** is the concluding chapter and it will briefly discuss the main findings of the analysis and discussion, and then move into a discussion of its relevance. It will conclude with a discussion on possible repercussions in the future as a result of NATO´s enlargement policy.

2. Background chapter

There has been a lot of research done on the state of the relationship between NATO and Russia over the years, and this chapter will use former research to present the relationship between the two. Since the Soviet Union was dissolved in 1991 the relationship between Russia and NATO have seen both ups and downs. At times, there have been attempts at cooperation and constructive discussion on issues, and at times such efforts have been completely mute. Russia views NATO as an adversary instead of as a partner, while NATO doesn't give Russia as much leeway to sway important decisions as Russia would like. For Russia, NATO´s enlargement policy is an especially sore subject. This chapter consider some of the underlying issues in the relationship between NATO and Russia: The efforts made to better the relationship between the two and the setting of the stage for the pivotal events of 2008 and 2014, while taking into account Georgia´s relationship with NATO, as well as Russia. It will start with a brief overview of NATO´s history and then move directly into a discussion of Georgia´s relationship with NATO and Russia, as this will provide important context for the rest of the discussion. The chapter will end with a discussion of NATO and Russia´s cooperation efforts and issues surrounding their relationship. This chapter will provide important context for the rest of the thesis and provide the reader with a historical overview of this issue.

Brief NATO history

NATO was created as a collective security military alliance for states that wanted to protect themselves against the Soviet Union. "…the primary aim of the Treaty was to create a pact of mutual assistance to counter the risk that the Soviet Union would seek to extend its control of Eastern Europe to other parts of the continent" (NATO, 2017). Or as Lord Ismay pointedly described it: "keep the Americans in, the Russians out, and the Germans down" (Karns, Mingst & Stiles, 2015: 170). After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 many, especially realist scholars, believed that the alliance would dissolve because the mission of the Alliance had disappeared. NATO was faced with a choice, either letting the Alliance become obsolete or change its mission. To endure the Alliance had to reinvent its purpose (Kanet, 2010). NATO did survive the dissolution of the Soviet Union and expanded its mission to

include peace missions and crisis management alongside its original focus of collective security. NATO remained a military alliance but it also wanted to instill values of democracy into countries that had formerly been under authoritarian rule and thereby create more stability on the European continent. Part of the mission of the alliance became to "extend the zone of peace and stability eastward" (Karns, Mingst & Stiles, 2015: 172). This need to reinvent the core mission of the alliance partly led to the Enlargement Policy of NATO, and Article X of the North Atlantic Treaty. Article X gave NATO a way to include more countries as members of the alliance. The enlargement policy was envisioned as strengthening both the alliance itself, but also as a measure to secure a more stable European continent. Article X in the treaty is commonly known as the open-door policy and this is the formal basis for the possibility of the alliance inviting new countries to become members (NATO, 1949). "The decision to formally proceed with eastward enlargement was made at the NATO Madrid Summit in July 1997" (Smith, 2010: 100). This has caused problems between NATO and its former adversary Russia, because Russia has expressed skepticism of NATO´s continued justification to exist and why they are expanding their membership ever closer to Russia´s border. There are other issues that have created divides between the two actors as well, but this thesis will focus on one of the main issues, NATO´s enlargement policy. "… the overall NATO-Russia relationship has remained constantly prone to disruption as a result of disputes or disagreements over long-term unresolved ´big picture´ issues" (Smith, 2010: 113). Russia sees the policy as unnecessary but have especially expressed opposition to NATO offering membership to countries that have borders with them. Russian membership in the Alliance is unrealistic which makes Russia worried about having a security organization, or military bloc, on their borders that they themselves are not a member of.

New NATO members will enjoy the same benefits that the current members have, including protection under Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty. Article V is the collective defense article of the treaty, which states that "The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all" (NATO, 1949). This article is the core principal of the alliance. The possibility of NATO membership is believed to induce democratic change in former non-democratic countries, and specifically create "greater civilian control over the military, greater parliamentary oversight, and the creation of transparent political processes" (Gebhard, 1997: 47). Countries that wish

to become members of the Alliance will have to show NATO that they have implemented the desired changes and that they adhere to NATO´s values. According to Rachwald (2011), new NATO members will not only enjoy a democratic reform but also more stability and prosperity as a result of membership. NATO believes that their enlargement policy will create stability for all actors on the European continent, not just the countries that eventually does become members (Cascone, 2010: 175). NATO is using their enlargement policy to create a more stable and secure Europe, but the closer NATO gets to the Russian border the more nervous Russia becomes. One country that has expressed their desire to join the Alliance is Georgia, and this has been partly the reason for some of the problems between NATO and Russia.

Georgia

In 2002 at the NATO Summit in Prague, the Shevardnadze government of Georgia declared their goal of NATO membership (Kriz & Shevchuk, 2011). Georgia has on multiple occasions stated its desire to become a part of Europe and its institutions, including NATO (Kriz &Shevchuk, 2009), but this was the official declaration from the Georgian President that Georgia would pursue accession to the Alliance. There are several reasons why Georgia wishes to become a member of NATO and one major reason is that being a member in the Alliance would bring security guarantees for Georgia against possible future aggression, from for example Russia (Kriz & Shevchuk, 2009). Another reason is that Georgia wants to become a part of Europe, and to be included in European and Euro-Atlantic structures. They want to become part of the European Union to promote development and modernizing in the country, and NATO to promote security guarantees against possible future aggression from Russia. According to German (2015) Georgia identifies themselves as a European country that was cut off from Europe when the Soviet Union existed. "The national strategic narrative identifies Georgia as a ´European´ state, an ancient part of Western civilization that was separated (against its will) from its natural path by ´historical cataclysms´" (German, 2015: 602). After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Georgia wanted to claim their rightful place in Europe once again.

Georgia is also seeking integration in Euro-Atlantic structures to get away from Russia´s sphere of influence, it doesn't want Russia to be able to control their decisions and how they

rule their country. "…NATO membership is the best guarantee of unity, territorial and democratic development of Georgia" (Kriz & Shevchuk, 2009: 105). This statement of unity leads to a problem in the case of Georgia, as it is struggling with the integration of the two regions South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The majority of the people living in these regions do not want to be a part of Georgia. "While South Ossetia wants to be united with North Ossetia and become part of Russia, Abkhazia wants to become an independent country within the CIS" (Kriz & Shevchuk, 2011: 95). Even though the two regions have different outcomes in mind, the goal for both is to be independent from Georgia.

The situation with the two regions South Ossetia and Abkhazia came to a breaking point in August 2008 when Russia invaded Georgia with military force in response to Georgia´s ´ethnic cleansing´ in South Ossetia (Smith, 2010). Georgian forces attacked Russian peacekeeping forces in the region, which eventually led to the Russo-Georgian War. South Ossetia and Abkhazia are two regions in northern Georgia that seeks independence from Georgia for various reasons, and in 2008 the conflict became too serious and ended up in a war. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Georgia freed themselves and became an independent state, but the regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia did not want to be a part of Georgia. Abkhazia and South Ossetia wanted to control their own territory, have their own written language and viewed themselves as ethnically different from Georgia.

Russia repeatedly compared Georgia's situation to the one in Kosovo, where Kosovo declared independence from Serbia. Russia believed that on this premise the international community should recognize the two regions as independent from Georgia, as it recognized Kosovo (Smith, 2010). NATO and the international community did not respond as Russia had hoped, because they viewed the case of Kosovo as unique. Russia is contradicting themselves because they themselves did not recognize Kosovo´s independence in 2008, but they demand that the Western countries recognize South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent. It seems as though both sides are only recognizing states independence when it benefits them. The situation took a turn for the worse when Georgia took military action against South Ossetia. Many agree that "…the initial aggression came from Tbilisi, not Moscow" (Tsygankov & Tarver-Wahlquist, 2009), but the reality is that this event created a divide between NATO and Russia regardless of who was the original aggressor. "The Russian military intervention in

Georgia in August 2008 can thus be seen at least partly as a dramatic warning to NATO´s members against opening the way to Georgian accession" (Smith, 2010: 117).

Despite Georgia declaring their goal of becoming a member of NATO already in 2002 they have still not received a Membership Action Plan (MAP) (Mayer, 2017). A MAP can be described as "…a process that could provide the grounds for a safe assessment of aspirant countries and, once invited, for their seamless integration" (Cascone, 2010: 177). MAP is one of the last steps in the process of becoming a member of NATO, but it does not guarantee membership in the Alliance (Cascone, 2010). There are several factors that can explain why Georgia have not received a MAP but I believe that the relationship between NATO and Russia has played a role. NATO has expressed that Georgia will become a member of the Alliance and that "…the accession of Georgia to NATO is not a matter of near future" (Kriz & Shevchuk, 2009: 107). Russia on the other hand has "…issued a warning for Georgia not to seek NATO membership or Russian-Georgian relations could be destabilized again" (Kriz & Shevchuk, 2009: 103). This has created a serious divide in the relationship between NATO and Russia due to conflicting interests. At the NATO Summit in Bucharest in 2008 the key summit communique included wording that stated: "We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO" (Smith, 2010: 117). As mentioned, even though NATO has stated that Georgia will become a member, the process has been indefinitely delayed. Allied countries such as France and Germany has shown opposition to Georgia´s accession into the Alliance claiming that the country does not meet the criteria and in fear of aggravating relations with Russia even further (Mayer, 2017; Kanet, 2010). For a country to become a member of NATO there must be consensus on the issue and as long as some of the members are opposed to the accession of Georgia, the MAP will be delayed indefinitely.

Georgia is a good example to consider when looking at the relationship between NATO and Russia, as the West has taken a special interest in Georgia, to Russia´s dismay. There are several reasons why the Western countries have particular interest in Georgia as opposed to some of the other former Soviet republics. "Georgia´s strategic location between oil-rich Azerbaijan and the Black Sea; its proximity to Iraq, and the rest of the Middle East; and its contentious relationship with Russia" (Mitchell, 2006: 670). These may be some of the reasons why the West has taken such an interest in Georgia, but it is also important to note that Georgia is one of the countries with the most people in government with education and

training from Western countries (Mitchell, 2006; German, 2015). One of the most plausible reasons is the geopolitical factors because Georgia is located optimally in terms of strategy for both the West and Russia. Another reason why it is interesting to look at Georgia in terms of the relationship between NATO and Russia is that the country was involved in an event that did delay the cooperation efforts that had been ongoing for a while between the two actors.

NATO-Russia cooperation

As Russia is a major actor in the European security arena, NATO does not disregard them. "…developing and maintaining at least a tolerably functioning relationship with Russia has come to be seen as an important element underpinning NATO´s claims to legitimacy as a core component of the post-Cold War European security architecture" (Smith, 2010: 99). That is easier said than done as all previous efforts that have been made to improve the relationship have eventually failed. There have been efforts to better diplomatic ties and cooperation between the two actors in many areas but the relationship is suffering from perpetual "strategic mutual mistrust" (Frye, 2000: 92). These efforts include the NATO-Russia Council, the NATO-Russia Founding Act, and the Partnership for Peace (Rachwald, 2011). Although these initiatives did improve the relationship between NATO and Russia at the time, they all failed to create a lasting constructive relationship between the two.

Russia joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council as early as 1991, in 1994 they joined the Partnership for Peace and in 2002 the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) was established (NATO 2018b). The NATO-Russia Founding Act served as the formal basis for the cooperation between the two, especially in the framework of the NRC, and it was established in 1997 (NATO, 2018b). The underlying purpose of the Founding Act was to build trust and cooperation between the two actors, and it gave Russia a special avenue for communication with NATO (Smith, 2010). The Founding Act was a special program aimed at strengthening cooperation with Russia and improve ties and cooperation with the two actors. As a result of the Founding Act, the Permanent Joint Council (PJC) was established. Some of the members of the Alliance saw the PJC, which was a part of the Founding Act, as a problematic forum. "…in practice, NATO Council sessions and Permanent [Joint] Council sessions will tend to merge. The free and easy ´family atmosphere´ of existing institutions will vanish" (Smith, 2010: 103). The PJC was "a council of 17" (Smith, 2010: 101) where

Russia was included in all talks as opposed to previous divided forums with members of NATO on one side and Russia on the other, 16+1. It created problems because some members of NATO feared that even though Russia could not veto any decisions they would have all the information to take back home, and Russia´s stance could possibly influence other member states opinions on important issues. The war in Kosovo in 1999 was a blow to the PJC and eventually led to the failure of the forum as Russia suspended their participation in it due to the war (Smith, 2010). The PJC was reinitiated shortly after but was eventually replaced with an improved version, the NATO-Russia Council (NRC).

In 2002 the NRC was established as a replacement of the PJC. The new council would give Russia co-decision rights on certain topics, including military crisis management, the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, counterterrorism, and missile defense; rights Russia did not have as part of the PJC (Smith, 2010). Despite Russia´s opposition to the military actions against Iraq in 2002-2003 the NRC still have validity whereas the PJC had not. One of the main achievements that came out of the NRC was Russia´s involvement in Operation Active Endeavor in Iraq (Smith, 2010). Despite the successes by the NRC, the relationship between NATO and Russia was still prone to distrust. "…NATO enlargement generally has been a source of ongoing debilitation to the NRC" (Smith, 2010: 117). Even though the NRC did lead changes for the better, the issue of NATO´s enlargement policy was still present and it was not solved by the council. The Russo-Georgian War demonstrated a major blow to the NRC, which can be directly linked to the issues of the enlargement policy not being discussed. After the crisis in Georgia, NATO suspended all formal cooperation in the NRC. NATO felt that the Russian actions in Georgia had been disproportionate and the suspension lasted until spring 2009 (NATO, 2018b).

The events in 2014 would be the final blow to the NRC. In 2014, Russia intervened in Ukraine with military force, and eventually annexed Crimea. Crimea is recognized by the international community as being a part of Ukraine and the actions of Russia were widely construed to be in violation of international law. Russia's aggression further strained the relationship between NATO and Russia. After the events in Ukraine, NATO officially suspended all activity including Russia in the NRC as a response (NATO, 2018b). The channels of communication were kept open, but the NRC had been rendered ineffective. Diplomacy through the NRC remains suspended to this day and this shows that the council

could not sustain through critical events on the European continent, just as the PJC. The relationship between NATO and Russia suffered because of the ineffectiveness of the NRC as well as from the continuous mistrust between the two actors.

The formal platform for cooperation was gone, and that harmed the relationship between the two, but NATO made it a point to keep the lines of communication open and a possibility for cooperation in the future. Russia is an important actor for NATO and the alliance wants to be able to keep at least a functioning relationship with the country, as this will set NATO as a core component in the European security environment (Smith, 2010). Despite several attempts made by both NATO and Russia to improve the relationship, it seems to have been, and is, suffering from mistrust and competition. "…prevailing attitudes on both sides have not been conducive to laying a shared normative basis for a more substantial and enduring partnership between NATO and Russia" (Smith, 2010: 122). NATO is looking at the value of the relationship based on Russia´s acceptance of their values, and on the other side Russia has come with no alternatives of engagement (Smith, 2010). Even though there are historical issues tracing back to the distrust between the two actors, one of the biggest issues for the relationship has proven to be NATO´s open-door policy and the possibility of membership in the Alliance for countries that were formerly part of the Soviet Union.

Issues between NATO and Russia

In 1990, Mikhail Gorbachev and other former Soviet Officials claimed that they received a pledge from NATO that the alliance would not move its borders further east (Kramer, 2009). The pledge was allegedly conducted as a gentleman´s agreement as part of the German reunification process and it stated that NATO would not expand further to the east (Polikanov, 2004: Trenin, 2009). There has been a lot of skepticism in the West that such a pledge was ever made and one view was that the pledge referred to no NATO forces being stationed on the eastern flanks of Europe (Kramer, 2009). Russia's understanding of this pledge was as a promise that NATO would not offer membership to countries located in the eastern part of Europe, and especially former Soviet Union republics, and that the buffer zone between NATO and Russia would remain non-aligned (MccGwire, 2008). In Russia's opinion, the broken commitment not to move east is the last in a series of broken and unfulfilled promises made by NATO (Dannreuther, 1999). NATO on the other hand, claims

that because all decisions made by the alliance is based on consensus, as the pledge was not recorded, it is not a formal agreement (NATO, 2018a). The gentleman´s agreement that Russia claims to have made with NATO was a promise made by an individual and is therefore not a binding agreement (NATO, 2018a). The phrasing used by NATO indicates that the pledge could have been made, but that is not legally binding, because it is not recorded on paper and therefore not a legal contract. The enlargement of NATO makes Russia nervous, as NATO is creating a divide in Europe and counteracting European stability, from a Russian point of view.

NATO´s enlargement policy is viewed as an encroachment by Russia, as an aggression counteracting security in both Europe and for Russia. What was previously viewed as a buffer zone between Russia and NATO can now be viewed as a "buffer zone in reverse" (Black, 2000: 9). The countries that were formerly a part of the Soviet Union has been a buffer zone between the two actors and by offering NATO membership to these countries, NATO is doing away with this buffer. This is problematic for Russia because the perceived threat of a military bloc on their borders is becoming a reality. Black (2009) suggests that Russia views the NATO enlargement policy as a fulfilment of their "deep-rooted fear of isolation and encirclement" (10). Instead of viewing the enlargement policy as a means to create more stability Russia views the policy as a tool for isolating them from the rest of Europe which is counter to Russia´s interests and creates a security issue for the country. Russia fears isolation from Europe both due to their monetary and cultural interests but also because they fear that NATO will encircle them with military bases and forces. "That the post-revolutionary Georgia and Ukraine had expressed their desire to join NATO, only added to Russia´s sense of being vulnerable and politically isolated by the West" (Tsygankov & Tarver-Wahlquist, 2009: 321). The enlargement can also be viewed as an exclusion from the security community in Europe, and thereby Europe itself, as NATO´s membership grows. Some believe NATO´s policies could create a new iron curtain, a throwback to the icy relations in Europe during the Cold War (Black, 2000; Antonenko, 1999-2000; Volkov, 1997). "Those responsible for Russian security, particularly in the military establishment, saw an expanding NATO not as a vehicle for shoring up stability in Europe but for isolating Russia from Europe" (Frye, 2000: 94). This policy is not beneficial to Russia and they want to keep eastern Europe as a neutral buffer zone between the two, while NATO wants to disseminate its values to this region through possible membership in the alliance (O´loughlin, 1999).

Russia has enjoyed steady influence in post-Soviet states, and see these areas as part of Russian sphere of influence. Russia has historical ties to these states as well as monetary interests. MccGwire (2008) argues that "…Russia has long-standing and legitimate interests in the former Union Republics; these include geostrategic concerns and the continuing presence of some 25 million ethnic Russians who were living outside the borders of RSFSR" (1291). One might argue that Russia has no reason to expect certain privileges in former Soviet Union republics, as they now are independent countries with their own sovereignty. NATO´s enlargement policy is diminishing Russia´s influence over these countries, where Russia has a vested interest in staying involved (Polikanov, 2004). The possibility of Georgian membership in NATO would likely "…affect the political, military, and economic interests of Russia" (Karagiannis, 2013: 86). This might cause friction between the two actors because NATO is moving into an area where Russia previously was the only major power.

Russia considers part of the former Soviet Union area as its zone of interest, an area where they have special interests and privileges, in for example "…politico-military, economic and financial, and cultural…" (Trenin, 2009: 13) aspects. As NATO moves into Russia´s sphere of influence Russia could start to feel uneasy both from a security standpoint but also due to decreasing influence in the region. NATO´s enlargement policy can be interpreted as a geopolitical strategy on NATO's part directed at Russia. "…in geopolitical terms Russia cannot be happy with NATO´s drive to the east, since any reinforcement of NATO will undermine the influence of the UN and pose challenges to Russia´s influence in the post-Soviet zone" (Polikanov, 2004: 491). Generally, NATO´s enlargement policy is making Russia feel less safe and could cause further divide in the future. "…Russians perceive that NATO´s policy of enlargement is butting into Russia´s ´region of privileged interests" (Wolff, 2015: 1111).

3. Theoretical framework and methodology

This chapter will be divided into two parts, one presenting the theoretical framework, and the other presenting the methodological framework and the methodological choices made throughout the thesis.

3.1 Theoretical framework

This thesis will follow Lene Hansen´s (2006) theoretical framework for discourse analysis within poststructuralism. "Without theory there is nothing but description, and without methodology there is no transformation of theory into analysis" (Hansen, 2006: 1). This thesis needs a theoretical framework for the analysis to be something more than a description of critical events and statements. The discourse analysis found within Hansen´s interpretation of poststructuralism will provide the framework for this thesis. Hansen´s framework has been chosen as a guide for this thesis because her interpretation of poststructuralism is applicable to this thesis, it is thorough and logical. Through interpretation of other well-cited scholars, she presents poststructuralism and discourse analysis as a framework that is applicable to empirical research. Discourse analysis has been chosen as the method for this thesis, and therefore the theoretical framework is important for the thesis´s core and for the analysis to make sense. Discourse analysis within poststructuralism "…pursues a set of research questions, centered on the constitutive significance of representations of identity and debating foreign policies, and it argues that adopting a non-causal epistemology does not imply an abandonment of theoretically rigorous frameworks, empirical analyses of ´real world relevance´ or systematic assessments of data and methodology" (Hansen, 2006: 4). This means that this analysis will focus on the representations that the actors use to present their own identity, as well as the identity they present of the other actor, and it will look at how these identities shape each actor´s foreign policy. Non-causal epistemology means that discourse analysis does not focus on event A leading to event B, rather how identities change the representation of the discourse and how this changes foreign policy.

As this thesis is looking into how the relationship between Russia and NATO has changed due to NATO´s enlargement policy it will be looking into how the representations of identity have changed over time and how this have affected the security environment in Europe. Identity is the representations one actor uses to describe themselves and others, and it will be important in this thesis because identities help shape the discourse on a matter as well as foreign policy. A poststructuralist discourse analysis will be an excellent method to discover these representations because it will give the analysis more depth. Discourse analysis provides an analytical tool that looks past the material aspects of international relations, it looks at how actors present themselves and others and how this shapes foreign policy as opposed to more mainstream theories that rely on realpolitik. According to Hansen (2006) poststructuralism is "…based on the assumptions that policies are dependent upon the representations of the threat, country, security problem, or crisis they seek to address" (5). The way NATO and Russia present their official discourse on the enlargement policy will change and shape their policies towards it, and this is part of what this thesis is seeking to uncover.

Hansen´s version of discourse analysis, which this thesis will use as its framework, focuses on the representation of the identity. Hansen (2006) argues that identity is discursive and political, by which she means "…representations of identity place foreign policy issues within a particular interpretative optic, one with consequences for which foreign policy can be formulated as an adequate response" (Hansen, 2006: 5). The representation of identity that is found within the discourse will be changing and have an impact on the foreign policy. "…identity is always given through reference to something it is not" (Hansen, 2006: 6). In this thesis, we have two Selves, NATO and Russia, and both Selves are represented through their representation of the Other. "Foreign policies need to ascribe meaning to the situation and to construct the objects within it, and in doing so they articulate and draw upon specific identities of other states, regions, peoples, and institutions as well as on the identity of a national, regional, or institutional Self" (Hansen, 2006: 5). The way NATO and Russia identifies the Self and Other will make it apparent how their relationship changes with time and in light of critical events on the European security arena. We need the representation of their own identity, as well as the Others identity, because an identity is always given in relations to something it is not (Hansen, 2006). Neumann (2008) exemplifies this with "…Russian identity, therefore, must be studied as something Russian and something non-

Russian" (66). We cannot only study the identity of the Self, but also need to find what they do not view themselves as, which then becomes the Other. It can be an opposite Other or a similar Other. By identifying the representations of Self and Other, the foreign policy of the actor will be become apparent. "…identities are simultaneously a product of and the justification for foreign policy" (Hansen, 2006: 23). The discourse of the actor can be the reason for or the effect of the political choices made. The identities of the actors and the foreign policy of them are interlinked. The identification of identities is critical to discourse analysis because the discourse will have an impact on the representation of both the identity and the foreign policy, and identity will have an impact on the foreign policy (Hansen, 2006).

The research questions chosen for a thesis will guide the entire analysis and are therefore important. For this thesis, the research questions must lead the analysis to representations of identity and how these representations shape foreign policy. "Deciding the scope and research questions is at the core of building a research agenda, but the delineation of which questions can and should be asked is intertwined with questions of epistemology" (Hansen, 2006: 8). Limiting the scope of the research question is normal in any analysis, not just a post-structural one. It is important to limit the scope of the research questions because it makes the analysis concise and it guides the researcher to stay on track. The limitations made in this thesis is to make sure not to include other actors than NATO and Russia for the main discourse, and only include one state in the case discourse. Another limitation made is to only look at the relationship between NATO and Russia from a security perspective and not include other aspects of the relationship. The research questions in this thesis will be a guide to what discourses we are looking for and how they will be analyzed. As such the research questions for this thesis should be presented one more time:

- How has the NATO Enlargement policy shaped the relationship between Russia and NATO, and the security environment in Europe?
    - How has possible accession of Georgia to NATO shaped the relationship between NATO and Russia and how will this affect the security environment in Europe?
    - How has NATO legitimized their enlargement policy as a stabilizing agent in Europe?
    - How has Russia delegitimized NATO´s enlargement policy as destabilizing the security environment in Europe?

Through discourse analysis this thesis will be able to uncover how the relationship between NATO and Russia is and has changed. It will use representations of identity and critical events to delineate how each actors foreign policy has changed over time due to NATO´s enlargement policy and how the possible accession of Georgia to NATO have and can shape the relationship between NATO and Russia.

"Theories of foreign policy are united by a concern with the way in which states understand and respond to the world around them" (Hansen, 2006: 15). This thesis will be looking at how NATO and Russia understand and respond to the world around them, and a methodological framework of discourse analysis will be a good framework to do this. Like other theories, poststructuralism argues that one needs clear ontological assumptions and epistemological choices for the analysis to be coherent and relevant. "…theories rely upon a set of ontological assumptions and make a series of epistemological choices" (Hansen, 2006: 15). In poststructuralism the ontology is "…deeply intertwined with its understanding of language as constitutive for what is brought into being" (Hansen, 2006: 15). Language is very important to a poststructuralist, it has an ontological importance: "…it is only through the construction in language that ´things´ - objects, subjects, states, living beings, and material structures – are given a meaning and endowed with a particular identity" (Hansen, 2006: 16). The ontological assumptions in this study will be grounded in language in line with poststructuralism. "The poststructuralist view of language as relationally structured and ontologically productive is coupled to a discursive epistemology" (Hansen, 2006: 15). A discursive epistemology is what is the most dominant epistemology in the data. "The adoption of a discursive epistemology implies that the poststructuralist analytical focus is on the discursive construction of identity as both constitutive of and a product of foreign policy" (Hansen, 2006: 20). The recurring representations will represent the discourse for the actor because they are being reiterated again and again. The analytical focus in this thesis will be looking at how representations of identities in the discourse will shape the foreign policy of the two actors. "Consistent with the ontological emphasis on language, the practical epistemological focus is on how identities and policies are articulated" (Hansen, 2006: 20). One important aspect of poststructuralism´s discourse analysis is that it is not using causality as an explaining factor, which some theorists sees as a flaw, but it is in fact an "…ontological and epistemological choice" (Hansen, 2006: 25).

<u>Ontological assumptions</u>

Ontology is interpreted as what is in the world, the reality. But through a poststructuralist lens "reality is unknowable outside human perception, and there is never only one authority on a given subject" (Dunn, 2008: 79). One cannot know anything about reality without having meaning accredited to it. A rock might not simply be a rock, it can be something else for someone else. This is not a question of materiality, the rock is there, but it is a rock because that is the meaning it has been given. Language is the binding factor that gives objects meaning and thereby our understanding of them, and it does so through representations of reality in discourses. "Poststructuralism´s discursive ontology is […] deeply intertwined with its understanding of language as constitutive for what is brought into being" (Hansen, 2006: 15). Language is essential in bringing meaning to objects, without the sociality of language objects would have no meaning and not exist in reality. Hansen (2006) argues that language is a "…field of social and political practice" (16). This means that language is not a universal tool that will give an object one set meaning, it is a social tool that can give an object different meanings across different discourses. An object will never have a meaning unless represented with certain meanings over and over again, through language. "…there is no objective or ´true meaning´ beyond the linguistic representation to which one can refer" (Shapiro in Hansen, 2006: 16). Language is significant in poststructuralism because it is part of the ontological assumptions that this theoretical framework adheres to.

This thesis will rely its analysis on a set of representations that builds NATO and Russia´s discourse on NATO´s enlargement policy. This means that ontologically this thesis will find what reality NATO and Russia makes through its continuous representations of the policy as well as the identities they present through language and representations. "Language is […] a system of differential signs, and meaning is established not by the essence of a thing itself but through a series of juxtapositions, where one element is valued over its opposite" (Derrida in Hansen, 2006: 17). The identity of the actors will become apparent in relation to something different, which can also be called the Other. When looking at NATO´s enlargement policy, Russia´s identity will become apparent with how Russia represent NATO because Russia views NATO as different from themselves and an Other.

Epistemological choices

Epistemology is how we can study the world as opposed to what is in the world. "…mainstream approaches adopt a positivist epistemology" (Hansen, 2014: 171), which means that they use causal relations to analyze world politics which can lead to them using independent and dependent variables for their analysis. "Poststructuralists […] embrace a post-positivist epistemology as they argue that the social world is so far removed from the hard sciences where causal epistemologies originate that we cannot understand world politics through cause-effect relationships" (Hansen, 2014: 171). Instead of focusing on how one variable affects another, poststructuralism analyzes how language describes and represents the object. The words an actor chooses to represent something can have different meaning, and one single word will never have just one meaning. The meaning is given to a word by the words used around it. An actor chooses how they want to portray a word and their choices will affect what meaning is connected to the language they are using. "Consistent with the ontological emphasis on language, the practical epistemological focus is on how identities and policies are articulated" (Hansen, 2006: 20). The object of this study is NATO´s enlargement policy and it does not have a meaning without language. NATO´s enlargement policy is not a reality and there has to exist language that describes it for it to have meaning. The meaning around the NATO´s enlargement policy will become apparent by studying the language that is used to describe it. The language that give it meaning is called representations and the representations will form the discourse of the object. Language can mean the written word, spoken word, images, etc. but for this thesis the focus will be on how the written word presents the object. "The words we use to describe something are not neutral, and the choice of one term over another has political implications" (Hansen, 2014: 172). The way the actors decide to describe the object will affect how it is analyzed, and it is a conscious choice in international relations. The actor chooses how they wish to represent something to affect others´ feelings about it. Language is not neutral, it helps to create a meaning around the objects it is describing, and the language the political actors chooses to describe the object will have political implications (Hansen, 2014). The representations on the object for the study will differ from where the representations come from, both the actors and the timeframe, and this study will focus on NATO and Russia´s representations of the object through three different periods. Representations are not set in stone; they can change over time and due to critical events and that is why this thesis is looking at the events of 2008 and

2014 to see how history has changed the representations over time and in connection to critical events with high tensions on the European arena.

3.2 Methodological framework

Official foreign policy discourse analysis has been chosen for this thesis because it will enable me to find the identity that NATO and Russia gives themselves and each other, their foreign policy and the link between them (Hansen, 2006). I used this analytical tool to analyze both actor´s discourse on NATO´s enlargement policy in connection with critical events on the European continent. "Much of poststructuralist discourse analysis has focused on policy discourses responding to such striking moments as conflicts and wars" (Hansen, 2006: 69). The data in this analysis was extracted from three different years that had an impact on the European continent; 2008, 2014, and 2017. In 2008 Russia invaded Georgia, and in 2014 Russia annexed Crimea. 2017 was chosen as a reference point to ´present time´. I analyzed the language used in these three years to uncover the relationship between Russia and NATO, and how the discourse has changed. "The goal is to identify discourses that articulate very different constructions of identity and policy and which thereby separate the political landscape between them" (Hansen, 2006: 47). Neumann´s (2008) three steps for a successful discourse analysis was used as a guideline when choosing the methodological factors of this thesis:

"…one needs to delimit the discourse to a wide but manageable range of sources and timeframes" (63)

"…identifies the representations that comprise the discourse, taking into account censorship and other practices that shape the availability of text" (63)

"…explore change" (63)

Research design

Every step in this research design was done two times, once for the data from NATO and once for the data from Russia. I asked two main questions when going through the

material, and all texts that had representations that answered them was included in the dataset (see: Appendix):

- What words and expressions are being used to legitimize NATO´s enlargement policy?
- What words and expressions are being used to delegitimize NATO´s enlargement policy?

The reason why I included both legitimizing and delegitimizing words and expressions was because the one would not make sense without the other. "A given discourse cannot be entirely detached from all other discourses. They are ordered and scaled in relation to one another" (Neumann, 2008: 66). If I had only looked at how the NATO enlargement policy was legitimized, the study would have been one-sided and it could potentially have been missing important information that would be crucial to the analysis. Neumann (2008) shares a good example on this relating to identity: "…Russian identity […] must be studied as something Russian and something non-Russian" (66). This example provides us with the information that you cannot study one actors identity without also studying how they classify the other actor´s identities. This study looked at how Russia and NATO identifies themselves through representations and how they represent each other as an Other.

The research started with a first read-through of all the data that was found in the NATO and Kremlin database. The second step was to do a second read-through where I used a highlighter pen to highlight all words and expressions that answered my original questions. The third step was to put these excerpts into a table split up in NATO and Kremlin, as well as by year and monthly blocks, which left me with a system that I could use when I analyzed the data (See: Appendix). This helped me see the changes in the language of the representations of the discourse, how time and critical events shaped the representations, and how the representations differed between the two actors. It also gave me an easy access system to observe the different ways the actors used language to describe the enlargement policy. The analysis of the language used by the two actors gave me the tools to establish how the relationship between NATO and Russia have been affected by the policy and critical events happening on the European continent. "…the methodology of discourse analysis insists on reading based on explicit discursive articulations of signs and identities and that one has to pay careful analytical attention to how signs are linked and juxtaposed, how they construct Selves and Others, and how they legitimize particular policies" (Hansen, 2006: 41).

Timeframe

The timeframe for this thesis was focused on 2008 to present time. Three periods were selected for the analysis, two of them hold critical events on the European continent and the last one will be able to give an indication for how the discourses are presented in present time. Choosing timeframes when tensions on the European continent are high helped the analysis because it illuminated how the language changes during a crisis in contrast with when tensions are low. "The term ´key events´ refer to those situations where ´important facts´ manifest themselves on the political and/or the media agenda and influence the official policy-identity constellation or force the official discourse to engage with political opposition and media criticism" (Hansen, 2006: 28). Choosing timeframes before and after critical events enabled the analysis to see the changes in language within the same period, with both high and low tension in the security environment.

"Mapping debates around key events offers a methodological technique for tracing the stability of official discourse as they can be used to construct a timeline which in turn can be employed when empirical material is selected" (Hansen, 2006: 28). The data collected in this thesis was mapped around two critical events on the European continent as well as ´present time´ for analytical purposes. The three periods that was chosen was 2008, 2014, and 2017. 2008 was chosen because it was the year of the Russo-Georgian War. The Russian invasion had an impact on how NATO members viewed the possibility of Georgian accession to NATO. This was an event that had an impact on the security environment in Europe, and was chosen as a key event in this thesis because two of the main actors in the crisis was NATO and Russia. 2014 was chosen because this was the year that Russia annexed Crimea. This was an event that changed the security environment in Europe because no country had ever claimed another countries territory in recent times on the continent. Ukraine was a country that was considering applying to become a member of NATO, so Russia and NATO were again two important actors. These two events were chosen for analysis also because they showed a clear breach in the cooperation between NATO and Russia with the suspension of formal cooperation in the NRC, which has been discussed in the background chapter. 2017 was included in the analysis because having a reference to present time was important for the analysis. Present time will give us data on how wording have changed from two periods with high tension to one with lower tensions.

The same timeframes were used when searching for texts in the different periods in both NATO´s and Kremlin´s database. For all three periods the limitation on dates was: 01.12-01.01. Meaning that for 2008 it was 01.12-2007-01.01.2009. A month before the period started and one day past was included to make sure vital information was not lost.

Text selection and number of texts

When researching the databases, I looked for relevance in the documents towards NATO´s enlargement policy, including, but not exclusively, possible accession for Georgia and Ukraine. I also included other European countries´ possible accession because I believe that any text mentioning the enlargement policy, regardless of what country is being discussed, will show the official foreign policy discourse on NATO´s enlargement policy. I looked at NATO and Russia´s discourse on possible Georgian accession to NATO, and how the competition between NATO and Russia unfolded concerning Georgia. The case of Georgia is an underlying conflict between the two actors and it could have a substantial effect on their relationship. When researching legitimizing and delegitimizing representations it was beneficial to include all texts mentioning enlargement. These types of texts will be able to show the discourse towards accession as a whole instead of just focusing on one country´s possible accession.

The text selection focused on the highest representing organ of NATO and Russia, the NATO Secretary General and the President of Russia. These two positions were chosen as the starting point for this analysis because these leaders are representing their actor and what they say and write will be a representation of their respective actor´s policies and discourses. It will represent the actor´s stance on the issues. "…discourse analysis gives epistemological and methodological priority to the study of the primary texts; that is for instance, presidential statements, speeches, and interviews in the case of official foreign policy" (Hansen, 2006: 74). I included statements, speeches and press conferences from both actors in the dataset and analysis. Personalized interviews with one single media outlet was excluded because these are usually very pointed towards one certain issue or the holder of that position, and for this analysis it is more relevant to include the other types of texts.

Number of texts

I included as many texts in my dataset as possible to make the analysis as pointed as I possibly could. "The ideal is to include as many representations and their variations as possible, and to specify where they are to be found in as high degree as possible" (Neumann, 2008: 62). This statement provided me with a guide when selecting material for the analysis. I chose to be as thorough as possible, which eventually left me with a very big dataset to analyze. "…there will […] always be a risk that some relevant texts are not included" (Neumann, 2008: 69). Even though my dataset is very big there is a chance that I have missed texts with important information that would be beneficial to this thesis. However, it is simply impossible to read every single document each actor has published both due to time constraints but also because the amount of data would be too vast to analyze.

For the data from NATO I used NATO´s own database to find texts: http://www.nato.int. This website has a very good database that is easy to use and it is easy to limit the amount of data for research through the database. For the first reading, all texts that contained the word ´enlargement´ were included. The original result with the search word in the databases before first reading was 38 entries in 2008, 33 entries in 2014, and 10 entries in 2017. After first reading some texts were eliminated as not being relevant to the analysis of this thesis. 17 of the texts were deemed relevant for the study in 2008, 20 were deemed relevant in 2014, and 8 were relevant in 2017. The second reading eliminated even more texts and the final number in 2008 ended up being 14 texts, for 2014 it ended up at 19, and in 2017 it ended up on 7. The text selection shrunk from the first reading to the second reading because some of the texts were missing information, some were replicas, and some were interviews with a single media outlet, which I have already decided to eliminate from my analysis.

For the data from Russia I used the Official Internet Resource of the President of Russia: http://en.kremlin.ru. This website also contains vast amounts of data and because of this all texts within the timeframes that included the word ´NATO´ was included in the first reading. The first reading yielded 60 results for 2008, 25 results for 2014, and 19 results for 2017. This is the number of texts that had the word ´NATO´ in them, and obviously many of these would be eliminated because this thesis is looking not into NATO itself but its

enlargement policy. The reason why ´NATO´ was used as a search word instead of ´enlargement´, as had been done with the NATO database, was because I would run into the problem of having to read vast amounts of documents discussing enlargement in other areas than foreign policy. After the first reading it was deemed that there were 17 relevant texts in 2008, 8 relevant in 2014, and 5 relevant in 2017.

Reliability

One important thing that came up during the research phase of the thesis was that I, the researcher, was lacking basic knowledge of the culture in Russia. According to Neumann (2008) "…a researcher needs a basic level of cultural competence to recognize the shared understandings that create a common frame of reference, which makes it possible for people to act in relations to one another" (64). I do not believe I hold the basic understanding of the Russian culture that Neumann (2008) recommends but because this thesis is not focusing on Russian culture, rather European security, I believe I have attained the right tools to complete this analysis in an appropriate manner. It was also important to maintain an understanding of my own culture and how it differed from the ones I studied during this process, and to avoid that my culture had an impact on the analysis. Another issue can be that the researcher has problems distinguishing his or her own culture, as the norm, from the one that is being analyzed.

Another important aspect to address is the language barrier. For the data from Russia I had to choose from translated texts, because I do not speak Russian. Due to this some information might be missing from my analysis; some texts might not have been translated, some wording might have been changed from the original language, and some words might have gotten lost in translation. But because most of the documents that I did not have access to in this process are documents that mostly describe the discourse on NATO enlargement within Russia, this should not become an issue. I do believe that the translated texts will suffice for this analysis because it seemed like most of the statements and speeches made by the President of Russia were translated. There were also some language issues in the texts from the NATO database. Most of the texts were purely in English but some of them contained translations and some parts of some of the texts were in other languages. I do not

know if this is an error from the publisher or if it meant to be this way, but the parts of the texts in other languages were excluded as I cannot read them.

One important thing to address is the personal error aspect. The researcher might overlook important information when reading through the data. I have read through all texts two times and thereby protected myself as much as I can from the personal error aspect. But there might still be missing data. Some of the texts chosen were very long and important information might be missing. Especially in the data from Kremlin this might be an issue. Many of these texts were long and dense and this might have caused some important representations being missed. I did skim through some of the parts in these texts, as those parts were mostly about domestic politics including education, taxes, economy, etc.

Because the timeframes chosen for this analysis have been limited, some important information might be missing. "…there will therefore always be a risk that some relevant texts are not included" (Neumann, 2008: 699). But it is important to remember that at one point the researcher have to decide that they have gathered enough data for the analysis and be able to defend this. This thesis made the choice to only look at data within the years of 2008, 2014, and 2017, and the amount of data was massive. Due to the volume of data it was decided that these timeframes were enough because it would yield a good overview of the official foreign policy discourses of each actor and provide enough representations of these discourses. As Neumann (2008) states: "…at some point one has to be able to decide that one has read enough, even if one has not read everything" (70).

4. Analysis and Discussion

      The following text will present the main findings from the material that has been selected for the analysis. In the time frame this thesis is focusing on, three people held the position of NATO Secretary General (Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, and Jens Stoltenberg) and two people held the position of the President of Russia (Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin). There will be three sections, the first two will present the representations for NATO and Russia as well as presenting representations for all three periods chosen, the next section will compare and contrast the description representation found in both NATO and Russia´s data and present a comparison and analysis of the dominating representations, and the last section will discuss how the two actor´s discourse on Georgia have and can affect the relationship between the two. The different representations have been named and categorized to create an overview, depending on what wording the representations contained and what they described.

4.1 NATO´s official discourse on enlargement

      All representations found in the chosen data legitimizing NATO´s enlargement policy were included in the dataset. Several representations were dominant across all selected timeframes and some were only observed in one. The following section will first present the dominant representations found across the timeframes, then move into representations only found in the year of one event. The critical events chosen for the analysis are the Russo-Georgian War and Russia´s annexation of Crimea. This section attempts to show the tendencies found in the representations in connection to these critical events.

<u>The description representation</u>

      To provide NATO's official discourse on enlargement, analyzed data was from 2008, 2014 and 2017. In this data, NATO consistently described their enlargement, representing their discourse on, through the use of wording such as ´integration´ (NATO, 2008:1; NATO,

2008: 3; NATO, 2008: 3; NATO, 2008: 5; NATO, 2008: 7; NATO, 2008: 9; NATO, 2014: 1; NATO, 2014: 4; NATO, 2014: 5; NATO, 2014: 9; NATO, 2014: 16; NATO, 2017: 4; NATO, 2017: 7), ´family´ (NATO, 2008: 4; NATO, 2008: 13; NATO, 2008: 15; NATO, 2014: 1; NATO, 2014: 6; NATO, 2017: 1; NATO, 2017: 3; NATO, 2017: 4), ´unification´ (NATO, 2008: 5; NATO, 2008: 6), and ´community´ (NATO, 2008: 6; NATO, 2014: 3; NATO, 2017: 1). The word integration was commonly found used together with ´Euro-Atlantic´ but also as ´European´ (NATO, 2017: 7).

The word ´enlargement´ was also found throughout the data, and it has some importance to the description representation. NATO chose to use enlargement as the name of their policy, which shows that they are using a descriptive word to legitimize it. Throughout the data, ´enlargement´ was found as both a description of the policy and as the name of the policy. The NATO Secretary General consistently calls the policy ´enlargement´ or open-door policy, using these words instead of others to describe it. No negatively loaded words were found when the NATO Secretary General described the policy in any of the data for this analysis.

By consistently using these types of words, NATO´s discourse on enlargement is represented in a positive manner and it is part of what legitimizes the policy. It shows members, non-members and possible members that if they do wish to become members they will be part of a family, and they will be integrated into Euro-Atlantic structures. NATO is a collective security organization, meaning that members share the burden of defense and security. To ´be part of a family´ is an expression observed on multiple occasions in the data and by using these types of words it is obvious that new members will enjoy being a part of a family that is a collective security organization. Georgia is a such a country; if it were to become a member it would be able to grow and become a part of a community that would help it prosper: "…as the Alliance grew, security grew and stability and prosperity spread across this continent" (NATO, 2014: 2). Because of the security issues Georgia has had with Russia, becoming a part of the NATO family would provide the country and citizens with security and promises of protection. NATO uses these words consistently to legitimize their policy, but also to attract the attention of possible partners and members.

This representation has been found throughout the data in 2008, 2014 and 2017, and it shows that the NATO Secretary General is very consistent in his choice of words and thereby the representations he uses to legitimize NATO´s enlargement policy. NATO´s official discourse on enlargement is clear, countries that become members become part of something bigger than a single state can be alone. It shows that NATO has a strong and clear official discourse on enlargement and that time and critical events has little effect on the discourse.

The defense representation

The second representation that was consistently found throughout the data in 2008, 2014 and 2017, was one defending the choice to let new countries become members of NATO and how this will benefit not just prospective members. This representation shows us, more than the latter, how NATO legitimizes their choice to go through with their enlargement policy. Instead of just describing the policy, this representation defends the choice to go through with it. A recurring representation in the data is ´stability´ (NATO, 2008: 1; NATO, 2008: 3; NATO, 2008: 4; NATO, 2008: 7; NATO, 2008: 8; NATO, 2008: 10; NATO, 2014: 1; NATO, 2014: 2; NATO, 2014: 6; NATO, 2014: 7; NATO, 2014: 17; NATO, 2014: 20; NATO, 2017: 1; NATO, 2017: 3; NATO, 2017: 4; NATO, 2017: 5). This shows that NATO legitimizes their enlargement policy through promoting the idea of spreading stability in the region. Creating stability for a whole continent, and the world, is a difficult task and NATO´s representation on this shows great levels of confidence. By consistently and over time repeating this word as a representation of NATO´s discourse on enlargement, NATO is showing us that only through a strong NATO will there be enough stability for everyone in Europe to feel secure. An excerpt from the data in 2014 shows this representation very well: "…stability in an unpredictable world" (NATO, 2014: 2). NATO is stating that the world is unpredictable and that the only way to overcome this is if NATO remains strong and relevant. NATO will become strong and relevant through the enlargement policy and this will help the continent overcome the unpredictability in the world today.

Another important thing to note is that in 2014 NATO even went as far as saying that the enlargement policy would not just create more stability on the European continent but also beyond: "…advance stability across the Euro-Atlantic area, and beyond" (NATO, 2014: 2). This not only shows how NATO wishes to legitimize their enlargement policy, but also how

the policy will be positive for everyone. Through enlargement of NATO the values of NATO will spread in Europe, which will lead to more stability on the European continent, which again will lead to more stability in the world.

Other words were found to be a part of the defense representation, even though the main word remained ´stability´. These were either found in the data by themselves or in connection with the original word, used to make the representation of the discourse stronger. The words are words used to defend the policy and show to the reader how this will benefit the European security environment as well as individual countries. Some of these words includes ´peace´, ´security´, ´confidence´, ´prosperity´, ´freedom´, ´democracy´, and ´cooperation´. With this type of language NATO is defending their policy through strong words that are positively loaded. They are using these words to show what has, can, and will happen because of the enlargement policy. One good example of this representation is "…best guarantee for long term peace and stability on our continent" (NATO, 2008: 1). The NATO Secretary General is stating in this quote that the enlargement policy is the best guarantee for positive development on the European Security arena, and that the policy is the best choice for creating stability.

Another part of the defense representation is the use of the word ´values´ (NATO, 2008: 8; NATO, 2017: 4; NATO, 2017: 6). Even though the defense representation is full of words that shows the reader the exact values of NATO, it is interesting to note that the word ´values´ was only mentioned three times as part of the representation. By using this word, NATO clearly states that the above-mentioned words are part of its core values and part of the enlargement policy is to spread these values to other states. "…share our values" (NATO, 2017:4).

The defense representation was consistently found throughout the timeframes chosen for this thesis. This shows how dedicated and selective NATO is when choosing its language to defend the enlargement policy. NATO, through the Secretary General, are trying to form a gathered front which is consistent in its chosen language for describing and defending the policy, and because they are using such strong wording it is beneficial to them.

<u>2008 – The Russo-Georgian War</u>

In 2008, the most common representation was the description representation, through words such as ´family´ and ´integration´. What is interesting is that the atmosphere of the language used in 2008 is very positive and hopeful. Most of the language NATO used to legitimize the enlargement policy in this timeframe is showing the reader that NATO is an organization that all actors should want to either be a part of or partner with. NATO´s values are presented in many of the representations from this timeframe, and through enlargement these values will spread. NATO is presenting the idea that this will be a positive development for the security environment in Europe. The following excerpt shows us both NATO´s core values as well as how inviting new members into the Alliance will create stronger adherence to these values: "…preserve and enhance liberty, democracy and the rule of law – values" (NATO, 2008: 8). The representations found in January-August of 2008 produce a NATO filled with hope; hope that the enlargement policy will spread NATO´s values, stability in the region, and that all countries will feel included. After that period there is a gap in the data, which will be discussed below.

<u>2008 - Disappearance of the discourse</u>

While going through the data for NATO´s discourse on enlargement it became apparent that there was missing data from September-December of 2008. No representations of NATO´s official discourse on enlargement was found in this timeframe. Russia invaded Georgia early August in 2008 and after this NATO´s discussion on enlargement disappeared. In this timeframe one can only guess why the data is missing, but one can assume that the discussion moved onto something else. From what was read, the discussion moved away from talking about accepting new members to how to help Georgia in the best way possible and how to reprimand Russia for violating Georgian sovereignty. Another probable reason for why the discourse disappeared is that NATO did not want to amplify the crisis by provoking Russia while the crisis was ongoing. Analytically it is very interesting that the discourse disappears in this period because one would believe that NATO would continue to push for enlargement and its benefits, but due to the underlying reasons for the war and disagreement among member states, they did not. Instead the conversation of enlargement completely

disappears and is replaced by discussions on what do to with Russia as an aggressor and how to support Georgia.

2014 – The Russian annexation of Crimea

In 2014 one very interesting representation was established that had not been observed in 2008. In this period NATO turned some of their attention to Russia in their representations. Several representations of NATO´s discourse on enlargement now contained defensive language specifically aimed at Russia as an opposite actor on the European security arena. A lot of the language was observed as defending their choice to enlarge their membership to other countries through representations that showed that it would benefit Russia in the long run as well. "…Russia has looked for stability and security along her Western borders. And that´s exactly what the EU and NATO enlargement process have provided" (NATO, 2014: 1), "…heal the divisions of the past, overcome conflicts which lasted generations, and build a community based on inclusiveness, democracy and cooperation" (NATO, 2014: 6), "…erase many of the painful dividing lines on our continent" (NATO, 2014: 7), "…NATO´s open door policy is not a provocation against anybody" (NATO, 2014: 11), "…everybody, including Russia, has profited from the zone of stability, security, and prosperity we have contributed to develop" (NATO, 2014: 11), and "…we have not accepted new members of NATO as part of any aggression against Russia" (NATO, 2014: 11). All these excerpts show how part of the discourse in this timeframe is specifically focused on Russia and its approval of NATO´s actions. In this timeframe Russia presents a bigger threat to stability than it had earlier because of their annexation of Crimea, and through its representations NATO is trying to diminish that threat. The representations draw specifically on the painful past of the security environment in Europe to evoke certain feelings. It also draws on the current status of the security environment with Russia´s annexation of Crimea, and that the continent needs stability.

Another interesting representation of the discourse from 2014, was an explanation that NATO probably felt was needed in the current security environment in Europe at that time. This representation shows us that NATO does not push any countries to become members, and that no outside actor can push NATO to approve or disapprove a possible accession. The excerpts "…no third country can veto future enlargement" (NATO, 2014: 13) and "No

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country has ever been forced into NATO" (NATO, 2014: 20) shows how NATO´s language around the enlargement policy changed from only talking about the positive sides of it for the members, to also include preconditions that will never be broken. No other country than the current members of the Alliance will be able to have a say in which countries will become members, and the sovereignty of the country is the highest priority. NATO have never and will never force a country to become a member, and thereby violate their sovereignty. This representation legitimizes the enlargement policy in a way that no outside pressure can intervene in the accession process.

The next important representation found in the data from 2014, is directly linked with the previous paragraph. The representation of ´sovereignty´ (NATO, 2014: 6; NATO, 2014: 8; NATO, 2014: 9; NATO, 2014: 11; NATO, 2014: NATO, 2014: 19) was seen in different variations across the data for 2014. Sovereignty was established in the world because of the treaties that became known as the Peace of Westphalia (Armstrong, 2014). It guarantees all states self-rule without interference, and all states follow international law and humanitarian conventions. Of course, in newer times the world society have created limits to what a state can do to their own citizens without interference. The representation of sovereignty in the data shows us that NATO is using a strong word to legitimize the enlargement policy. For many actors it is a fundamental right of a state to manage their sovereignty, and that nobody will violate it. By bringing the word sovereignty into the conversation surrounding enlargement, NATO is giving strong indications that even though members are seemingly giving up a small part of their sovereignty to become members, their sovereignty is still their own and they have full rule of it. By using a word that is so well known and respected, NATO is legitimizing their policy by establishing that it is up to each country what route they want to take, and that NATO will not interfere with such decisions.

2017 – Present time

The main representations of NATO´s discourse are not as obvious in 2017 as they were in 2008 and 2014. In 2017, NATO´s enlargement policy had been in effect for several years and the results of increasing the membership had been seen. Therefore the representations found in the data for 2017 seem like a mix of the representations found in both 2008 and 2014. There were no critical events in 2017, as seen in 2008 and 2014 with the

Russo-Georgian War and the annexation of Crimea. In 2017, the representations can be seen as different versions of the same representations found in 2008 and 2014. As we can see from the following excerpt from the data, both the representation of joining a community and NATO´s core values are presented: "…joining a community of nations dedicated to democracy, human rights, the rule of law and to each other" (NATO, 2017: 1). The same representation of the discourse was observed in 2014 and then repeated 2017. This is interesting because in 2008 there was little mention of specific values that NATO held; the focus was more on what the benefits of membership were for the possible new members. In the later years, some of the focus shifted towards NATO´s standards.

Another representation that was repeated in 2017 was that NATO would never force any country to join the Alliance. This has strong ties with the idea of sovereignty, even though the word sovereignty was not found specifically in the data from 2017. The focus on this has grown stronger with the words chosen to describe it: "…we will never, never, never try to force any country to join NATO" (NATO, 2017: 1). Not much mention of any outside forces was observed in the data from 2017, instead the focus shifted over on NATO themselves as a neutral partner that respect the sovereignty of the countries in Europe.

4.2 Russia´s official discourse on enlargement

When reading through the data for Russia´s official discourse on enlargement all representations delegitimizing NATO´s enlargement policy was included in the dataset. Several representations were dominant in both 2008, 2014, and 2017, while some were only applicable to one timeframe or event. The following section will firstly present the representation found across all timeframes, then move into the specific events and show the dominant representations there as well as discuss some of the development of the representations.

<u>The description representation</u>

Just as with NATO´s official discourse, a clear description representation was found in the data for Russia. This representation was consistent through all three periods chosen for the analysis and was reiterated throughout the timeframes. Russia was found to use one specific word to describe and to delegitimize NATO´s enlargement policy. The word ´expansion´ (Kremlin, 2008:1; Kremlin, 2008: 4; Kremlin, 2008: 5; Kremlin, 2008: 6; Kremlin, 2008: 7; Kremlin, 2008: 8; Kremlin, 2008: 9; Kremlin, 2008: 11; Kremlin, 2008: 12; Kremlin, 2008: 16; Kremlin, 2008: 17; Kremlin, 2014: 1; Kremlin, 2014: 2; Kremlin, 2014: 5; Kremlin, 2014: 6; Kremlin, 2014: 8; Kremlin, 2017: 1; Kremlin, 2017: 4) was observed in several variations throughout the data set. Russia is using ´expansion´ to describe NATO´s enlargement policy consistently throughout the timeframes. Expansion is a negatively loaded word that is used consistently by the Russian President. Russia is using the word expansion instead of enlargement to describe the policy to both delegitimize the policy, but also to show the world their opinions of it and what it is doing to the European continent. "Of course we are not happy to see NATO expanding right up to Russia´s borders" (Kremlin, 2008: 17), this excerpt shows us that they are using expansion to express their opinions about the policy. Russia is clearly trying to make NATO and other players on the arena understand that NATO´s enlargement policy is infringing on their interests and is making Russia insecure.

Russia is refusing to use the actual name of the policy, enlargement. They are consistently using expansion instead of enlargement, however there were some representations in the data where the Russian President used ´enlargement´ (Kremlin, 2008: 12; Kremlin, 2014: 3) instead of expansion. This is interesting because the Russian official discourse on NATO´s enlargement policy was extremely consistent across the data, while in 2008 and 2014, years that did contain critical events for the security environment in Europe, the President called the policy enlargement (Kremlin, 2008: 12; Kremlin, 2014: 3). These are not examples of sentences where the name of the policy is being used, it is still a description of the policy. It is interesting why the President chose to use ´enlargement´ instead of ´expansion´ on these occasions. One possible reason might be that in these specific documents the President wanted to be more diplomatic in the way he described the policy to evoke certain feelings towards themselves as the suppressed. Another is that he simply misspoke and forgot to use ´expansion´ to describe it.

Another interesting thing that was observed in the data in connection with the description representation was the mention of the alleged promise that was made to Russia during the German reunification talks. Russia clearly feels that NATO has broken a promise of not moving eastward, and is again describing this move eastward as an expansion. The way Russia is talking about the enlargement policy as a broken promise shows us that they are clearly trying to delegitimize the policy because they were promised that it would not happen. "…we were promised […] that after Germany´s reunification, NATO would not expand eastward. The then NATO Secretary-General told us that the alliance wouldn't expand beyond its eastern borders" (Kremlin, 2014: 2). This excerpt shows us that Russia is considering the vocal promise that was made as a contract, or a gentleman´s agreement, and that NATO´s move eastward is in clear violation of this promise. This representation was found in both 2008 and in 2014, two timeframes where critical events happened on the European continent, it was however not apparent in the data that was analyzed for 2017.

One word that is apparent in this representation is ´promise´ (Kremlin, 2008: 14; Kremlin, 2014: 2), which is a strong word because promise means that you have given your word to do or not to do something. Russia is using the word promise to show that NATO has broken a promise, and thereby insinuating that they might do so again towards them or another actor. The word collection ´would not expand´ (Kremlin, 2014: 2; Kremlin, 2014: 8) was also found in connection with ´promise´. Part of the promise was that NATO would not move their alliance further east than they already had and this made the Russians hopeful for the future. Now that NATO has, Russia sees this as infringing on its sphere of influence as well as moving into territory where Russia has strong cultural and historical ties.

The geopolitical representation

Throughout the periods chosen for this analysis it became obvious that Russia is using geopolitics to delegitimize NATO´s enlargement policy. Part of their geopolitical representation is that NATO is moving ever closer to their borders. They are moving their infrastructure there as well, which Russia might observe as an aggression. This representation is observed throughout the data. It shows us that Russia is using geopolitics as one of their strongest arguments to counteract NATO´s enlargement policy and to shape opinions of it. The word ´geopolitical´ (Kremlin, 2014: 2; Kremlin, 2014: 4) was only observed in 2014, but

geopolitics has been used by Russia as a representation of the official discourse without calling it geopolitics throughout the data. The analysis of the geopolitical representation includes words such as ´borders´ (Kremlin, 2008: 1; Kremlin, 2008: 6; Kremlin, 2008: 16; Kremlin, 2008: 17; Kremlin, 2014: 2; Kremlin, 2014: 5; Kremlin, 2014: 6; Kremlin, 2014: 8; Kremlin, 2017: 3; Kremlin, 2017: 5), ´isolation´ (Kremlin, 2008: 11; Kremlin), ´surround´ (Kremlin, 2008: 13), and ´containment´ (Kremlin, 2014: 1), and are included as being part of it without using the actual word of the representation.

All these words are used by Russia in different contexts to evoke the same feelings, that NATO is behaving aggressively towards Russia and that this might possibly worsen both their relationship as well as the security environment in Europe. One important thing to look at when analyzing the geopolitical representation is that Russia is starting to feel excluded from areas that they previously had easy access to. "…ousted from a region that is extremely important to us" (Kremlin, 2014: 2). This specific excerpt talks about the Black Sea region where Russia has had access for a long time. They feel that if NATO expands to that area, Russia will lose their access and thereby part of their interests will be taken from them. Another important thing to look at is that NATO is a military alliance and Russia is scared what such an alliance, that they are not a member of, will bring to their borders. "…we are against having a military alliance making itself at home right in our backyard or in our historic territory" (Kremlin, 2014: 1).

In the data, it was observed that Russia, several times, turned to historical elements to delegitimize NATO´s enlargement policy. Several excerpts mentioned going back to the way things were during the Cold War with new dividing lines being drawn in Europe, and a containment of Russia. The historical elements of the representation were apparent in 2008 and 2014 but not observed in 2017. "…continues the old logic behind the policies in place at a time when Russia was seen as an adversary at the very least" (Kremlin, 2008: 8). This excerpt from the data shows us that Russia feels that NATO is returning to Cold War politics and viewing Russia as an aggressor once again. The word containment was mentioned earlier, and it is also relevant here. If Russia is being described as an aggressor, they might start to act like it due to fear of what might happen if they do not. During the Cold War, there was a dividing line through Europe and both sides were contained on each side. "…NATO is bringing its military infrastructure right up to our borders and is drawing new dividing lines in

Europe" (Kremlin, 2008: 16). This excerpt shows that Russia is interpreting the actions from NATO as creating new dividing lines in Europe, which might result in a reaction from them. This representation of the Russian official discourse on enlargement is warning the other European countries that if the security environment in Europe slips back to how it looked during the Cold War, the Russians will have to react accordingly to safeguard their country and their interests.

Going back to the original geopolitical representation of Russia´s official discourse on NATO´s enlargement policy, it is important to discuss the infrastructure aspect of it and what consequences this might have for the European security environment. The infrastructure most mentioned in the representation is military bases and missile defense systems. Russia fears that NATO´s eastward expansion will lead to new NATO military bases, and that missile defense systems will be established in countries that have a border with Russia. This is perceived as a threat to them and could eventually lead to destabilizing the security environment in Europe. Russia feels that they would "…be forced to retarget our missiles against the sites that represent a threat" (Kremlin, 2008: 3) if such sites were established on their borders. This could lead Europe into a dangerous environment, with each actor reacting to the others actions. Russia is using this representation to delegitimize NATO´s enlargement policy to show that no one knows what might happen in the future as a result of this policy, and they do not want to be the aggressor that starts it.

The reaction representation

One very important representation of Russia´s official discourse on NATO´s enlargement policy is the reaction representation. Through this representation Russia is telling the world, and more specifically NATO, what they will have to do if NATO continues their enlargement further east. This representation was observed throughout the timeframes and through it Russia´s possible future actions are presented. This representation has a lot in common with the previous representations mentioned, but only in the way that they are using the other representations as explanations for why they must react, and that is why this representation is interesting. One word that was consistently used in the data to show the reaction representation was ´measures´ (Kremlin, 2008: 1; Kremlin, 2008: 2; Kremlin, 2008: 5; Kremlin, 2008: 7; Kremlin, 2017: 2). This word is used to show that Russia will have to

take measures to ensure their own security and interests if NATO continues to infringe on it. Other words such as ´react´ (Kremlin, 2014: 2; Kremlin, 2014: 6) and ´defend´ (Kremlin, 2008: 5) are also used in this representation. If NATO does not change their enlargement policy and their attitude, Russia clearly states that they will have to come with some sort of countermeasures to make sure their interests are not being infringed and their security not decreased. "…Russia will be forced to take measures to protect its security" (Kremlin, 2008: 7). Russia is ready to protect its security in the face of an expansionist NATO and they are using this to delegitimize the policy. If Russia must protect their security against an alliance that has so many European members, the security environment on the continent might shift dramatically.

The conversation representation

One representation that showed up in the data from 2008 and 2014 was the conversation representation. When reading through the data on the official Russian discourse on enlargement it is obvious that Russia feels like their voice is not being heard, their worries not being taken seriously, and that NATO refuses to discuss the enlargement policy´s consequences with them. If NATO would have had a conversation with Russia concerning the policy and laid out the plans forward, then Russia might have been more inclined to understand the logics behind it, and understand that the policy is not a tool meant to harm them. "We constantly expressed concern over the enlargement of NATO but our concerns were ignored" (Kremlin, 2014: 3). As can be seen from the excerpt, Russia feels as if they have made all the correct approaches to create a conversation concerning the enlargement policy but have not been heard. This is a way to delegitimize the policy because it portrays NATO as a stubborn alliance that does not wish to discuss their policies with adversaries. An excerpt from the data in 2008 shows us that Russia has many concerns regarding the policy but have not been able to get any answers from NATO. "…we have received no constructive responses to our completely legitimate concerns" (Kremlin, 2008: 1).

It becomes obvious through the data that Russia is using this representation to delegitimize NATO´s enlargement policy with common words such as conversation, answer and cooperation. These are words that are embedded in the world we live in today; Russia is using these specific words to evoke strong feelings of distrust towards NATO, and to show

the world that they are not the enemy in this situation. "…NATO surround us with its bases and takes in more and more countries, while telling us, ´don't worry everything is fine´" (Kremlin, 2008: 13). Russia is presenting NATO as not wanting to confirm that there are apprehensions towards their policy. Russia has stated their concerns to NATO, and they seem to be brushing it off as ungrounded fear.

2008 – The Russo-Georgian War

Many of the representations that have been mentioned earlier were observed in 2008, including the description representation, the geopolitical representation, the reaction representation, and the conversation representation. 2008 was a year where a lot happened on the European arena, but for this thesis the main crisis was the Russo-Georgian War. One interesting representation that appeared in 2008 was the idea of ´sovereignty´ (Kremlin, 2008: 2). Although it was only observed in one of the texts in the dataset for 2008 it has importance. Russia is presenting the idea that countries that want to become members of NATO must give up parts of their sovereignty and that this will have a negative impact because it will place limitations on the countries that are giving up parts of their sovereignty. Sovereignty is the most important power a country holds and there is no situation where it will be beneficial for a country to agree to give up parts of it. This contrasts with how NATO uses sovereignty in their representations.

Another interesting representation was the democratizing representation. NATO has represented their enlargement policy as spreading democracy, Russia presents it differently. "…if a country is a member of NATO, it can insist on being considered democratic, and if not, that means it isn't democratic?" (Kremlin, 2008: 6). Even though the question Russia is asking here can be considered redundant, it does raise the issue of NATO membership creating democracy. NATO is pushing for the idea of democracy, but it is the state that takes the measures to become democratic. If a country is not a member of NATO it can still be a democracy. Russia is presenting the idea that accession to NATO does not automatically lead to democratization (Kremlin, 2008: 6) and that it is not NATO that is creating democracy but the states. They are arguing that countries can be democratic without being a part of NATO and delegitimizing one of NATO´s main arguments for the policy in Europe.

2014 – Russian annexation of Crimea

In 2014, the European community was witness to a crisis that could change the whole security environment in Europe, Russia annexed Crimea as a response to Ukraine´s new government and NATO´s involvement. There were many representations present in the data from 2014, and many of them have already been discussed. The historical representation, as part of the geopolitical representation, was apparent in the first part of the year, the conversation representation was present in the second part of the year, and the description representation was observed throughout the year. The conversation representation was observed as being a strong part of Russia´s delegitimizing efforts in 2014 and this might be a result of the events the European community saw in 2008 with the Russo-Georgian War. From the data collected in 2014, Russia tried to use as many representations as possible to present their official discourse on NATO´s enlargement policy. This can be successful, but it can also become too much. If the representations had been consistent throughout the period it would have been more believable, but too many representations portray a lack of consistency. Many of the representations shown in 2014 are good representations that does a good job of delegitimizing the enlargement policy, but the lack of consistency creates difficulties for the reader to pin down exactly what Russia sees as the biggest problems.

2017 – present time

One interesting representation that appeared in 2017 was a statement of NATO´s enlargement causing an imbalance on the European continent as well as in the world. "…it destroys the strategic balance in the world" (Kremlin, 2017: 2). Russia is showing here that it is their belief that the enlargement policy is not creating stability in the region, rather the opposite. The security environment in Europe will suffer as a consequence of the enlargement policy, because some countries are included in the agreements and some are not. With the advances NATO is taking toward the Russian border, Russia will be forced to react appropriately and this could destabilize the region. The data shows that Russia is clearly using imbalance and instability as representations of their official discourse on NATO´s enlargement policy, and to delegitimize it.

Most of the representations that have been discussed above were also present in 2017, this shows that Russia has been able to remain mostly consistent in their official discourse on NATO´s enlargement. The fact that a representation that was presented in 2008, still is valid in 2017 shows their persistence and reluctance towards the policy. Russia is still refusing to use the name of the policy when talking about it. They are still consistently using the word ´expansion´ when addressing it. Russia is still addressing the issue of NATO´s infrastructure that is creeping closer to their borders and the measures they will have to take in response. The issue of mistrust is still very clear in the representations; Russia presents an issue where their concerns are still not being addressed. One interesting representation of Russia´s official discourse on the enlargement policy is that Russia is blaming the United States of America (USA) for the policy in one statement. "…an instrument of US foreign policy" (Kremlin, 2017: 3). No single member country of NATO has been pointed out as the reason that NATO has chosen to expand their membership before this. In this representation, Russia clearly believes that the USA is using NATO as a tool to promote its own interests. Russia is using USA´s power relationship with the European member states to delegitimize the enlargement policy. Because this excerpt came from 2017, it would be interesting to see if Russia continues to use these types of representations to delegitimize the policy.

4.3 Comparison of NATO´s and Russia´s official discourse on enlargement

This section of the chapter will compare and contrast the representations of the discourse from both NATO and Russia. It will start with a comparison of the description representation of the two actors, as this was consistently found in the data from both actors. It will then move into a comparison and discussion of the rest of the representations found. The last part will discuss NATO and Russia´s discourse on Georgian accession to NATO and possible repercussions of this.

<u>The description representation</u>

NATO and Russia are using the description representation to portray two very different scenarios and descriptions of NATO´s enlargement policy. NATO was found to consistently describe the policy by its name, enlargement. This is not to say that they only used the word as the name of the policy, NATO did use the word to describe the policy as well as naming it. But the NATO Secretary General consistently used enlargement throughout the data for the analysis as the descriptive word for the policy. The Russian President consistently used the word expansion to describe the policy, even when using the name for it. However, a couple of instances was found where the President did use enlargement instead of expansion. In these instances, enlargement was not used as the name of the policy, but as a description of it. This is very interesting because the President of Russia was found to be extremely consistent with using the word expansion to describe the policy. From the analysis it looked like the Russian President in fact refused to use enlargement as a descriptive word of the policy, and even as a name. It is very interesting that the two different actors chose to use these two very similar, yet very different representations of description. The two words, enlargement and expansion, are two very differently loaded words even though they are used to describe the same thing.

Expansion is a negatively loaded word used to portray something that is intruding and spreading to an area where it has no rights, despite what is already there. It is a word used to show that someone or something is actively using their power without taking into account the actors or objects that are already there. The Oxford Dictionary (n.d.) defines expansion in political terms as "The political strategy of extending a state´s territory by encroaching on that of other nations". Expanding is a word describing an entity spreading without regard of what is already there and what is next to it, it describes something that is pushing through borders and in political terms violating the sovereignty of other states. Enlargement is a positively loaded word in comparison. Enlargement is a word also used to describe something spreading, but in a positive context. When using enlargement as the describing word, what is meant is something being enlarged, or getting bigger. The word enlargement is used when the spreading of the entity is consensual and desired in the areas that it is spreading to. Enlargement could be used to describe something that is correct and something that would not violate the sovereignty of any states.

The fact that NATO and Russia are using two very similar words, with very different meanings behind them is very interesting. Russia is using the word ´expansion´ to show the world that NATO´s enlargement policy is encroaching on their territory and their interests, and that the policy is pushing its way forward without any regards to the countries that it will affect. NATO is using enlargement both to name the policy as well as describing it. It is obvious that they would choose a word that is positively loaded seeing as it is their policy. They want the world around them to see the policy as a positive tool and embrace the changes that will come from it. Both words for the representation chosen are describing something that is spreading, and this shows us the two actors´ discourse on the policy. Russia´s discourse on the policy from the description representation is negatively loaded, while NATO´s discourse is positive. Russia is refusing to use the name of the policy when talking about it, which shows how negative they believe its impact will be on them and the countries that will become members of the Alliance. NATO has named the policy ´enlargement´ which shows everyone that they believe that the policy will have a positive impact.

NATO´s descriptive representation also includes showing how the enlargement will positively affect the European security environment, the countries that become members, and the Alliance itself. By using words such as family, integration, and unification NATO is describing the enlargement policy as something extremely positive for Europe as well as the countries that wish to become members. When comparing expansion to family it is obvious that NATO represents the enlargement policy as inclusive and comfortable, while Russia views it as expansionist and unnecessary.

Comparison

The next section will be a comparison of all representations of the discourses, except the description representation. The description representation was found consistently through all the data for both actors while the rest of the representations were a little bit different from each other, but still very interesting to look at.

The first thing to look at here is what kinds of representations were found consistently for each of the actors, as this will give us an overview of what the actors find important when

choosing what kind of language to use when presenting their discourse on NATO´s enlargement policy. In the data from NATO there was only one representation that was found throughout the data, excluding the description representation, the defense representation. In this representation NATO is defending the enlargement policy by using language that is positively loaded, statements that draws out positive feelings about the policy, and using words that persuade the European community that enlargement is necessary and beneficial. In the data from Russia there were several representations found across the data; the geopolitical representation, the reaction representation, and the conversation representation. The geopolitical representation shows how Russia feels that NATO´s enlargement policy is encroaching on their sphere of influence and creating a threat. The reaction representation is a representation that Russia is using to deter countries from NATO by showing what they would be forced to do if NATO proceeds further east in Europe. The last representation found in the data from Russia is the conversation representation. This representation shows how Russia is presenting themselves as having tried to create meaningful conversations with NATO with regards to their concerns surrounding the enlargement policy.

One interesting aspect of these representations compared to one another is the obvious trend seen between them. NATO´s representations are mostly defensive and explanatory, while Russia´s representations are reactionary. NATO´s representations explain the positive outcomes that will come from the enlargement policy and how this will strengthen the entire continent of Europe. Russia´s representations explain how they will be affected and forced to react. NATO wishes to use their representations to show everyone that the policy will be a positive effort for everyone, including Russia, and they are trying gain approval for it. They are using defensive and explanatory representations to explain how the countries in Europe will benefit from the policy, will benefit everyone, and to defend the choice they made to go through with the policy despite the pressure from Russia.

Russia is using their geopolitical representation to show the world and NATO how the Alliance´s actions will affect and restrict Russia, as a major power player on the European security arena. Russia is using their reaction representation as a deterrence towards the enlargement policy. This representation has connections with the geopolitical representation, as the geopolitical representations shows us how Russia´s interests will be infringed and thus shows us how Russia will be forced to act if NATO continues moving further east. In the

reaction representation, the language clearly shows that Russia is presenting the case as them being forced to act because NATO is not willing to listen to them and is disregarding Russian interests in eastern Europe. This is where the conversation representation comes in, because the language here clearly insinuates that Russia has tried to engage in conversation to explain their concerns. The conversation representation is particularly interesting because the language used here is specifically created to make NATO seem like an oppressive power that is not willing to engage in constructive conversation with countries that question and are opposed to their policies. "We constantly expressed concern over the enlargement of NATO but our concerns were ignored" (Kremlin, 2014: 3). This excerpt shows us that the language Russia has chosen puts Russia in a very positive light and NATO in a negative one. Russia presents themselves as the actor that is willing to engage in constructive conversation about the policy and presents NATO as the actor that is not willing to discuss the policy with possible adversaries.

The representations found in the data from Russia differ from NATO´s in the way that Russia is very focused on how the enlargement policy will affect them and not everyone else. There are some representations that mentions how it will affect other actors, but mostly the representations are focused on how the policy will affect Russia and how this again will affect the security environment in Europe. "…a threat to our national security" (Kremlin, 2008: 3). These types of representations were observed throughout the data from Russia and it affects the analysis in the way that Russia is very concerned with how the policy will affect their interests. By using these types of representations of their discourse, Russia is creating an identity of themselves as the victim of the policy. Russia is, through their representations, creating a vacuum where they are the only actor that is being affected and targeted by the policy. Some representations were observed in the data mentioning how the policy would affect other actors on the European arena, "…prospects of membership have split the population" (Kremlin, 2008: 14). But Russia was observed to consistently use the representations to show how the policy would affect them and what they must do if NATO comes too close. Going through the data it is clear that Russia feels that their security will be at stake with NATO´s enlargement policy, and that they will have to act in accordance. This could possibly destabilize the security environment on the European continent.

NATO´s representations differ from Russia´s as they focus mainly on how the enlargement policy will affect prospective members, the European security arena and the whole world, instead of focusing on how it will benefit the Alliance. NATO could have used the representations to show how enlarging their membership would benefit the current members and strengthen the Alliance as it is. Instead the representations observed from NATO´s data focused more on how it would affect outside actors instead of themselves. "…as the Alliance grew, security grew and stability and prosperity spread across this continent" (NATO, 2014: 2). Very few representation in the data from NATO was observed to use language that showed how the enlargement of membership would benefit the Alliance as an actor. Most representations were observed to explain how the policy would benefit Europe in the long run, some were found to explain how it would benefit certain countries, and some were found to explain how it would affect the whole world.

The following excerpts are examples of how NATO have represented the benefits of the enlargement policy for everyone: "…bigger and bigger sum of peace, security and stability in Europe" (NATO, 2014: 1), "…integration into the Euro-Atlantic family where Georgia naturally belongs" (NATO, 2014: 1), and "…advance stability across the Euro-Atlantic area, and beyond" (NATO, 2014: 2). NATO presented the benefits other actors will experience as a representation of their discourse, instead of focusing on how they themselves will benefit from it. There will be benefits for NATO, and its members, from increasing the membership but by not focusing on these NATO is representing themselves as a non-egotistical actor that wants other actors to reap the benefits from being part of the Alliance. It is clear from the data that NATO wishes to represent themselves as a protector of other actors and as an actor that does not focus on their own benefits but rather how others can benefit from them.

It is apparent that NATO and Russia present themselves and the situation very differently through their representations of their discourse on NATO´s enlargement policy and their identity. Russia is victimizing themselves through the representations by using language that explains how the policy will affect them and how they are incapable of protecting themselves from the policy with diplomatic measures. They are also presenting themselves as the ´bigger person´ and NATO as the punitive and non-cooperative actor. Russia is also presenting NATO as an Other that is egotistical and an oppressor on the

European arena. NATO is presenting themselves as an actor that is non-egotistical, sacrificing and protecting others. They are also presenting themselves as the ´bigger person´ that does not worry about how the enlargement policy will benefit them but instead how it will benefit others. NATO´s representations of Russia´s identity as an Other is vague. They are not representing Russia as a completely different other, but not a similar Other either. Russia is presented as a partner with different views on the security issues in Europe and as an actor that sometimes doesn't know what is best for themselves. These representations of identity show us that there is a gap between the way the two actors identify themselves and each other, and this can become problematic. Seeing such a big gap between the identities can lead to very different foreign policies on the issues between the two actors and this can cause major problems in the future.

The representations observed in the data for the two actors before, during, and after the Russo-Georgian War is interesting because one can see how representations of a discourse can change during a year due to a critical event. When looking at the data from 2008 the most interesting difference between the representations that NATO and Russia presents is in the latter part of the year. Here the representations from NATO completely disappears while Russia´s representations become more targeted and victimizing. In the latter part of the year the Russian President is using language that is presenting Russia as a victim with NATO as a major threat to their interests. The Russian representations in this period is harsher than the rest of the year, using language such as "…it is absolutely against us" (Kremlin, 2008: 14), "…done as they pleased" (Kremlin, 2008: 15), and "…action directed against us" (Kremlin, 2008: 16). The rest of the year does include representations from all categories mentioned earlier, but in the latter part of the year the representations became much more pointed towards NATO as the oppressor and Russia as the victim. Throughout the year NATO´s representations consisted mostly of the description representation.

The changes in the representations over the three years chosen for this analysis were not as drastic as was suspected before the analysis was started. There were some subtle changes, but for the most part the representations stayed the same from both actors. Russia´s representations remained, not surprisingly, negative towards NATO´s enlargement policy through all three years, and NATO´s remained positive. There were some changes in the representations, but for the most part the same things were reiterated in different wording over

the three years. The language used in the representations from NATO is focused on selling the idea of the policy and creating approval through promises and benefits. These benefits have been seen in other member states and NATO is selling the idea that it will translate into all new members. The language in the data from Russia is focused on themselves, how NATO´s enlargement policy is affecting their sphere of influence, and trying to create disapproval of the policy. These representations were observed throughout the data and did not change substantially.

The lack of drastic changes in the representations from the two actors tells us that the two actors´ discourse on NATO´s enlargement policy has not changed much despite many changes on the European arena. There have been diplomatic efforts to create a better relationship, critical events on the European security arena, and critical events that have resulted in cooperation between the two actors, but the discourse´s have not changed drastically. The fact that the Russian discourse is the opposite of NATO´s on the enlargement policy tells us a lot about the relationship between the two and what the future might look like. Lack of change in the discourse on the enlargement policy tells us that the factors that have played a part have had little, if any, effect on the discourse. The lack of change insinuates that the relationship between the two actors have not changed much over the years despite many efforts and it leaves us with questions of what, if anything, will change this in the future.

If one is to use NATO and Russia´s discourse on the enlargement policy as a guide to how their relationship has changed over time it is evident that the relationship has not changed drastically, despite efforts to improve the relationship and critical events that could have changed it. From the data in this thesis the two seem to be on two different sides of an argument that neither can win. Because their discourses are so far from each other, and have not changed much over time, one could conclude that the relationship is strained and all efforts that are being done to better the relationship have failed in some sense. NATO´s discourse on enlargement is a positive one. Their discourse presents a policy that will be beneficial to all, will create stability, and spread NATO´s values. Russia´s discourse on the policy is inherently negative, describing a scenario where Russia is set to the side as a powerful actor on the European arena that will have to react if the Alliance comes too close. These two discourses are on opposite sides of each other and a reconciliation between the two

is hard to imagine. Because these two discourses have not changed much over the three periods this thesis is looking at, one might argue that they won't change in the near future. If the discourses do not change, the foreign policies of the two will most likely remain the same, and this will not lead to a better relationship. This does not mean that the relationship will get worse but as long as the discourses does not change, the relationship will most likely remain the same or possibly become more strained. This might eventually escalate and the security environment in Europe is the first continent that will be destabilized by this.

<u>Possible NATO membership for Georgia</u>

The former sections have discussed in length the discourses on NATO´s enlargement policy. This section will discuss the discourse on the possible accession of a country and how this might implicate the discourses and the relationship between NATO and Russia. This section will be looking at the discourse of the enlargement policy in action as opposed to the policy itself and will be using the possible accession of Georgia as its case study.

The case study for this thesis is NATO and Russia´s discourse on possible Georgian membership in the Alliance, and this is clearly a problematic area. Through NATO and Russia´s discourse on the enlargement policy one can deduct the discourse on Georgian membership in NATO. It is apparent that the enlargement policy has created issues between NATO and Russia in the past: the Russo-Georgian War, the annexation of Crimea, and the failure of the NRC are some examples of this. Through the discourses above one can assume that Russia is inherently against the policy, while NATO is pushing for it.

Accepting new members into the Alliance that has a border with Russia can be highly problematic because Russia has stated that they will have to take measures to counteract NATO´s actions. Russia has made it clear through its representations that they will not accept NATO encircling them with member states, including possible military bases, and this promise does include Georgia. The Georgian state has on multiple occasions stated that they aspire to become members of NATO because they view themselves as part of Europe and want to be integrated into Euro-Atlantic structures. NATO has stated on multiple occasions that Georgia will become a member of the Alliance: "…integration into the Euro-Atlantic family, where Georgia naturally belongs" (NATO, 2014: 1). This excerpt from the data shows

us that NATO believes that Georgia would fit well in the Alliance and it proves that Georgia´s European tendencies will allow them a place in the Euro-Atlantic family. It is obvious that NATO wants Georgia to become a member and that Georgia wants it, but Georgia has still not received a MAP. In 2008 the discussions surrounding Georgia in NATO were optimistic and one were lead to believe that they would soon receive a MAP. But the events of 2008 most likely put Georgia´s MAP on hold indefinitely. The Russo-Georgian War between Russia and Georgia in South Ossetia showed the members of NATO that there were internal conflicts in Georgia that had to be overcome before Georgia could receive a MAP. It also showed them the lengths Russia were willing to go to protect their interests in the region.

Russia has made it clear through their representations that by letting Georgia becoming a member of the Alliance, NATO is infringing on Russian interests resulting in an unstable European continent. Russia´s representations on their discourse on NATO´s enlargement policy shows us that Georgian membership would most likely create an even more strained relationship between NATO and Russia than the one we have seen and see today. The representations of the discourses presented in the analysis will have a direct impact on the representations of Georgian accession and how the situation will unfold. NATO has repeatedly stated that Georgia will one day become a member and that no non-member state can veto this decision, but some members of the Alliance see the Russian threat as realistic and are therefore reluctant to agree to Georgian accession. Russia on the other hand have stated multiple times that they will not accept a military alliance encircling them and infringing on their sphere of influence. "…we must consider these circumstances and react accordingly" (Kremlin, 2014: 2). What ´react accordingly´ means exactly is hard to say but it is plausible to draw the conclusion that it would not be beneficial to the relationship between NATO and Russia, neither the European continent.

NATO and Russia´s discourses on the enlargement policy have not changed drastically over the periods selected for this thesis so one can assume that they will remain the same for some time to come. This is problematic when looking at possible Georgian accession to the Alliance as NATO have promised them membership. The discourses are too far from each other and this will cause issues with future enlargement of the Alliance. From Russia´s discourse on enlargement we know they will react, and from NATO´s discourse we know that Georgia has been promised membership. If Georgia were to become a member and

the discourses remained the same one could assume that the relationship between NATO and Russia would not benefit from it and one consequence would be that the security environment in Europe could suffer. The relationship between the two actors is important on the European arena because they are two major power players, and if the relationship between them took a turn for the worse it is hard to say what would happen. But from the representations of the discourses found in this thesis I believe that Georgian membership in NATO would not be beneficial for the relationship between NATO and Russia and the European security environment.

5. Conclusion

The objective of this thesis has been to study how the relationship between NATO and Russia has been shaped by NATO´s enlargement policy and the possible accession of a former Soviet republic. By studying NATO and Russia´s relationship through a post-structural perspective and applying discourse analysis, this thesis has attempted to create understanding to how NATO´s enlargement policy has shaped the relationship between the two and how possible accession of Georgia have and can shape it. The post-structural perspective allowed for a deeper understanding of the language used to describe NATO´s enlargement policy and the possibility of Georgia´s accession, in connection with critical events that many mainstream theories would not. Discourse analysis allowed for an understanding of the lack of changes in the way NATO and Russia used language to present their views on the policy and how this affected the relationship between the two.

The Russo-Georgian War in 2008 and the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014 were chosen as critical events to ground the analysis in. The discourses found were directly linked with critical events with high tension on the arena that involved NATO and Russia, as well as present time with low tension. This thesis has sought to see if the language used to describe NATO´s enlargement policy changed significantly from times with high tension to times with lower tension, and how this could possibly affect the actor´s foreign policy and the relationship between NATO and Russia. The inquiry is not looking for how one critical event lead to a change in foreign policy, as some mainstream theories might, but how the language changed in these periods and how this shaped the relationship between NATO and Russia. The lack of change in the discourse, despite critical events on the European arena, is still affecting foreign policy decisions and many mainstream theories would not have helped uncover this.

The analysis was divided up into three sections; NATO´s discourse on the enlargement policy, Russia´s discourse on the policy, and a comparison and discussion of the findings in the first two sections. It was presented as such to show NATO and Russia´s official discourse on the policy first separately and then attempt to show the differences between the representations and what implications this would have on the discourses. The

comparison section shows the differences between the two actors, it reveals the identity of the two, and shows how the language changes over time. The first section which presented the representations of NATO´s official discourse on the enlargement policy showed that there were two representations that dominated the discourse: description and defense. While the second section showed that the Russian discourse is presented through more representations than NATO: description, geopolitical, reaction, and conversation. The third section revealed that that Russia is inherently negative towards the enlargement policy while NATO is pushing for it being beneficial for everyone. It is clear that the representations used by the actors did not change much over time, which again leads to very little change in the discourses.

The language the actors were observed to use in their representations of their discourses illuminates some of the underlying problems with NATO´s enlargement policy on the European arena. There is a past of mutual suspicion and distrust between the two and this is part of the reason why Russia, seemingly, cannot and will not accept the policy. Russia is not necessarily opposed to the Alliance, but they are opposed to the policy. NATO has constantly promised that the policy is not a tool devised against Russia, but Russia still feel it is infringing on their interests and taking away from their security. Russia´s discourse on the enlargement policy clearly shows that it has harmed the relationship between them and NATO. Russia´s discourse shows a very negative relation toward the policy and this has caused issues in the past between the two actors. If nothing changes it will most likely cause problems in the future as well. This leads into the case study of this thesis, NATO and Russia´s discourse on Georgian accession to NATO. Russia has repeatedly stated that they will not tolerate being encircled by NATO and the case of Georgia has created problems in the past. On the other hand, NATO has stated clearly that Georgia will become a member of the Alliance. There does not seem to be any agreement between the two actors on the enlargement policy and the possible accession of Georgia. It is clear that NATO and Russia´s discourse on the enlargement policy as well as possible accession of Georgia is too far apart for a reconciliation. The discourses observed in this analysis tells us that the relationship between NATO and Russia is suffering from the enlargement policy and that the security environment in Europe might be destabilized as a result.

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Appendix

Data-set – all representations observed in the data

	NATO 2008	Russia 2008
January-April	"…contribute to Euro-Atlantic security" (NATO, 2008: 1) "…Euro-Atlantic integration" (NATO, 2008: 1) "…best guarantee for long-term peace and stability on our continent" (NATO, 2008:1) "…the open door should not become a hollow phrase" (NATO, 2008: 2) "…performance based process" (NATO, 2008: 2) "…the only recipe for lasting peace and stability" (NATO, 2008: 3) "…Euro-Atlantic integration" (NATO, 2008: 3)	"…the world has entered a new spiral in the arms race" (Kremlin, 2008: 1) "NATO itself is expanding" (Kremlin, 2008: 1) "…bringing its military infrastructure ever closer to our borders" (Kremlin, 2008: 1) "…we have received no constructive responses to our completely legitimate concerns" (Kremlin, 2008: 1) "…not seen any real steps to look for compromise" (Kremlin, 2008: 1) "…we have to take measures in response" (Kremlin, 2008: 1) "…emotional impact" (Kremlin, 2008: 2)

	"…NATO family" (NATO, 2008: 4)	"…joining an alliance of this type would place limitations on our country´s sovereignty" (Kremlin, 2008: 2)
	"Euro-Atlantic integration is the recipe for security and stability" (NATO, 2008: 4)	"If Ukraine is willing to limit its own sovereignty" (Kremlin, 2008: 2)
	"...Euro-Atlantic ingegration" (NATO 2008: 4)	"…limitations on sovereignty have certain consequences in real life" (Kremlin, 2008: 2)
	"…prevent that we would see the horrors of the nineties again" (NATO, 2008: 4)	"…the goal of neutralising our nuclear missile potential" (Kremlin, 2008: 2)
	"…Euro-Atlantic integration" (NATO, 2008: 5)	"…countermeasures" (Kremlin, 2008: 2)
	"…the unification of Europe" (NATO, 2008: 5)	"…a threat to our national security" (Kremlin, 2008: 3)
	"…an excellent framework for managing Europe´s longer-term transition" (NATO, 2008: 6)	"…be forced to retarget our missiles against the sites that represent a threat" (Kremlin, 2008: 3)
	"…the power of enlargement to strengthen our Euro-Atlantic community" (NATO, 2008: 6)	

	"…unification of Europe" (NATO, 2008: 6)	"…without anyone´s opinion being asked" (Kremlin, 2008: 3)
	"…enlarge the European democratic space" (NATO, 2008: 6)	"…expansion" (Kremlin, 2008: 4)
	"…boost of stability and confidence" (NATO, 2008: 7)	"…unnecessary but also harmful and counterproductive" (Kremlin, 2008: 4)
	"…Euro-Atlantic integration" (NATO, 2008: 7)	"…overstepping its limits" (Kremlin, 2008: 4)
	"…Europe will be a safer place" (NATO, 2008: 7)	"…NATO expansion" (Kremlin, 2008: 5)
	"…extended the sphere of security and stability" (NATO, 2008: 8)	"…force Russia to respond by taking measures to protect its security" (Kremlin, 2008: 5)
	"…preserve and enhance liberty, democracy and the rule of law –values" (NATO, 2008: 8)	"…ignoring Russia´s interests" (Kremlin, 2008: 5)
	"…enhance the security and stability" (NATO, 2008: 8)	"Russia will defend its positions" (Kremlin, 2008: 5)
	"…new chapter" (NATO, 2008: 8)	

	78	"…NATO cannot ensure its security at expense of other countries" (Kremlin, 2008: 5)
		"…expansion of NATO" (Kremlin, 2008: 6)
		"…not working at strengthening predictability and trust in our cooperation and have prevented it from moving to a new level" (Kremlin, 2008: 6)
		"…appearance of a powerful military block on our borders […] a direct threat" (Kremlin, 2008: 6)
		"…expansion" (Kremlin, 2008: 6) X3
		"…if a country is a member of NATO, it can insist on being considered democratic and if not, that means it isn´t democratic?" (Kremlin, 2008: 6)

		79	"Entry into NATO, unfortunately, does not automatically lead to the democratisation of a country" (Kremlin, 2008: 6) "…the idea of the democratising role of the military-political bloc has been greatly exaggerated" (Kremlin, 2008: 6) "…expansionist policy" (Kremlin, 2008: 6) "…we do not believe that automatic expansion will resolve the current problems" (Kremlin, 2008: 6) "…the NATO bloc is not an effective answer to today´s challenges and threats" (Kremlin, 2008: 6) "…moving military infrastructure to our borders" (Kremlin, 2008: 6) "…disregard of Russian interests" (Kremlin, 2008: 7)

		"…expansion" (Kremlin, 2008: 7) X2
		"…Russia will be forced to take measures to protect its security" (Kremlin, 2008: 7)
		"…expansion plans" (Kremlin, 2008: 8)
		"NATO´s expansion" (Kremlin, 2008: 8) X2
		"…continues the old logic behind the policies in place at a time when Russia was seen as an adversary at the very least" (Kremlin, 2008: 8)
		"…NATO´s expansion" (Kremlin, 2008: 9)
		"…counter-productive" (Kremlin, 2008: 9)
		"…military-political bloc´s expansion" (Kremlin 2008: 9)

		"NATO is expanding but is not offering at the same time more effective instruments for combating terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, infectious diseases or organised crime" (Kremlin, 2008: 9)
May-August	"…contribution to the alliance" (NATO, 2008: 9) "…Euro-Atlantic integration" (NATO, 2008: 9) "…great success" (NATO, 2008: 10) "…Euro-Atlantic security and stability" (NATO, 2008: 10) "…build a stable and secure Europe that is whole, free and at peace" (NATO, 2008: 10) "…no shortcuts" (NATO, 2008: 12)	"…divergence" (Kremlin, 2008: 10) "…consequences of marginalizing and isolating countries, creating zones with different levels of security and abandoning the creation of general regional collective security systems" (Kremlin, 2008: 11) "…NATO expansion" (Kremlin, 2008: 11) X2 "...our relations with NATO would be completely undermined ruined for a long time to come" (Kremlin, 2008: 11) "…cause serious damage" (Kremlin, 2008: 11)

	"…enlarging the Euro-Atlantic family of democratic nations that is NATO" (NATO, 2008: 13) "…democratic credentials" (NATO, 2008: 13) "…further the goals of the alliance" (NATO 2008: 13) "…foster the goals of the Washington Treaty" (NATO, 2008: 14) "…inspiration and encouragement" (NATO, 2008: 14) "…enlarging the Euro-Atlantic family of democratic nations" (NATO, 2008: 15) "…democratic credentials" (NATO, 2008: 15) "…further the goals of this alliance" (NATO, 2008: 15)	"…the membership of NATO is rather restricted" (Kremlin, 2008: 12) "…expansion" (Kremlin, 2008: 12) "…NATO enlargement" (Kremlin, 2008: 12) "…NATO surrounds us with its bases and takes in more and more countries, while telling us, ´don't worry everything is fine´" (Kremlin, 2008: 13) "…we do not like this" (Kremlin, 2008: 13)
September-December	MISSING DATA	"…promises were made" (Kremlin, 2008: 14)

	83	"…assurances were given" (Kremlin, 2008: 14) "…Russia cannot feel comfortable in a situation where military bases are increasingly being built around it" (Kremlin, 2008: 14) "It is absolutely against us" (Kremlin, 2008: 14) "…any country that has shown loyalty to the bloc, is ready to be rude to Russia, and can demonstrate a basic set of fairly obvious things, has the right to claim NATO membership" (Kremlin, 2008: 14) "…threats NATO membership creates" (Kremlin, 2008: 14) "…prospects of membership have split the population" (Kremlin, 2008: 14)

	84	"…NATO is not becoming stronger from such actions, this is not helping international relations, and tensions are not diminishing" (Kremlin, 2008: 14) "…it is not fair to Russia" (Kremlin, 2008: 14) "…humiliating for Russia" (Kremlin 2008: 14) "…very destabilizing factor for NATO and the Caucasus" (Kremlin, 2008: 14) "…provoke a conflict" (Kremlin, 2008: 15) "It is in NATO´s interest of course" (Kremlin, 2008: 15) "…done as the pleased" (Kremlin, 2008: 15) "…NATO´s expansion" (Kremlin, 2008: 16) "…victory over Russia" (Kremlin, 2008: 16)

	85	"…NATO is bringing its military infrastructure right up to our borders and is drawing new dividing lines in Europe" (Kremlin, 2008: 16) "…action directed against us" (Kremlin, 2008: 16) "Of course we are not happy to see NATO expanding right up to Russia´s borders" (Kremlin, 2008: 17)

	NATO 2014	Russia 2014
January-April	"…wider region a safer place" (NATO, 2014: 1) "…integration into the Euro-Atlantic family, where Georgia naturally belongs" (NATO, 2014: 1) "…bigger and bigger sum of peace, security and stability in Europe" (NATO, 2014: 1)	"…NATO´s expansion" (Kremlin, 2014: 1) "…the infamous policy of containment, led in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, continues today" (Kremlin, 2014: 1) "…sweep us up in a corner" (Kremlin, 2014: 1) "…a perfectly real threat" (Kremlin, 2014: 1)

	"…Russia has looked for stability and security along her Western borders. And that's exactly what the EU and NATO enlargement process have provided" (NATO, 2014: 1)	"…we are against having a military alliance making itself at home right in our backyard or in our historic territory" (Kremlin, 2014: 1)
	"…a Europe that could be whole, free and at peace" (NATO, 2014: 2)	"The Soviet Union ceased to exist, but NATO remains" (Kremlin, 2014: 2)
	"…adopt important reforms" (NATO, 2014: 2)	"Why is it expanding towards our borders?" (Kremlin, 2014: 2)
	"…as the Alliance grew, security grew and stability and prosperity spread across this continent" (NATO, 2014: 2)	"…establish new blocs?" (Kremlin, 2014: 2)
	"…freedom, security, and prosperity could flourish" (NATO, 2014: 2)	"…we were promised […] that after Germany´s reunification, NATO wouldn't expand eastward. The then NATO Secretary-General told us that the alliance wouldn't expand beyond its eastern borders" (Kremlin, 2014: 2)
	"…success story" (NATO, 2014: 2)	
	"…unique transatlantic family" (NATO, 2014: 2)	"…it´s enough to sign a bilateral treaty on friendship and mutual assistance" (Kremlin, 2014: 2)
	"…greater security" (NATO, 2014: 2)	

	"…advance stability across the Euro-Atlantic area, and beyond" (NATO, 2014: 2)	"…apprehensions and questions" (Kremlin, 2014: 2)
	"…stability in an unpredictable world" (NATO, 2014: 2)	"…counteract" (Kremlin, 2014: 2)
	"…safeguard the freedom and security of all our members" (NATO, 2014: 2)	"…NATO´s eastward expansion" (Kremlin, 2014: 2)
	"…integration in the Euro-Atlantic community" (NATO, 2014: 3)	"…geopolitically sensitive" (Kremlin, 2014: 2)
	"…improving Euro-Atlantic security" (NATO, 2014: 3)	"…ousted from the Black Sea area" (Kremlin, 2014: 2)
	"…Euro-Atlantic integration" (NATO, 2014: 4)	"…ousted from a region that is extremely important for us" (Kremlin, 2014: 2)
	"…NATO´s Open Door Policy has made Europe more secure" (NATO, 2014: 4)	"…we must consider these circumstances and react accordingly" (Kremlin, 2014: 2)
	"…Euro-Atlantic integration" (NATO, 2014: 5)	"…given up part of their sovereignty" (Kremlin, 2014: 2)

	"…Neither Russia or any other third party can have an impact" (NATO, 2014: 5) "…provide effective defence" (NATO, 2014: 5) "…Euro-Atlantic family of nations" (NATO, 2014: 6) "…these countries gave their democracies the strongest possible anchor" (NATO, 2014: 6) "…rejoined the family of Western nations" (NATO, 2014: 6) "…spread the space of freedom, democracy, security and stability ever further across this once-divided continent" (NATO, 2014: 6) "…great success stories" (NATO, 2014: 6) "…peace and prosperity" (NATO, 2014: 6)	

	"…sovereign choice" (NATO, 2014: 6)	
	"Accession to NATO is a free choice" (NATO, 2014: 6)	
	"…spread of peace and stability across Europe" (NATO, 2014: 6)	
	"…heal the divisions of the past, overcome conflicts which lasted generations, and build a community based on inclusiveness, democracy and cooperation" (NATO, 2014: 6)	
	"…great success stories of our time" (NATO, 2014: 7)	
	"…advance democracy, stability and prosperity" (NATO, 2014: 7)	
	"…erase many of the painful dividing lines on our continent" (NATO, 2014: 7)	
	"…a Europe whole, free and at peace" (NATO, 2014: 7)	

May-August	"It´s not just one for all – it´s also one for all" (NATO, 2014: 8)	"…they never ask us about our opinion" (Kremlin, 2014: 3)
	"…they exercised their sovereign right to make that choice" (NATO, 2014: 8)	"…never any dialogue on this issue" (Kremlin, 2014: 3)
	"…NATO´s enlargement has actually been good for Russia in terms of trade. Investment. Security" (NATO, 2014: 8)	"…the next thing you know, it will have a US missile defence complex stationed on its territory (Ukraine)" (Kremlin, 2014: 3)
	"…a Europe whole and free" (NATO, 2014: 9)	"…concerns regarding economic and security issues" (Kremlin, 2014: 3)
	"…by the choice of sovereign nations and free people" (NATO, 2014: 9)	"We constantly expressed concern over the enlargement of NATO but our concerns were ignored" (Kremlin, 2014: 3)
	"…our vision for a Europe whole, free and at peace" (NATO, 2014: 9)	
	"…this country and many others were attracted by the values and principles of our Euro-Atlantic institutions" (NATO, 2014: 9)	"Why don´t we have the right to evaluate events from the standpoint of our security" (Kremlin, 2014: 3)
	"…sovereign right to choose" (NATO, 2014: 9)	

	"…freedom to choose" (NATO, 2014: 9)	"The only responsibility they can impose on the alliance members is to contribute money to the joint military budget which they don't do anyway" (Kremlin, 2014: 3)
	"…Euro-Atlantic integration" (NATO, 2014: 9)	
	"They are strong in NATO, and NATO is stronger with them" (NATO, 2014: 10)	"…accession to NATO" (Kremlin, 2014: 4)
	"…great success" (NATO, 2014: 10)	"…an accession could be followed by the deployment of missile strike systems" (Kremlin, 2014: 4)
	"…spread security and prosperity and moved closer to the goal of a Europe whole, free and at peace" (NATO, 2014: 10)	"…serious geopolitical consequences for our country" (Kremlin, 2014: 4)
	"…NATO´s open door policy is not a provocation against anybody" (NATO, 2014: 11)	"…forced out of the Black Sea territory" (Kremlin, 2014: 4)
		"…certain red lines that we can´t allow to be crossed (Ukraine and Crimea)" (Kremlin, 2014: 4)
	"…everybody, including Russia, has profited from the zone of stability security, and prosperity we have contributed to develop" (NATO, 2014: 11)	"…nobody has conducted a meaningful dialogue with us on this" (Kremlin, 2014: 4)

	"…we have not accepted new members of NATO as part of any aggression against Russia" (NATO, 2014: 11)	"…no substantive discussion" (Kremlin, 2014: 4)
	"…right to decide itself its security policies and Alliance affiliation" (NATO, 2014: 11)	"…means the possible deployment of NATO troops, ballistic missile systems and missile defence capabilities" (Kremlin, 2014: 4)
	"…create a Europe whole, free and at peace" (NATO, 2014: 11)	"…radically new environment" (Kremlin, 2014: 4)
	"…an historic success" (NATO, 2014: 12)	"…we could not allow NATO forces to eventually come to the land of Crimea and Sevastopol, the land of Russian military glory, and cardinally change the balance of forces in the Black Sea area" (Kremlin, 2014: 5)
	"…spread peace and cooperation across Europe" (NATO, 2014: 12)	
	"…been good for the countries that joined" (NATO, 2014: 12)	
	"…been good for the alliance as a whole" (NATO, 2014: 12)	"…expanding NATO" (Kremlin, 2014: 5)
	"…NATO helped bring Europe together" (NATO, 2014: 13)	"…extending the area under their military and political control ever closer to our borders" (Kremlin, 2014: 5)

	"…hand of friendship" (NATO, 2014: 13) "…contribute to Euro-Atlantic security" (NATO, 2014: 13) "…no third country can veto future enlargement of NATO" (NATO, 2014 13)	"Any nation that is part of an alliance gives up part of its sovereignty" (Kremlin, 2014: 6) "We will react appropriately and proportionately to the approach of NATO´s military infrastructure toward our borders, and we will not fail to notice the expansion of global missile defence systems and increases in the reserves of strategic non-nuclear precision weaponry" (Kremlin, 2014: 6)
September-December	"…a historic success for NATO" (NATO, 2014: 14) "…a Europe whole, free and at peace" (NATO, 2014: 14) "…no third country has a veto over NATO enlargement" (NATO, 2014: 14) "…NATO´s greatest success stories" (NATO, 2014: 15)	"…why have you sold your sovereignty?" (Kremlin, 2014: 7) "…NATO would not expand eastward" (Kremlin, 2014: 8) "…the expansion started immediately" (Kremlin, 2014: 8) "…expansion" (Kremlin, 2014: 8)

	"…increase the space of democracy and freedom in Europe" (NATO, 2014: 15)	"…it is a virtual wall" (Kremlin, 2014: 8)
	"…each country has the right to choose its own path" (NATO, 2014: 15)	"What about the anti-missile systems next to our borders?" (Kremlin, 2014: 8)
	"…a great success" (NATO, 2014: 15)	"They never stopped building walls" (Kremlin, 2014: 8)
	"…enlarged the part of Europe which is now living in freedom, in democracy" (NATO, 2014: 15)	"…we have the right to do so too (ensure its own security)" (Kremlin, 2014: 8)
	"…a great success" (NATO, 2014: 15)	
	"…Euro-Atlantic integration" (NATO, 2014: 16) X4	
	"…a great success" (NATO, 2014: 17)X2	
	"…more democracy, more stability, more freedom, prosperity in a new members or new Allies in NATO" (NATO, 2014: 17)	

	"It´s up to each and every independent nation to decide itself what kind of security arrangements it wants to be part of" (NATO, 2014: 19) "…great success" (NATO, 2014: 19) "…no third country outside NATO can veto" (NATO, 2014: 19) "…contributed to democracy, to stability, and to peace in Europe" (NATO, 2014: 20) "No country has ever been forced into NATO" (NATO, 2014: 20) "…great success" (NATO, 2014: 20) "…the strongest military alliance in the world" (NATO, 2014: 20) "…an alliance of democracies" (NATO, 2014: 20)	

	NATO 2017	Russia 2017
(December) January-April	"…stability and peace in Europe" (NATO, 2016: 1)	"…expansion" (Kremlin, 2017: 1)
	"…an important building block" (NATO, 2016: 1)	"...more serious reasons for doing so" (Kremlin, 2017: 1)
	"…a Europe whole, free and at peace" (NATO, 2016: 1)	"They have stepped up deployment of strategic and conventional arms beyond the national borders of the principal NATO member states" (Kremlin, 2017: 1)
	"…Euro-Atlantic community" (NATO, 2017: 2) X2	
	"…joining a community of nations dedicated to democracy, human rights, the rule of law and to each other" (NATO, 2017: 2)	"…provoking us constantly" (Kremlin, 2017: 1)
		"…attempts to interfere in our internal affairs in a bid to destabilise the social and political situation in Russia itself" (Kremlin, 2017: 1)
	"…spread greater peace and prosperity across our country" (NATO, 2017: 2)	
	"…never forced any country" (NATO, 2017: 2)	
	"…NATO family" (NATO, 2017: 2)	

	"…peace, security, stability and thereby creating the foundation for economic prosperity and growth" (NATO, 2017: 2) "success" (NATO, 2017: 2) "…the way to move towards a Europe whole, free and at peace" (NATO, 2017: 2) "…we will never, never, never try to force any country to join NATO" (NATO, 2017: 2) "…making NATO and Europe stronger and at peace" (NATO, 2017: 3) "…a family of democratic nations" (NATO, 2017: 4) "…promote stability, peace, prosperity in Europe and NATO" (NATO, 2017: 4) "No one else has the right to intervene or to say that they don't accept that a new country becomes a NATO member" (NATO, 2017: 4)	

May-August	"…NATO family" (NATO, 2017: 5)

"…share our values and who can contribute to our security" (NATO, 2017: 5)

"…good for the stability" (NATO, 2017: 5)

"…good for international peace and security" (NATO, 2017: 5)

"…Euro-Atlantic integration" (NATO, 2017: 5) | "…infrastructure creeps closer" (Kremlin, 2017: 2)

"…taking the appropriate measures" (Kremlin, 2017: 2)

"…it destroys the strategic balance in the world" (Kremlin, 2017: 2)

"…an instrument of US foreign policy" (Kremlin, 2017: 3)

"…their military infrastructure expanding and approaching our borders" (Kremlin, 2017: 3)

"…concern" (Kremlin, 2017: 3) |
| September-December | "…shared security and shared values" (NATO, 2017: 6)

"…historic success" (NATO, 2017: 7) | "…exporting democracy" (Kremlin, 2017: 4)

"…NATO expansion" (Kremlin, 2017: 4)

"…a heavy burden of mistrust" (Kremlin, 2017: 4) |

	"…a key contributor to Euro-Atlantic security" (NATO, 2017: 7) "…secured peace in Europe and paved the way for European integration" (NATO, 2017:7)	"…global imbalance" (Kremlin, 2017: 4) "…aggressive" (Kremlin, 2017: 5) "…when we move our forces on our territory, it is perceived and portrayed as a threat to somebody, but when foreign military bases and infrastructure approach our borders and new complexes are deployed, that is perfectly fine" (Kremlin, 2017: 5)