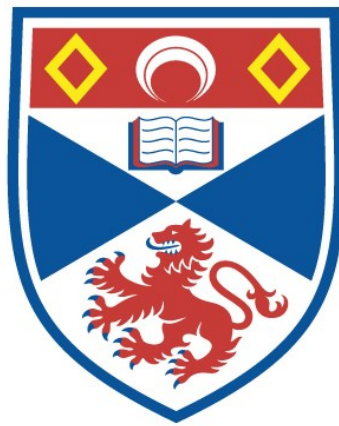# BEYOND SECURITIZATION:
A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE
BUSH ADMINISTRATION AND IRAQ

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A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews

2010

Beyond Securitization:

A Critical Review of the Bush Administration and Iraq

A Thesis submitted to the School of International Relations of the University of St Andrews in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Faye Donnelly

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ABSTRACT

Beyond Securitization:

A Critical Review of the Bush Administration and Iraq

This thesis responds to the longstanding call from constructivist and poststructuralist scholars for a turn to discourse. It focuses on the paradox of the ability of language to act as a constituting and constraining device within an agent-structure discussion. The Copenhagen School(CS), its attention to language and its concept of securitization is examined in terms of its strengths and weaknesses, including bringing discourse onto the security agenda to an unprecedented extent. This thesis seeks to speak security at a deeper level and move securitization beyond the moment of utterance and the notion of agents breaking free of rules that would otherwise bind, as well as beyond a singular definition of security. It is proposed that the CS framework can be theoretically complemented by Wittgenstein's notion of language games on board. The analytical shift made by juxtaposing a speech act and a language game also foregrounds the link between language and rules. Wittgenstein's idea of 'acts of interpretation' is also considered, and substantive questions are raised about what the language of security legitimates in principle and in practice. The Bush administration's justifications for the 2003 Iraq war are taken as a point of departure, and covers how the Bush administration deployed the language of security to justify highly controversial moves. Their narrative about the use of the pre-emptive use of force without an imminent threat existing and 'enhanced interrogation techniques' such as those seen in the Abu Ghraib photographs in the name of security exemplify that words matter. The arguments conclude that adjustments are needed in the way security is currently spoken in IR theory.

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I, Faye Donnelly, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 80,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

I was admitted as a research student in February 2006 and as a candidate for the degree of PhD in February 2006; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between 2006 and 2010.

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Acknowledgements

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<u>Introduction</u>

<u>Research Puzzle</u>

The Iraq war represents one of the most puzzling and controversial events in the post Cold War era. The manner in which the Bush administration finally decided to hold Saddam Hussein accountable, through military intervention, provoked a worldwide outcry, severely tarnished the United States reputation around the world and led to a succession of negative events such as those in Abu Ghraib, whose full implications are yet to be determined.

Invading Iraq on the grounds of pre-emptive self-defence proved particularly contentious. The invasion marked a rare case in recent history when a major power engaged in military action against another country for preventive reasons, although rhetorically justified by the Bush administration as pre-emptive action. In March 2003, the United States and its allies invaded Iraq, and while legal justifications for the invasion were issued, a general consensus emerged that that the Bush administration's arguments were legally unpersuasive (Lobel and Ratner 1999). Yet, assertions of illegality did not prevent the invasion. Reflecting on such a situation, it is pertinent to ask how this foreign policy move was made possible. How could the Bush administration make a case for war without sufficient evidence to support their claim of imminent threats? How did security come to occupy the dominant justification for the Iraq war when it was exactly the security of the situation that was itself under strenuous debate? These puzzles require further investigation and shall concern us throughout the entire thesis.

<u>Justifying the Iraq War: The Literature</u>

While much ink has been spilled over the US military invasion of Iraq in 2003, this thesis is not another rehearsal about the causes behind the Iraq war.[1] Instead, the answers explored deal with the issue of language and legitimacy. This thesis is about portraying the Bush administration's foreign policy ventures in Iraq as a discursive space. Focusing on the language they used to justify the invasion, I highlight how these policies were given a particular meaning through a language of security. My goal is to explicate how this particular linguistic constellation both enabled and constrained the Bush administration as they justified their military action in Iraq, and by extension their global war on terror.

A cut in at the level of language departs significantly from conventional wisdom found in mainstream International Relations (IR) speculation about the Iraq war. Previous research has tended to focus on why the Bush administration undertook this unilateral foreign policy venture.[2] For many, the promulgation of the Bush Doctrine after September 11, 2001 made a special claim to global leadership. The premise of pre-emptive self-defence, which underscored the latter, strongly implied that America would use any means necessary, including force, to secure themselves. As Charles Krauthammer (2002/2003: 6-7) remarks, "we are witnessing the dominance of a single power unlike anything ever seen". Similarly, John Lewis Gaddis (2002:50) claimed that the Bush Doctrine represented, "the most sweeping shift in U.S. grand strategy since the beginning of the Cold War". Without a doubt, the US possessed the military capabilities to pursue their preferential course of action, fuelling predictions that the Bush administration was bent on a course of hegemonic imperialism. Such prioritisations were held to be highly emblematic of the rise of neo-conservatives hawks within this administration.[3]

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[1] For such accounts see among others Rick Fawn and Raymond Hinnebusch (2006);Chaim Kaufmann (2004): Walter J. Boyne (2003); Rajiv Chandrasekaran (2007) and Micah L. Sifry and Christopher Cerf (2003).

[2] The explanations offered range from oil, (see Joseph Stiglitz 2008), to President Bush carrying out paternal legacies see Robert J. Pauly and Tom Lansford 2005), neo-conservative elites (see Francis Fukuyama (2006), the Jewish lobby (see John Mearsheimer, Stephen Walt, Geoffrey Wheatcroft, William Pfaff, Daniel Levy, Joseph Massad, Noam Chomsky and Mark Mazower 2006)

[3] See James Mann (2004).

What is particularly interesting about the unilateralist argument is that America is depicted as being unbound.[4] Focusing on the unrivalled material powers and resources available to the Bush administration lends itself to the assumption that they could pursue their interests without encountering any serious impediments. Their ability to launch 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' without the support of a second UN Security Council Resolution, and in the face of enormous national and international condemnation, strengthens the suggestion that the Bush administration was unrestricted in the pursuit of their own self-interests. Through continuous claims that the world had fundamentally altered after September 11, the Bush administration maintained that the old rules and international structures central to international order were no longer adequate to deal with terrorist threats. Instead, they argued, radically different security strategies and tactics were needed so as to ensure America could use whatever means were necessary to defeat their enemies. Such assertions fuel the notion that the Bush administration was acting in a unilateral world. Indeed, many scholars saw the invasion as a major challenge for the international law discipline because the Bush administration and their so-called 'coalition of the willing'[5] seemed to be deliberately flouting international law or considering it irrelevant. [6]

The unilateral argument is consistent with a rationalist understanding. The dominant popular explanation purported by this approach is a strategically calculating actor operating within a structured environment. From this viewpoint, the Bush administration's decision for war represents a calculated move to maximize their interests with as little cost a possible. As the most powerful actor possessing the largest material resources, their plan to invade Iraq would succeed in the way in which they dictated.

Thus, the Bush administration's foreign policy is a difficult case in terms of demonstrating that their power was constrained, particularly by language. The Iraq

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[4] See Ivo H. Daadler and James Lindsay (2005); John E. Riely (2005-2006) and John Newhouse (2003).
[5] In the context of the Iraq war, the coalition of the willing refers to the group of countries that were prepared to publicly support the US actions in Iraq. For interesting accounts on the role of this group see Sarah Anderson, Phyllis Bennis and John Cavanagh (2003). For more basic information of the composition of this group see Steve Schifferes (2003). Again, the presence of a coalition undermines claims that the Bush administration thought it had the power to go it alone.
[6] See Philippe Sands (2005) and John Prados, (2004).

war makes this case even more difficult. Assuming that America went it alone, or acted unilaterally, to invade the country is premised on the idea of cheap talk. The language used by the Bush administration to justify their decision to go to war with Iraq in 2003 is inconsequential. At worst it can be seen as case of deliberate deceit.

While the aforementioned accounts carry considerable validity, they are nevertheless too narrow to capture the processes that ultimately created the space in which the Bush administration could make a case for employing pre-emptive self-defence. Firstly, relying on materialist claims is bound to be problematic in the case of Iraq as material evidence turned out to be highly contested. Indeed, as shown, the absence of material power, most noticeably Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), turned out to be extremely limited in enabling the Bush administration to justify this particular war. A heavy reliance on material proof weakened rather than strengthened their reasons for undertaking pre-emptive military actions against Iraq. An even more troubling facet of focusing on the materiality of the invasion in isolation is that it overlooks how the material aspects of this situation came to be understood as the grounds for war. Facts, after all, do not speak for themselves, but people speak for them. Creating a sharp dichotomy between material and linguistic levels is too simplistic. Taking both into consideration underscores how the language used by the Bush administration helped to give meaning to the particular context.

On closer investigation, we find that language played a vital role in enabling the Iraq regime to be understood as a grave and growing threat that could only be overcome through pre-emptive measures. Without these arguments, war would not have been possible. Had a different discursive label been used, such as *attack*, a different sphere of action would have been created, one requiring a different set of rules and practices. Without the language of pre-emptive self-defence, the idea of a war in Iraq would not have had resonance. It is important to clarify that material aspects still remain crucial in understanding the Bush administration's decision to go to war. Language is not all there is to explaining the event. Had the events of September 11, 2001 not taken place, the Iraq war would probably not have occurred or at least not in the same way.[7]

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[7] For instance, the US failed to launch a war against Saddam Hussein during the presidency of George H. Bush in 1991 although there was sufficient evidence that this regime possessed WMD at this stage. See John Mearshimer and Stephen Walt, (2003) and John Mueller (2005).

Nevertheless, language is a crucial facet of understanding how this mode of action became possible, one that requires far more attention than it receives within the crude considerations of unilateralism and American power.

Rationalist accounts compound the weakness found in materialist arguments claiming to explain the causes of the Iraq war. While acknowledging that the Bush administration certainly attempted to purse its own self-interests, I show they were interacting with others and in a context which had established sets of meanings. In order to build a convincing argument, it was necessary for the Bush administration to present the case in a manner that resonated with what was already meaningful in this particular setting. This limited the choice of discursive frames available to them. They were unable to act alone.

Secondly, accounts of rationalist unilateralism are overly deterministic insofar as they tend to assume that the Bush administration's foreign policy was set to a particular course. Within these accounts, the war with Iraq is portrayed as an inevitable outgrowth of September 11 2001. One caused the other. Although the Iraq war was triggered by the window of opportunity the terrorist attacks constituted, I highlight other options were also available, given there was not direct connection between Iraq and the events of September 11, 2001. This link was socially constructed. The way in which the Iraq war has played out has not been linear or even predictable. On the contrary it has taken many unforeseen avenues. Cause did not lead to effect. This calls into question the positivist claim that all events can be measured and assessed using scientific variables.

For the government to commit such an undertaking, it had to persuade society that such an undertaking was necessary, desirable and achievable. This points to the importance of language. The fact that the Iraq war was so contentious meant that the Bush administration had to build a case for war. Language was a crucial vehicle that facilitated this argumentative process. Indeed, how can you make an argument without language? Persuasion is not about brute force, but argumentation.

Assertions of unilateralism also work from the premise that the Bush administration's foreign policy was not dramatically transformed. Moreover, any modificiation can be

put down to strategic recalculation. Absent in this equation is the possibility that the Bush administration may have been forced to change their agenda even when it went against their policy preferences. Nor can they explain how the Bush administration's language of security survived and adapted even when it should have collapsed. Why did this change occur? Does language have anything to do with change? And if so how?

To fill the gaps left in materialist, positivist and rationalist approaches, I turn to a constructivist understanding. This approach reinforces how important and powerful language can be in creating spheres of action and interaction. By assuming that language matters, it provides an alternative angle with which to view the Iraq war. It demonstrates how this particular foreign policy was socially constructed through cycles of contestation and interaction following the dramatic events of September 11, 2001. This gives us greater insight into how the Iraq war became a possibility in the face of serious contestation.

Several critical veins of IR scholarship have provided useful entry points to show that neither the US war on terror nor the Iraq war were inevitable (Croft (2006), Jackson (2005), Krebs and Lobasz (2007) McDonald (2005)). All of the aforementioned contributors explore the discourse used by the Bush administration to socially construct their 'war on terror' in the aftermath of September 11, 2001. Each shows the power this discourse had in constructing and diffusing a particular set of meanings in which the US war on terror came to be understood as a common sense assumption, which, in turn legitimated new policy programmes such as the Department of Homeland Security in 2003 and the Patriot Act which was signed into law on 26 October 2001.[8] Through their analysis it is possible to see how, in the weeks and months after September 11, 2001, attempts were made to make sense of that day. According to Stuart Croft (2006:17) what is at stake is, "an examination of the production of meaning in a crisis, of the cultural production of a discourse and the cultural reproduction that followed".

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[8] The official website of the US Department of Homeland of Security can be found at
http://www.dhs.gov/index.shtm, the US Patriot Act can also be found at
http://epic.org/privacy/terrorism/hr3162.html

My point of departure with respect to this literature is to examine how the Bush administration's security discourse was not only constructed as a war on terror. Instead, I aim to explore how their language game of security transformed as it was put into practice. This broadens our understanding of language as a constitutive and constraining device. Unlike these authors, I try to capture how the discourse employed by the administration helped constitute the boundaries of what was permissible and possible at different stages of the security policy pursued by the administration in the name of pre-emptive self-defence. In this respect I trace the evolution of their security discourse from September 11, 2001 and how the Bush administration employed this narrative to speak security in two other episodes or what I term 'defining moments' during the Iraq war. These two defining moments are when no WMD were found in early 2003 and when the Abu Ghraib photos were released in April 2004. Both represent sites of contestation.

The first defining moment I examine is when the main justification for the US invasion was challenged by the lack of credible evidence that Iraq possessed WMD in early 2003. Clearly this represents a period of acute crisis for the Bush administration since their decision to invade Iraq was premised on Saddam Hussein possessing WMD. The findings of the UN inspectors firmly refuted this line of argument. They also raised serious questions concerning the manner in which the architects of the intervention had built their case for war. Arguably the defining moment contributed to partially disrupting the legal justification for the military intervention. The outstanding question remains in regard to how the Iraq war was still undertaken. I argue that they rebuilt their arguments.

In examining the Bush administration's response at this defining moment, I found something unexpected: that the language of security alone did not legitimate the Iraq war. Security was certainly not abandoned as a core rationale for the intervention. Instead, it remained a core logic underscoring their argument that this was a war of necessity. Nevertheless, at the defining moment the Bush administration supplemented their definition of security with a democratic logic.

It is necessary to clarify that I am not asserting this government never uttered the word *democracy* post-September 11, 2001, or throughout its global 'war on terror'

campaign. Themes of delivering humanitarian aid and liberating innocent Iraqi civilian were clearly present in the run up to the war, particularly as part of their discourse of regime change.[9] In addition to casting the Iraq war as a democratising mission, the Bush administration also greatly raised the visibility of the democracy issue by rooting the war on terrorism in a global 'freedom agenda' immediately after the September 11, 2001.[10] As President Bush declared, "*freedom and fear were at war*" (Bush, September 20, 2001).[11] Expanding on this point, Vice President Cheney remarked, "*our administration's central goal for the Americas is to continue the momentum of progress, to build a hemisphere that lives in liberty, trades in freedom and grows in prosperity*" (Cheney, May 6, 2002).[12] Such a declaration implied that democracy promotion was now an unavoidable part of any serious foreign policy debates that the Bush administration would engage in. As Jonathan Monten (2005:112) claims, "the promotion of democracy is central to the George W. Bush administration's prosecution of both the war on terrorism and its overall grand strategy, in which it is assumed that U.S. political and security interests are advanced by the spread of liberal political institutions and values abroad". While this observation is correct, alongside his claims that, "the current US strategy falls squarely within the mainstream of American diplomatic traditions" (Monten, 2005:113), I approach the issue from a different angle.[13] Making a stronger theoretical argument, I suggest this discursive shift altered the contours of their initial justifications for the Iraq war. Observing the Bush administration's shift to democracy as the epicenter of it foreign policy, on a deeper level it also showcases how the same frame of reference later became problematic.

Few have probed the oral statements of the Bush administration around this redefinition. The discursive shift itself has been underplayed in the hype about the lack of material evidence and the fact that the invasion could still proceed without it. More commonly, the recourse to democracy is taken as cheap talk to hide ulterior

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[9] For example on October 11, 2001 The President announced an 'American Fund for Afghan Children': http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/10/20011011-8.html
[10] For an in-depth discussion see Thomas Carothers (2007)
[11] Full speech available at
http://georgewbushwhitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html
[12] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020506.html
[13] Also see Michael Boyle (2008).

motives. Treating this discursive shift as insignificant window dressing cloaks what exactly was being undertaken by the Bush administration. It overlooks what kind of war they were fighting and on what grounds. What definition of security did the Bush administration invoke in response to this crisis? What do these structures suggest about the scope for speaking security? Analysing the competing and alternating language games contained within their definition of security shifts the focus of interaction from how they justified the war to the interactions between their words. It is this relationship that I am interested in.

Examining how the Bush administration moved from a language game that was defined in the name of security and pre-emptive self-defence to a broader definition of security that included democracy promotion illustrates that their language became invested with two powerful contradictions. On the one hand, tensions arose between the Bush administration's definition of the rules of war and those accepted intersubjectively. On the other hand, a tension appeared in their definition of security due to the internal inconsistencies between their language of security and democracy. Once these terms become inversely related, they constituted a set of meanings that the Bush administration did not intend. This highlights that language is a social activity outside the direct of control of the user, even a sole superpower. In short, there are limits to speaking security.

The second defining moment is the Abu Ghraib abuses in 2004. Here again we find that the Bush administration's language of security is extremely challenged by the allegations that their 'enhanced interrogation techniques' legitimated the use of systemic abuse. However, unlike the first defining moment when their security narrative survived and adapted when it was challenged, Abu Ghraib signifies the evolution to a different context. When it comes to the justification of torture, the Bush administration's security discourse collapses. After Abu Ghraib issues were re-phrased and defined outside their security discourse. The discrepancies that arise between how the Bush administration's language of security performed at the two defining moments reaffirm that discourse is never complete, and thus always susceptible to change. Taking the larger language game into consideration is crucial. If we focus solely on the Bush administration's responses we find that little has

altered. When placed in the wider context of their language game of security we begin to see the first signs of change.

Two guiding questions

My ambition to present the Iraq war as a site of linguistic contestation is brought together with deeper methodological and theoretical themes. In taking language seriously this research project proceeds from two central questions:

The first opens up a linguistic paradox:

How is language a constitutive yet constraining device?

Addressing this question requires conceptualising language as a form of action and interaction. This entails a deeper analysis on how agents make decisions and the language that they employ to communicate and justify their intentions. What role does language have in the social construction of meanings and realities? Stepping into the discursive processes highlights language as a site of contestation and thus negotiation. It is inherently linked to how things are identified, understood and recognised. All of this points to some notion of constitution. Language helps create collective social and organisational processes such as rituals, cultures, rules and identities. Nevertheless, by creating the boundaries of knowledgibility, language limits what can and cannot be deemed acceptable in a given context. On the one hand it enables agents to understand their surrounding, whereas on the other it helps to ensure that they can act in accordance with a wider social repository.

The second question builds on the first to ask:

How is it possible for words to change meanings?

Despite its omnipresence, no universal language exists. As a social formation it is never a self-contained, closed whole. The constant definition and redefinition of words is evidence of the instability of ideas. Studying language as a transformative process enables explorations into the manner in which interrelated sets of meaning not only co-exist but alternate. Paying closer attention to the discursive strategies and

practices invoked to legitimate a specific action enables explorations of how words that were considered legitimate in one context fail to be considered as such in another. How does one set of meanings surpass other alternatives? Adding depth, I explore how the meaning of reified words can change through social interactions.

By addressing these two issues my focus is on how individuals negotiate meaning in social contexts. This lens places a stronger emphasis on the power of language. It illustrates that discourse is not just derived from social power but is itself an expression of power. As shown, discursive frames categorise a particular context in a particular way, establishing the boundaries of explanation. Such definitions set the stage for emphasising certain details and ignoring or excluding others.

Contributions

This thesis develops both constructivist and critical security agendas. Initially I revisit the agent/structure debate. I then relate this to explorations into how language legitimates security practices.

Attempting to avoid the pitfalls of conventional constructivism and post-structuralism, I advocate critical constructivism as the middle ground between them. Providing this bridge is advantageous as it demonstrates that language is neither as cheap as the scientific approaches suggest, nor purely relative as with post-structuralism. Instead, language is conceptualised as an enabling and constraining device. This awareness offers two nuanced links in the relationship between agency and structure. First, drawing on critical constructivism demonstrates that language is not purely agentive in an interpretative sense, but neither is it structural in a material sense. Secondly, taking language as a form of action opens up the space to take different forms of agency into consideration. The additional layers of interactions I bring to the fore arise from the relationship between words. Acknowledging language as a site of contestation makes it imperative to analyse the internal dynamics at play within a discursive field. This adds a double layer of complexity to exploring how language enables and constrains. The extra dimension provided resides in the ability for different structures of meaning, or speech acts, to coexist, compete, conflict and even

change. The implication that transformations in a discourse can come from within as well as from outside adds depth to central characterisations on how agency is embedded in and constrained by the set of political vocabularies available at any given time.

Building on this, I elaborate a methodological approach to explore how words both enable and constrain central actors in the realm of security. Reflecting extensively on the issue of security in this manner provides a more complex and richer reading from corresponding notions of security in mainstream and critical theories of IR. Firstly, it undermines the realist claim that language is cheap, particularly in the realm of security. Aligning my argument with critical security studies, particularly the Copenhagen School's (CS) securitisation framework, I aim to show the language of security is a pivotal mechanism of power. However, I take a slightly different approach from the extant CS literature, and view the language of security not so much as a speech act or utterance, but as part of an ongoing process. As shown, the CS tends to focus on individual speech acts. In doing so, they present an overly agentive account of language. For a start, the conversation between the securitising agent and the audience is missing in their case. More problematically, their account overlooks the intersubjective structures of meaning that constitute and constrain those speaking security. Instead the story of speaking security becomes more of a monologue, with the attending temptation to represent a particular point of view.

My second critique builds on this agentive bias to show that the CS approach lacks temporality. As a result, it fails to capture transformations in the discourse of security. Hence I suggest that their model ought to take into consideration the possibility of competing discourses. Challenging the ability of one discourse to pervade society, I show that there are parts of securitised speech acts which run into other discourses in a discursive field. Outlining this battle over the definition of words exemplifies there will always be elements of meaning which are contested by other discourses. It can therefore be argued that languages are characterised by a multitude of such struggles in different issue-areas. Indeed, the third way I advance the CS framework is to broaden and deepen the concept of securitisation to incorporate a clustered concept of security. This enables the interactions between different articulations of this term to become visible. It also paves the way to explore the interaction between words.

Adopting a clustered discursive framework facilitates analyses into similar and different meanings signified in discourses.

Finally I challenge the securitisation framework treatment of rules. Taken to its logical conclusion, their definition of speaking security implies that rules are unimportant. In short, securitisation enables agents to break free of rules that are normally binding. This leaves CS with no adequate means of explaining why people draw on existing rules, or attempt to redefine them in order to legitimate their speech acts. Focusing awareness on the centrality of rules within the securitisation process is crucial to demonstrate that while the language of security gives agency, it also acts as a structure. Joining this fourfold critique together enables me to explore an under-theorised issue of securitised environments. Within existing literatures, there is a serious lack of attention paid to the outcomes of securitised speech acts, and what these processes of securitisation actually legitimate. However, if we take language as a form of action, then it becomes apparent that they also create environments and spheres of engagement. I argue it is imperative to examine how securitised environments operate as well as the rules that operate in this arena. Further study is also needed of the evolved definitions of security and acceptable behaviour within securitised realms.

Case selection: The Iraq War 2003

I chose to focus on the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war as it enabled me to narrow down their security discourse after September 11, 2001 to one specific area. This provided scope to an otherwise unmanageable research project.[14] My discussion of the origins of the war on terror discourse is thus necessarily brief. Instead this thesis takes the justifications for the Iraq war as one specific move within this larger language game. The goal is to excavate how the social world was defined and presented in the Bush administration's language of security in the Iraqi context. Again, my intention is not to construct a narrative of the Iraq war, but to illustrate the theoretical aspects of the language of security highlighted in the main chapters.

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[14] Here I refer only to a PhD research project. Obviously a book or more extensive project could address these issues in greater depth

The analyses incorporated in this research are concentrated in very limited time-frames. To contextualise how security was spoken to justify the Iraq war, I undertook an extensive discourse analysis of the Bush administration's foreign policy discourse in the six-month time period preceding and following September 11, the Iraq war and the Abu-Ghraib scandal. Discourse analysis is a tool of critique to, "illustrate how….textual and social processes are intrinsically connected and to describe, in specific contexts, the implications of this connection for the way that we think and act in the contemporary world" (George, 1994:191).

Those well versed in discourse analysis will be aware there are several different, albeit related, types of discourse analysis.[15] My goal is not to find one perfect fit so much as to provide a basis for a critical evaluation of research on language and discourse in a systematic and rigorous way. While debatable, taking this view enables me to illuminate the evolution and transformations of the Bush administration's language game of security in greater breadth. Taking this broader analytical view brings the transformative dimensions into sharper relief. Focusing extensively on the Bush administration's language at one particular point would prevent the larger language game from becoming visible. Discourse analysis is thus a methodological commitment I build upon to elucidate the core theoretical points I am addressing. I certainly am not asserting that language is all there is, but equally I wish to argue that there is added value in understanding language as a constitutive and constraining device.

The sources that I drew upon in conducting my discourse analysis are multifaceted. Primarily I have focused on the public speeches and official statements of the Bush administration. For the sake of simplicity, all the presidential and vice presidential speeches I have quoted are archived and available through the link below.[16] It is impossible to cite all the speeches I have studied and analysed in the pages that follow due to the scope of this thesis and the vastness of the literature I drew upon. What I present are key samples which capture the core lines of argument that the Bush

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[15] See Jennifer Milliken (1999).

[16] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/. These speeches can also be accessed through the U.S. National Archives website: http://www.archives.gov/

administration made in response to the lack of WMD and the Abu Ghraib photographs. Where these speeches are quoted they are quite lengthy, but again, this is unavoidable to a certain extent in order to demonstrate what their main lines of argument were. The official documents I accessed have been supplemented with extensive research of secondary sources. This includes firstly newspapers, most noticeably the Washington Post, the Guardian (UK), the New York Times. Secondly, I studied an enormous quantity of media coverage, predominantly interviews with members of the Bush administration on CNN, Fox News, ABC in the US, and BBC and Al Jazeera outside the US. Numerous official Congressional reports obtained from the Library of Congress, along with the transcripts of the twenty interviews that I conducted on a research trip to Washington D.C. in 2004, also formed an important part of the research materials underscoring my arguments. To reflect more on what Lene Hansen (2006) refers to as inter-textuality, I attempt to demonstrate that neither things nor meanings stand in isolation, but only in reference to others.

All revealed the language of security as the foundational pillar of the Bush administration's discursive response. This finding is neither based on my own personal beliefs nor on a deductive inference. Rather, I employed an inductive approach to ensure that the patterns documented here are internal to these texts rather than imposed on them through a list of pre-established criteria. Discovering the puzzles posed by the defining moment spurred me to focus more explicitly on the Bush administration's discursive arguments during this particular time period. On doing so, I realized the inherent yet overlooked importance of this redefinition, both theoretically and empirically. Using the defining moment as a starting point, I explore the tensions created in and by the discursive strategy employed by the Bush administration in justifying the Iraq war. This is the uneasy relationship between the terms *security* and *democracy*.

While these speech acts are rather different, and seem to emphasise at first contradictory elements, they are not contradictory at all if one understands the 'grammar of the term'. Turning to Abu Ghraib, I bring a number of insights to this brief excursus. Comparing the language that the Bush administration employed in these incidents, I construct crucial discursive linkages between them. This lets us see how such seemingly disparate notions were preconditions for them to speak security.

Going further, I explore how these two internal narratives changed from being conciliatory at the defining moment when no WMD were found, to being extremely contentious in the case of Abu Ghraib. Adding this comparative dimension helps to explain how the Bush administration's definition of security is problematic. It also amplifies the important consequences of this redefinition. What becomes apparent is how the Bush administration was enabled and constrained by their language of security.

Disclaimers:

Within this thesis I discuss the Bush administration in broad terms. This categorisation is problematic insofar as it treats this government as a unitary actor, omitting the factions within this government over the Iraq war. While these rivalries are worthy of closer inspection, they are not dealt with here due to space limitations.[17] To compensate for my generalisation of the Bush administration, I make reference to several members of the administration and the government rather than focusing solely on the President.

Secondly, because my greatest concern is with the security narrative constructed by the Bush administration to justify the Iraq war rather than the people or US foreign policy per se, I do carefully construct the background of the administration and the structure within which it was working. My choice to background how this group of neoconservatives came to power, and where this ideology fits in American history, was influenced by my desire to couple a theory of language with an exploration of the dynamics of how a particular language game of security was played out. This choice involved making textual selections about how they spoke security in the Iraq context and, more importantly, how this discourse adapted and transformed when it was put into use.

While the Bush administration's definition of security discussed here likely involves elements of individual mindsets, the main concern is not with whether this government is cynical, self-deceived or morally unreflective. It is not the members of

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[17] For interesting accounts see Bob Woodword (2002), (2004), (2006) and (2009).

this establishment themselves who are on trial. Rather than inquire into the inner mental state of the American political elite, I focus on proclaimed principles, observable deeds and real-world consequences. To establish the premise that language both constitutes and constrains, it is necessary and sufficient to demonstrate that the Bush administration's language of security enabled and constrained them in important ways.

This thesis claims that the Bush administration worked within the boundaries of international law to justify the Iraq war. My reading of premises and criteria might be too cursory, perhaps skirting some areas and lumping others together when international lawyers may choose to expound on them. However, providing an in-depth account of the legalistic clauses and propositions the Bush administration reworked is beyond the scope and specialization of this thesis. Nonetheless, I hope to show that we need to reflect more substantively on the language of international law.

The last note is on the structure of the thesis. While I re-evaluate the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war, the empirical case is not at the forefront of my analysis, although it does illustrate my theoretical arguments. The goal of this research is neither to offer a narrative of the war on terror nor an account of the Iraqi conflict per se. Instead, the central thrust of my argument is to envision a new way of thinking about language as an enabling and constraining device. In return, we find a clearer way to review how security is being spoken in principle and in practice.

To bring these issues together in a consistent fashion, I employ a more integrated framework which weaves the theory and empirical together in each chapter. The empirical sections are structured into every chapter, each one of them developing a particular aspect of the theoretical model. The case studies will, in each part, serve to show how those theoretical claims can be applied to security contexts. This model will be present in all the chapters, albeit the empirical side more visibly in some chapters than others. Chapter 1 is arguably where discussion of the Bush administration's language is a bit longer, though this is in order to analyse the historical genealogy of their security language after September 11, 2001.

The proposed set up departs from traditional approaches to the presentation of theory, method, and cases. I recognise that presenting my argument in this way is an unconventional approach. However, it does not invalidate the original contribution this thesis might make to the further understanding of how security is being spoken in principle or in practice. Indeed, it is my expectation that by serving as the illustration of theoretical concepts and empirical data this framework will shed some light on the evolution and adaptation of security discourses in both domains. Moreover, the empirical discussions will not be the mere application of the theory. Instead, the theoretical concepts are unpacked and glean important insights into the Bush administration, when they spoke it and what purposes in this discourse were operationalised.

Breakdown of Chapters

Chapter 1 acts as a foundational overview of the theoretical and methodological frameworks developed throughout this thesis. Here I establish the suitability of constructivism for examining the role of language in the construction of social reality. Such an understanding helps to highlight its potential as a form of power. This challenges the assumptions underlying traditional IR theories. Concerns about language and intersubjectivity are deemed irrelevant in materialist, positivist and rationalist missions to explain the pattern (s) of the world. Constructivism is among the increasing number of critical voices questioning such structural accounts. Having established that agency matters, the chapter reviews the different ways in which language is conceptualized within more reflexive lines of inquiry. In order to capture language as both a constitutive and constraining device, I argue that it is necessary to use a critical constructive or Wittgensteinian approach. Taking this line provides a middle ground between conventional constructivism and post-structuralism. Whereas the former largely ignores language, the latter oversimplifies the way in which it can be interpreted.

Thinking of language as both a site of agency and structure overcomes the impasse in the agent/structure debate highlighting the intersection between them. Examining

language itself as a structure also sparks an interesting discussion about the relationship between words. This links back to the agent-structure debate since the way words are grouped together will influence the intersubjective context in which both have meaning. Chapter 1 ends by introducing a new theoretical lens for thinking about the Iraq war. What I highlight is that this foreign policy was not an inevitable outcome of September 11, 2001 or a unilateral pursuit. Instead I maintain that the Iraq war was socially constructed. More specifically, I examine how it was given meaning through a series of discursive moves and practices undertaken in the name of security. Within the confines of this rhetorically constructed reality, the Iraq war appears as a rational and reasonable response. More significantly, for many people it seemed like the right thing to do. In this way the Bush administration's language of security and security practices reinforced each other.

Chapter 2 critically examines the Copenhagen School's framework as a progressive framework to show how language constitutes and constrains. Dealing with the issue of security, the School seems well placed to address this relationship. Its strength is that it creates a space in which security can be recognised as a performative speech act rather than a zero sum game. Unlike material, positivist and rationalist approaches, the CS hones in on the linguistic sources of security. Nevertheless, the reflections on security as a discursive practice are misplaced on three interrelated levels. Firstly, securitisation rests on the notion of speech act theory. Consequently, it examines a narrow timeframe, when security is uttered during a securitizing move.

Secondly, the CS framework prioritises the ability of the securitized speech act to break everyday rules and replace them with exceptional ones. I argue this representation overestimates the ease of creating change. More problematically, it fails to capture instances when agents do not attempt to break free of rules, but rather employ rules when they speak security. The structures of meaning that initially prompt and constrain action are forgotten or generalised.

Thirdly, I reassess the CS narrow definition of security. I posit that focusing on a speech act alone dilutes the multiplicity of referent objects that can be labelled as security issues. It also ignores the internal and often competing sets of meanings

subsumed within this term itself. My analysis moves into unexamined terrain, namely to explore how securitised environments are legitimated and operate.

Together these four oversights contribute to what I term hidden dangers of speaking security, a theme I return to in chapter 4 when I address the Abu Ghraib abuses. The final section of Chapter 2 develops the empirical case by demonstrating that, in spite of its weaknesses, securitisation sheds light on the Bush administration's language of security in several respects. Nonetheless, I illustrate the deficiencies of conceptualising the Bush administration's security discourse through a securitised frame. Specifically, I indicate that the CS framework breaks down when it comes to analysing the defining moment in question. Firstly, it is unclear whether or not this moment depicts a case of successful securitisation of the Iraq war. Secondly, and more interestingly, the CS cannot account for the fact the language of security alone was unable to justify the war. As parts of the Bush administration's foundational representations were challenged, one would expect to have seen the collapse of their securitised speech act into a new socially constructed crisis. What my analysis points to instead is how the Iraq war was justified by a clustered definition of security that included democracy. This observation is taken as a point of departure for outlining the means by which the Bush administration's security discourse survived and adapted.

Chapter 3 of the thesis points to a different way of thinking about language as a constitutive and constraining action. I draw on the thought of Ludwig Wittgenstein to develop a more complex definition of security than the CS. Acknowledging Wittgenstein's claim that we have to analyse meaning in use allows for greater multiplicity. Wittgenstein also directs analysis away from a speech act alone towards the larger process of a game. In the former we have an action, in the latter we have a series of actions or interactions. Taking my cue from here I move beyond the moment of security utterance to examine how these words are put into use. Next I move beyond the notion of rules being broken. Indeed I argue that language games draw our attention to intersubjective rules in a way that securitisation does not. It also facilitates instances where rules are redefined, even subtly, through acts of interpretation and the ramifications of these changes. Finally, I move beyond the notion of a singular utterance to explore the interaction between words. Advocating a clustered definition of security, I allow for the fact that words may not share the same importance in every

situation, but rather that they vary depending on the social interactions in which they operate and are operationalised.

Fleshing out Wittgenstein's distinction between obeying rules blindly and acts of interpretation highlights different operational modes of legitimisation. Hence this stance provides greater analytical insight into how norms that were recognised as acceptable in one instance become unacceptable in another. In establishing this link, I reinforce how language constrains as well as constitutes discursive meanings and practices. That is, language games deliver a way to trace the synchronic evolution of legitimating and de-legitimating processes in everyday as well as exceptional circumstances. The empirical section of this Chapter adopts a language games approach as an advanced way to read the Bush administration's security discourse for the Iraq war. Building on this revised conceptualisation of security, I return to the defining moment. Besides enabling the latter to become visible, a language games approach provides the conceptual and historical tools necessary to appreciate the significance of this redefinition. In short, I outline the alternative set of meanings brought into play the presence of this democratic discourse. Conceptualising the Bush administration's definition of security as a cluster illustrates that it contained two competing yet co-constitutive discourses. While interlinked in the Bush administration's security agenda, these terms operate according to different sets of rules. Thus I outline the alternative set of meanings brought into play by the presence of this democratic discourse.

The analysis in Chapter 4 shifts to the Abu Ghraib scandal and looks at contentious matters faced by the Bush administration because of the earlier defining moment. The last case study is most distinct, because torture is not usually a security issue. Although torture and security can be seen as belonging to radically different structures of argumentation, that is, torture as a human rights issue, this thesis is also interested in constructing discursive linkages between the two. Indeed, the interrelationship between security and democracy is one of the most significant and underlying themes across the cases. Undertaking this double reading reveals the possibilities for redefining the language of security are small but significant. To systematise this argument I take Abu Ghraib as representative of two broader dilemmas. Firstly, I contend this scandal illustrates the gap between the Bush administration's definition

of what is permissible in the name of security and those embedded in intersubjective rules such as the Geneva and Torture Conventions. The Abu Ghraib scandal resulted in a legitimacy crisis for the Bush administration and how they were viewed by their peers. What is less dramatic, yet just as significant, is the damage done to the meanings of the words that they were using. Put differently, it is not merely the agent's legitimacy that was drawn into question, but also the legitimacy of the very words themselves. The Abu Ghraib scandal also revealed an internal contradiction in their own definition of security. It highlights the tension between their competing narratives of security and democracy. I explore what linguistic compromise was reached when the two discourses collided. As shown, their language of security affected how they could respond to the abuses in an intelligible way.

The conclusion returns to the two main questions I raised at the beginning of the thesis, namely how language can act as a constitutive as well as a constraining device and how the meaning of words can change through the process of interaction.

Chapter 1:

Why Language Matters

Introduction

This chapter sets out to show why it is important to pay attention to language in IR. The main premise is that language represents a form of power. More specifically, I illustrate that language needs to be conceptualized as both a constitutive and constraining device. This is the linguistic paradox. Language empowers agents to act in one way rather than another, to create and communicate the narratives that tell their side of the story. Yet language also brings social realities into being by creating intersubjective structures which can be internalised and institutionalised. This limits and regulates how agents *can* act without determining the *way* they will act. Having both an agentive and structural capacity, language cannot be ignored as a central instrument that legitimises political processes and determines outcomes. Instead, it represents and produces power in the realities according to which we live and make choices.

To capture this duality we need not only to illustrate that language makes a difference, but it is also necessary to think about language in a more complex way. Within this Chapter I advocate critical constructivism as an enriched theoretical and methodological apparatus for understanding language in a more robust fashion. It presents an alternative account to traditional IR approaches. Rather than assuming talk is cheap, critical constructivism illustrates that it really does matter, and can even be very expensive for agents acting within particular spheres of engagement. A critical constructivist view also provides a nuanced reading of language than is found in more reflexive veins of IR.

Section 1 outlines the origins of the so-called constructivist turn in IR (Checkel, 1998; Price and Reus-Smith 1998). To do this, I situate constructivism vis-à-vis traditional theories within this academic field. Here, particular classificatory distinctions are made between the guiding principles of constructivism and those underscoring rationalist and positivist approaches. The significance of constructivist debates with rationalist accounts is underlined by the former's opposition to the notion that actors are unitary and driven purely by instrumental self-interest. Constructivists are also opposed to the positivist understanding of what counts as reliable knowledge within mainstream IR.

Against this backdrop, Section 2 turns a critical eye to the various strands within constructivism. Mapping these internal boundaries draws attention to the diversity of this approach. Nevertheless, these dividing lines also highlight key fissures in constructivism. I will focus on the most prominent division, namely that between conventional and critical constructivists. The separation of these two camps stems from fundamental epistemological differences, which have serious implications for how conventional and critical constructivists understand and explain the construction of social identities and realities. With respect to the issue of language, such differentiations are profound. While conventional constructivism overlooks the importance of language as a level of analysis, critical constructivists prioritise it.

Critical constructivist inquiries into the role of language are timely, particularly given the burgeoning interest in discourse in recent IR debates (Doty, 1996, Larsen, 1997, 1999, Milliken 1999, Campbell 1998, Hansen 2006). Section 3 situates critical constructivism alongside other critically inclined approaches, often called post-foundational, which address the centrality of language. Surprisingly, however, critical constructivism often appears on the fringes of these debates. I maintain that this oversight stems from the mislabeling of this approach as being either identical to its conventional counterpart or completely separate from post-structuralism. Put differently, critical constructivism does not neatly fit into either the positivist or post-positivist versions of language typified in IR. What critical constructivism offers is a way to overcome and realign the current impasse of distinguishing language as either scientific or interpretative. This allows for all sides to engage in genuine conversations about the role of theory and language in IR.

Advocating critical constructivism as a 'middle ground' I address gaps at the heart of literature that I am building upon. In Section 4 I examine the ongoing agent-structure debate in IR. Within the discipline this issue is conceptualised in several ways (Carlsnaes 1992). My focus is circumscribed in the sense that it pertains to the agent/structure relationship which constructivism advances. Building on constructivist claims that agents and structures are mutually constituted I take the agent/structure debate to the level of language to make a deeper claim. This stems from my wish to revise conventional constructivist and post-structuralist considerations about the relationship between agents, structures and language within critical IR. On the one side, we have conventional constructivists dealing with agency but not language. On the other side, we have post-structuralists dealing with language, but predominantly as a means of a structural constraint. To properly study both the constitutive and constraining dimension of language necessitates broadening the opposing viewpoints symptomatic of such discussions. I advocate critical constructivism as a possible alternative.

The second claim that flows from my reading the agent/structure debate is that the relationship between words demands greater intellectual attention. Arguing that language is never fixed is based on the assumption that alternating structures of meaning may constantly emerge in the course of interactions. Indeed, it is the possibility that multiple and interfacing languages co-existing which creates a realm of agency. Different discourses make alternative choices available, enabling agents to act in one way as opposed to another. Following on from this I argue that language must be conceptualised as a process which contains its own dynamics. Going a step further, I seek to explore the work done in, as well as by, language. The goal is to illustrate how alternative and alternating sets of meanings subsumed within a single language can constitute and constrain agency. To function in a meaningful way, competing structures of meaning embedded within a discourse must relate to each other congruently. The way that words are interwoven will affect how the meaning of a discourse is constituted as well as how it can be put into practice. I argue critical constructivism is one way to explore how language can constrain from within, due to the presence of multi-faceted structures of meaning, as well as externally as part of an intersubjective context.

Section 5 draws upon the theoretical and methodological discussions presented above to analyse the Bush administration's justification for the 2003 Iraq war. My main argument is that this particular foreign policy represents a socially constructed reality. At its broadest level this rests on two claims, the first being that the Iraq war was not an inevitable or natural outcome caused by the terrorist attacks against America on September 11, 2001. Instead, I argue this decision for war was chosen by the Bush administration as the most appropriate response to deal with the security issues that arose in the aftermath of September 11. Exploring how the construction of this war became possible usurps rationalist and positivist accounts which try to determine what caused it. It also problematises arguments that the US invasion was a unilateral action based on the pursuit of material gains.

Undermining claims of unilateralism, I illustrate that these actions were constituted through processes of interaction and within an intersubjective realm. This both empowered but also restricted how the Bush administration could act. The second point addressed is that the Bush administration's language was a powerful constitutive and constraining device in legitimating their foreign policy for the Iraq war. To make this claim I outline how language worked in this context. The language this administration constructed after September 11, 2001 was certainly an indispensable tool which gave the Iraq war meaning. In sum, the language they used to justify the Iraq war helped to constitute a reality in which certain identities and norms were held to be true. Within these discursive renderings, Saddam Hussein came to constitute a threat that necessitated the use of pre-emptive self-defence.

Demonstrating that the Bush administration was constrained by language is a much harder task. At first glance it almost seems paradoxical. Given the military prowess of the US and the manner in which they conducted their foreign policies post-September 11, 2001, i.e. by any means necessary, it is easy to overlook that the Bush administration was constrained. I wish to recollect this point. In conjunction with illustrating that President Bush and his team were constrained by the intersubjective context in which they were interacting, I wish to highlight they were limited by the discursive frames they employed to legitimate the Iraq war.

Firstly, the language the Bush administration used to legitimate the Iraq war was structural insofar as it emerges out of an already existing security context, which already had a particular set of meanings. In this case what we are witness to is not the US acting unilaterally or in a vacuum. Instead we find a tailoring of the larger September 11, 2001 discourse of security to legitimate another realm of military action.

Secondly, I critically investigate what I term a 'defining moment' in the Bush administration's attempt to justify the Iraq war. This is when they had to redefine their central argument to undertake military action against Saddam Hussein once no WMD were found in 2003. The UN finding on this matter severely challenged the discursive templates and status quo reality that the Bush administration had constructed to justify the Iraq war. Analysing their discursive response to this revelation indicates that they did not abandon their argument that Saddam Hussein posed a security matter so grave that it warranted the use of pre-emptive measures. Nevertheless, their argument of pre-emptive self-defence had to be redefined to stand for more than simply Saddam Hussein's possession of WMD. The latter existed as an intersubjective reference point that had to be modified in light of the lack of material evidence to substantiate it. I argue that the Bush administration redefined their justifications in a way that integrated principle of democracy promotion in a much for substantive way.

This re-definition by the Bush administration is often overlooked as being insignificant cheap talk. In a materialist, rationalist, framework such modifications would be understood as a strategic move that cloaked alterative motives. My goal is to show that this linguistic manoeuvre is far from cheap. On the contrary, the language they used created a different realm of agency and structure. Elaborating on this observation I explore the significance and consequences of this subtle re-definition. My central claim is that while this modification gave the Bush administration the agency to proceed with legitimating the invasion, it also constrained their actions at this moment and thereafter. In the immediate timeframe the inclusion of democracy promotion as a justification for war altered the Bush administration's earlier definition of what was permissible in the name of security. The way in which they spoke security was then altered.

This re-definition also structured their agency in a less obvious fashion by introducing an alternative structure of meaning. For the Bush administration's meta-definition of security, as pre-emptive self-defence, to retain legitimacy it now had to be compatible with democratic principles. In short, the two discursive categories had to align. I argue this added an unexpected restriction upon the Bush administration's agency. The full limitations of this are explicated in the case of Abu Ghraib in Chapter 4.

The chapter concludes with a recap of the main theoretical arguments advanced and developed. A critical constructivist reading is sketched out as a basis for a methodology which understands language as a constitutive and constraining device. Synchronically it bestows an alternative reading of the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war. These levels interconnect, with discoveries at one level affecting considerations at the others.

Section 1: Origins of Constructivism

As a disciplinary study within IR, constructivism arose as the Cold War drew to a close. This timing was not coincidental. As the Soviet Union was rapidly dismantled, traditional theories were caught by surprise. Oversights occurred for different reasons. Neo-realist and rationalist assumptions of power maximisation and self-survival proved out of sync with the peaceful ending of the Soviet superpower (Mearshimer 1990: 5-6). Evidently they had little to say when peace rather than war was the name of the game.[18] Neo-liberalism could better account for benevolence between former rivals as a mode of mutual cooperation (Wallander and Keohane 1999). Their reliance on cost-benefit calculations still sat uncomfortably with the unexpected collapse of the entire Soviet edifice. Constructivism proved far more amenable to understanding the abrupt end of the Cold War. Unlike its IR counterparts, this approach advocates agency and change as inherent features of social reality. Such considerations allow constructivists to account for the possibility and presence of unintended consequences in everyday as well as revolutionary situations (Fierke 1998, Kegley Jr. 1993, Kratochwil 1993).

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[18] William C. Wohlforth (1994-1995) argues that Realism can still explain the end of the Cold War

Much of the groundwork for constructivism had been set before 1989, however. It belongs to a rich tradition of scholars attempting to move beyond 'scientific' ways of studying our world. This is often referred to as the 'third way' (Lapid 1989). Scholars working in this tradition reject the orthodoxies of positivism and rationalism. Positivists maintain that there is an objective reality that may be discovered through empirical means (Popper, 1959). Subsequently, they fail to reflect upon or question established structures.[19] As James Der Derrian (1996: 277) argues, "in international relations the meaning of realism is more often than not presented as uniform, self-evident, and transparent-- even by those critics who in debates great and not-so-great have questioned its historical relevance, political function, or heuristic value".[20] By contrast, constructivists and other critical theorists do not accept the inevitability of the status quo. Rather, they maintain that theory is highly situated in the social and historical traditions of the prevailing order. From a critical perspective, efforts to measure and to obtain verifiable truths potentially obscure crucial details central to our apprehension of the world. Michael Parenti argues,

> *"[w]hat is missing from this scientism is the essence of politics itself, an appreciation of the inescapability of interest and power in determining what solutions will be deemed suitable, what allocations will be thought supportable, and, indeed, what variables will even be considered as interrelating and salient. The presumption that there is a scientifically discoverable 'correct' solution to problems overlooks the fact that social problems involve conflicting ends and often irreconcilable value distribution; thus one man's solution is often another mans disaster" (1970:79).*

A major advantage of constructivist critiques on mainstream IR theories was to demonstrate that causality and constitution operate according to different logics (Wendt, 1998). Martin Hollis and Steve Smith's (1990) distinction between explanation and understanding captures this essential difference. According to them, the causal approaches explain phenomena, whereas the constitutive approaches seek to understand them first and foremost. To *explain* an occurrence is to treat it scientifically with a view to identifying causes that led to the outcome. Conversely, to *understand* an occurrence is to make sense of the situation in light of the rules and

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[19] It is important to note that positivist and rationalist theories of course do have a place in IR. However, they do not address the role of social ontology, epistemology or language sufficiently enough. See Fierke and Nicholson (2001) for a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of positivist and post-positivist approaches

[20] For further literature related to this critique see Richard Ashley (1986) and R. B. J. Walker (1993, 1988)

institutional practices of the society concerned, and the participants' own reasons for their actions pertaining to the situation.[21]

Scientists, relying on a positivist methodology, begin by selecting variables to test whether these categories correspond with the real world. Their goal is to uncover regularities relying on empirical validation and falsification (Smith, 1996:16). Consequently, their hypotheses are not generally concerned with how the subjects of analysis give meaning to the world around them. Instead, they take actors and concepts as exogenously given. They are regarded as given and prior to the ideas held by actors (Waltz, 1979). From a constitutive perspective, this method is too restrictive. In fact, theorists in this vein argue that it is counterproductive to start out by assuming actors behave in pre-determined ways. As argued by Audie Klotz and Cecelia Lynch (2007:106), "[b]ecause constructivist ontology rejects the notion of an objective reality against which analysts test the accuracy of interpretations, 'falsifiabilty' cannot be the goal. Researchers can do no more than contrast interpretations against other interpretations".

Another methodological distinction is that rationalists and constructivists have different research foci. Causal modes of enquiry ask 'why necessary' questions. The dominant style of reasoning seeks to explain contributing factors that result in or cause an effect. With regards to the Iraq war, for instance, they would ask 'why did the events of September 11, 2001 result in Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003?' or 'why did the Bush administration undertake this invasion as part of their Global War on Terrorism?' In comparison, constitutive modes employed by constructivists ask 'how possible' questions (Doty 1993, Barnett 1999). Related to this, they examine relationships of constitution and the social fact that things happen. Returning to the example of the Iraq war, they would ask, 'how did it become possible that the events of September 11, 2001 resulted in Operations Iraqi Freedom in 2003?' or 'how was it possible for the Bush administration to undertake invasion as part of their Global War on Terrorism?'. Whereas 'why' questions seek an explanation that corresponds to the

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[21] Their critique recalls Robert Cox's (1981) famous distinction between problem-solving and critical theory. He argues that problem-solving theory takes the world as it is and looks for ways of understanding and predicting patterns of social and institutional behaviour so as to better fix problems within the given order. In contrast, critical theory problematises the given order, taking into account how it came about and proposing strategic rather than tactical responses.

invasion, 'how possible' questions are interested in the groundwork that enabled this policy to materialise.

A major premise of constructivism was to depart from positivist and rationalist assumptions that behaviour is structurally determined. In constructivist thinking, social conduct is shaped not by the environment or a structure, but by the way that environment is defined or interpreted by the actors under study.[22] As Stefano Guzzini (2000: 159) writes "what counts as a socially meaningful object or event is always the result of an interpretative construction of the world out there". Starting from the belief that humans are social, constructivists argue that agents always have a choice in how they act. From this perspective, outcomes are generated out of interactions between different actors. Agents may be self-interested, but they constantly alter their preferences within a certain context. In that sense agents and structures are mutually constituted, and one only has meaning through the other (Jabri, 1996). Structures open up the way for agents to make decisions, which in turn can influence and even change the structure.

Assuming that nothing exists in a vacuum, constructivists argue actors can be socialised into alternative structures of meanings. Consequently, this approach is inherently historical, for it "sees the world as a project under construction, as *becoming* rather than *being*" (Adler, 2005:11). The argument made here is that social reality is constructed and intersubjectively real because other people agree it is (Berger and Luckman, 1966; Searle 1995; 1997). Within constructivist thinking, context and intersubjectivity are closely related. The latter is an ontological pillar of the former. According to constructivists, understandings are neither purely individual nor subjective, but shared and widely accepted. Intersubjective meanings' are defined as 'the product of the collective self interpretations and self-definitions of human communities' (Neufeld, 1995: 77).

This emphasis on webs of meaning, which is part of the social totality, requires seeing the world in terms of social processes through which knowledge is accumulated and

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[22] See David Dessler (1989); K.M. Fierke (1996); Martin Hollis and Steve Smith (1991); J. David Singer (1961);Colin Wight (1999);Alexander Wendt (1991).

transmitted. It is argued, consequently, that, 'constructivism is the view that the manner in which the material world shapes and is shaped by human action and interaction depends on dynamic normative and epistemic interpretations of the material world' (Adler, 1997:322). Without denying that material structures exist, constructivists illustrate the importance of norms and rules at the level of international relations. Adding social dimensions, they "hold the view that the building blocks of international reality are ideational as well as material; that ideational factors have normative as well as instrumental dimensions; that they express not only individual but also collective intentionality, and that the meaning and significance of ideational factors are not independent of time and place" (Ruggie 1998: 33).

It is in this sense that ideas are potentially constructive of social reality (Bieler 2001). Overall, constructivism claims that shared normative understandings and cultures infuse actors with a shared sense of belongingness or identity, that is, "cultural environments affect not only the incentives for different kinds of state behaviour but also the basic character of states – what we call identity" (Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein, 1996:33). This draws attention to the close link between ideas and practices. By attaining membership in social communities, agents are able to gain a sense of who they are. Possessing knowledge of who they are also enables people to distinguish who they are not (Connolly,1981). Through processes of social interactions, agents attain a sense of self and other. This understanding reinforces that ideas are not a mental phenomenon or objects, but intersubjectively constituted forms of social action. In this sense Mark Laffey and Jutta Weldes (1997:209) define ideas as "symbolic technologies", which "are, most simply intersubjective systems of representations and representation-producing practices". Alexander Wendt (1992; 1994) follows this constructivist line of argument to criticise approaches which take state interests and identities as given or exogenous. He shows the problems with this assumption against the background of Alter and Ego, two aliens, interacting with each other for the first time. Through a series of gestures and reciprocation these strangers determine the identity of the other as friend or foe. Neither party is at an advantage since each has the ability or agency to decide how to respond. This choice influences the type of relationship they will have. The central principle Wendt (1992: 396-397) conveys is that people act on the basis of meanings which objects and other actors have for them.

Although rules and norms influence and regulate human behaviour fundamentally, constructivists are adamant that they do not determine it. Instead, they posit that rules exert power because they are internalised as the right thing to do rather than maximizing their given preferences (Risse, 2000:4). For constructivists, rule-following does not involve violence or force alone, but the ability of people to act in concert in specific circumstances.[23] Thus, constructivists focus more on norms and shared understanding as measures of legitimate behaviour. These do not exist *a priori* but are socially constructed. Rules are meaningful because they are shared. In constructivist accounts, collective meanings or 'logics of appropriateness' are held to influence how agents act as well as what they perceive to be in their interests (March and Olsen 1989). Constructivists do not claim that interests are unimportant in determining actor's calculations or preferences. Rather, they stress that what actors determine to be legitimate is socially constructed through the process of interactions and shared values and norms. Thus, identities do not only tell people who they are, they also tell them what they want (Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986).

Although constructivism introduces agency and interaction, they do not suggest that actors are totally free to choose or interpret their circumstances. Choices are not unlimited. As Neta Crawford writes, "surely actors are often circumscribed by resources or their options may seem limited by the structure of choices (such as time pressure) but generally decision makers still have options even within constraint" (2002:11). Moreover, it is not always clear how an agent should act. Agents coexist in social relationships and, consequently, their choices are partially dependent on others. Subsequently they cannot change their preferences or their surroundings instantly or without consequences. Shared norms and identities create a context in which rules are held to be true. This imbues them with authority and power. Making the same point, Hannah Ardent rejects the notion of power through coercion. In her opinion, power corresponds to the human ability not just to act, but to act "in concert"(1964:44). In this context, power, "is never the property of the individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together" (*idem).* As the empirical case illustrates, even the most powerful actors have to legitimate and justify

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[23]Hannah Ardent's (1970) differentiation between violence and power rests on a similar belief. The basic argument she makes is against the tendency to conflate violence and power; instead she claimed that the two were opposites. Whereas the former rests on legitimate rule the second signifies where this level of consent has broke down

change. For instance, it was necessary for the Bush administration to make a case for why war with Iraq was necessary. This required negotiating with other actors. With this in mind, constructivists do not give in to pure idealism.

Hence there is nothing in constructivism to prohibit the analyst from pursuing situational explanations. The difference is that even when constructivists pursue such analysis, they typically do so within a larger explanatory structure to show that the objective situations in which social actors find themselves are not determinative. Rather, constructivist accounts point to shared intersubjective contexts in which agents have to make choices in the process of interacting with others. It is as a result of these dialectical relationships that historically, culturally and politically distinct realities are created. Social structures can exist only in virtue of the recognition of certain rules and the performance of socially sanctioned patterns of action by agents.

Section 2: Conventional and Critical Constructivism

The previous section demonstrated that the 'constructivist turn' clearly established an alternative ontological outlook to traditional IR theories. It can be credited with bringing social issues and agency to the forefront of the discipline. This section is dedicated to outlining the key theoretical distinctions that differentiate various constructivist and post-structuralist strands. These divisions are particularly pertinent for conceptualising language as both a constitutive and constraining device.

Since its infancy, constructivism has diversified, and can now be seen through different prisms (Hopf, 1998). The expansion of this field is testimony to the increasing acceptance of the constructivist position as a way of analysing international politics (Walt, 1998:38). Today, it is generally acknowledged that, "constructivist analysis is compatible with many research methods currently used in social science and political science" (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001:392). Despite the ascendancy of constructivism, its identity as a theory per se remains disputed. As Vincent Pouliot

(2007:359) states, "constructivists have yet to devise a distinct modus operandi designed for the study of the social construction of meaningful realities". [24]

Although there are different constructivist approaches, the most distinctive fault line is the one between conventional and critical constructivism.[25] Both strands adhere to a social ontology, but in terms of epistemology they fundamentally disagree. Each assumes that social realities and identities are constructed, but draw on different theoretical traditions to reach this conclusion. Reflecting its point of origin, conventional constructivism does not reject the epistemological assumptions of positivist science.[26] In fact, authors who contributed to, "*The Culture of National Security*" explicitly deny the use of, "any special interpretativist methodology" or that they depart from 'normal science' or question whether it is appropriate to do so (Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein: 1996: 67). Similarly, Jeffrey Checkel (1998: 327) argues, "the quarrel with rationalists is not epistemological but ontological".

By retaining a positivist epistemology, conventional constructivists remain heavily indebted to more causal modes of analysis. At core their research agenda is problem-solving. Conventional constructivism or what Wendt terms 'scientific realism' assumes that we can classify a set of social conditions and criteria as generating things, having effects and explaining them. As a result, these accounts place a heavy emphasis on a way of knowing that is positivist. Their position assumes the existence of the world does not depend on the existence of the agent. Social reality has ontological influence outside of our understanding of it. According to Wendt (1987:365)

> "...this requirement follows directly both from the scientific realist's conception of explanation as identifying causal mechanisms, and from the ontological claims of structuration theory about the relationship of agents and structures. If the properties of states and systems are both thought to be causally relevant to events in the international system, and if those properties are somehow interrelated, then theoretically

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[24] According to Emmanuel Adler (2002: 109) methodology is the major missing link in constructivist theory and research".

[25] A variety of labels have been attached to describe this split within the vernacular of IR, including critical versus conventional, modernist versus post-modern, thick versus thin, systemic versus holistic, among others. See Michael Barnett (2005: 258)

[26] This theoretical commitment was part of an effort to overcome some of the skepticism about constructivism which arose from a conflation with postmodern approaches. It also emanated from early constructivists' attempts to quiet skepticisms about their supposed ambivalence towards mainstream social science methods. See Widmaier, W.W., M. Blyth, and L. Seabrooke (2007) on this background

understandings of both those units are necessary to explain state action".

It is the social reality out there which is independent of our thoughts that they want to explain (Joseph and Wight, 2010; Wight 2007; Wendt and Shapiro 1992).

Critical Constructivism

Acknowledging that Wendt and other conventional constructivists offer an entry point to bring the social back into a discipline that has been undersocialised (Wiener, 2003:256), critical constructivism suggests their accounts do so in a limited capacity. The major critique critical constructivist level at their conventional counterparts is that their mode of analysis rests on a conception of social epistemology that is too narrow. Problematically, they marry a social ontology to a positivist epistemology. As Karin Fierke (2007) notes, this union produces an inconsistent methodology. On the one hand, Wendt and other conventional constructivists argue that social relationships are formed in interactions and can be changed. On the other hand, they contend an objective world exists 'out there', contradicting the basic constructivist tenet that material conditions need to be created instead of being scientifically assumed. As Ian Hacking (1999:6) relays, to say that X is socially constructed is to show that X is neither "natural" nor "inevitable".

A principled refusal by conventional constructivists to question what is really real is evidenced in their treatment of identity formation as a relationship of causality. Returning to Wendt's account of Alter and Ego, we find identities are linked to interests to the point of compelling action. The missing link in Wendt's account is that he does not fully examine how the social reality that Alter and Ego operate in originates. While illustrating this context is social, he never pauses to ask how knowledge about the given context is produced. Nor does Wendt examine to what effects engrained knowledge is deployed. Rather, Wendt presents a first time encounter between ahistorical actors. As Maja Zehfuss (2002: 92) argues, "Wendt's treatment of identity as something which is attached to and negotiated between pre-existing anthropomorphic actors requires conceptualising identity as a unitary, circumscribable concept". Karin Fierke (2000: 337) also questions the relevance of

Wendt's approach, "to a situation where alter and ego have a past, and are, therefore, *already embedded in a context of social interaction".[27]*

Premised on the above, it is possible to argue that conventional constructivists would focus on the existence of the Iraq war in a simplistic way. Leaving aside epistemological issues, the goal would be to understand how agents such as the Bush administration and Saddam Hussein interacted. Whilst the Iraq war was certainly what these agents and other agents made of it, a move away from the epistemological issue that addresses how this war became understood as a war, or how pre-emptive action came to be understood as common sense, is problematic. Rather than assuming actors' identities were given, that the Bush administration was good and Saddam Hussein was evil, it is necessary to explore the social processes that inscribed these particular sets of meanings. Answering such questions draws attention to the role of language, something that Wendt and other conventional constructivists overlook.

In light of the aforementioned limitations, critical constructivism offers a more consistent theoretical follow-through (Hopf, 1998:181). This is achieved by their merger of a social ontology with a social epistemology. Adopting a 'consistent constructivism' is far reaching, for it suggests that knowledge does not have ontological foundations (Fierke, 2007). Contrary to Wendt, critical constructivists argue that the nature of being cannot be separated from ways of knowing. For them the way forward is to focus on what the social agents under investigation take to be real, rather than what analysts deem to be naturally true when they step back and observe it scientifically. As Kratochwil (2000:91) explains, "hardly anyone –even among the most ardent constructivists or pragmatists – doubts that the 'world' exists independent from our minds. The question is rather whether we can recognise it in a pure and direct fashion, that is, without any 'description', or whether what we recognise is always already formed by certain categorical and theoretical elements". A critical constructivist account thus creates a sensitivity to the recovery of meaning of the world as it exists for the actual agent by locating objects and texts in linguistic contexts in which they were produced. This enables greater comprehension about

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[27] Italics in original

where meanings come from and how they came to be. It also enables examination of how meanings relate to one another.

Adopting a social epistemology paints a different picture of language. A positivist epistemology rests on a correspondence theory of language, where objects are assumed to exist independent of meaning. Here, words act as labels for objects which mirror reality.[28] By contrast, critical constructivism contends that language is more than a mere description of a reality. Building on the 'linguistic turn', they illustrate how being in the world and knowledge about the world are intertwined.[29] As Thomas Risse establishes, "if we want to understand and explain social behaviour, we need to take words, language, and communicative utterances seriously. It is through discursive practices that agents make sense of the world and attribute meaning to their activities" (2004: 164). In this respect, critical constructivists concentrate on the constitutive role played by language in the construction of knowledge (Wittgenstein, 1979). This enables a more sophisticated understanding of language as an inherent feature of our world, not just an expression of it. To overcome a positivist treatment of language, critical constructivists emphasise that language is part of acting in the world. Without it, one could not begin to communicate with others, attribute meaning to objects or express feeling. In this sense Nicholas Onuf (1998: 59) claims, "talking is undoubtedly the most important way we go about making the world what it is". Again, this is an acknowledgement that knowledge only finds expression in language, reaffirming the need for a social epistemology.

To sum up, critical constructivism shows agency cannot be fully concepualised without taking language into account. Such a claim gives language much more theoretical weight than it receives in conventional constructivism. To capture how language is enabling and constraining we need to place it alongside post-structuralism. This is done in the next section.

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[28] For a causal account on narratives see King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane and Sydney Verba (1994)

[29] The 'constructivist turn' is a general term given to the revived interest in language in post-positivist IR and the social sciences that emerged in the 1980s. This 'turn' has deeper philosophical roots in the 'linguistic turn' that can be traced to thinkers such as E. Husserl (1962), Martin Heidegger (1934/71) and Hams Georg Gadamer (1994). My interest is predominantly in the former. For an extensive overview of the linguistic turn see Richard Rorty (1992) and Ludwig Witgenstein (1958[1979])

Section 3: Critical Constructivism/Post-Structuralism

The foundational claims which critical constructivist make about epistemology and language align it closely with post-structuralism. Once conventional constructivism is removed, these two theories appear to be more complementary than oppositional. For critical constructivism and post-structuralism alike there is no objective, ready made, reality to be found. "It is as if they existed which is categorically different from saying that they really do" (Suganami, 1999:378).

Taking this realisation a step further, critical constructivism and post-structuralism introduced unconventional ways of thinking about the link between agency and language. A common notion they have is that discourse matters and is constitutive of contextual meanings.[30] As Francois Debrix conveys, "this more relativistic reflection meant that there was no given vocabulary, no master IR-language, that once learned, would deliver the clues to the meaning of international relations…..instead, language in/about IR would have to be the product of one's interaction with the world" (2003:4).

Despite these similarities, however, fundamental theoretical and methodological distinctions remain between critical constructivism and post-structuralism. Acknowledging the boundaries separating the two is imperative as these are often missing or misrepresented within critical IR debates. Some even go so far as to treat these theoretical genres as the same. This temptation becomes problematic for authors working in the overlapping space between critical constructivism and post-structuralism (Ruggie, 1998:35). Why not unite them? After all, they both spring from a critique of orthodox IR theories and ask questions about knowledge. Below, I examine why it is necessary not to give into this fashionable tendency. It is important to reflect on the relationship between these two in order to envisage language as a constitutive and constraining device.

To start with, a substantial distinction exists between their understandings of language. These epistemological differences find expression in the investigatory tools critical constructivists and poststructuralists adopt to (re)conceptualise the world.

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[30] See Richard K. Ashley, R. B. J. Walker (1990) and William E. Connolly (1974).

Most distinctively, the former follow Wittgenstein to focus on language as a form of action. This path enables them to undertake normative reconstruction. In contrast, post-structuralism follows a 'French' style, heavy influenced by Michel Foucault and Jacque Derrida.[31] Consequently they focus on textual deconstruction. These different tools for studying language have significance when it comes to conceptualising language as a source of agency and structure. These are outlined in the proceeding paragraphs.

Wittgenstein's assertion that, "the limits of the language (*the* language which I understand) mean the limits of *my* world' (1979, §5: 62) is exemplary of the critical constructivist stance on language. As a point of departure it relies on a way of analysing social relations as actions and words. Drawing on speech acts, critical constructivists show words do things.[32] Through this claim language is portrayed as an action. For critical constructivists, interactions are about speech acts whereby neither speech nor act is prioritised, but rather are concomitant of each other. By saying something, the agent does something. For example, by specifying that the Iraq regime was a 'grave and gathering threat', the Bush administration also did something with considerable consequence. They constructed this object in terms of something that needed to be eliminated through military action. As seen later on, this placed the verbal performance on equal footing with the larger social context in which the word was uttered since each made the other possible. According to critical constructivism, words therefore exist on the same par as deeds and vice versa. The two cannot be separated, but rather constitute a continuous cycle. Similarly Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe explain, "An earthquake or the falling of a brick is event that certainly exists, in the sense that it occurs here and now independently of my will. But whether their specificity of objects is constructed in terms of 'national phenomenon' or 'expressions of the wrath of God' depends upon the structuring of a discursive field" (1985:108).

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[31]Making this assertion is important since there are other ways to get to post-structuralism. While the most influential route follows the French style (including figures Martin Heidegger and Friedrich Nietzsche via amongst others Michel Foucault, Jacque Derrida, Jacques Lacan, Gilles Deleuze to formations by Laclau and Mouffe, William Connolly, and Judith Butler) there are Anglo-American ways to get to post-structuralism too, notably radical pragmatists such as Richard Rorty.

[32] Although speech act theory is derived from Wittgenstein's philosophy of language, it came later on. See John L. Austin (1975) and John R. Searle (1995).

While acknowledging that words are performative, however, critical constructivists do not contend that words stand alone as foundational principles. Instead, their interest falls on how agents use a language. According to critical constructivism, in order for actions to have meaning they must be put into use through and disseminated in language. In this sense, words do not speak for themselves. Indeed, an important aspect of the critical constructivist approach is that interpretation and meanings are dependent on an intersubjective language in order to be explained and understood. From this perspective, language deals with and signifies more than words. For critical constructivists, it instead constitutes a way of life that facilitates multiple sets of practices. Their understanding of action is at the basis a belief that meaning cannot be understood in isolation, but only in relation to webs of meaning under constant construction. Concurring, Friedrich Kratochwil (2001: 15) adds that, "meaning is use and that communication among people is governed by conventions and criteria".

A critical constructivist understanding of knowledgibility is thus reliant on a particular language/rule nexus. As mentioned, these rules do not cause or determine action. Instead critical constructivist perspectives show that rules relate to performances that make agency possible within limits. As Nicholas Onuf (1989:35) puts it, "truths as we take them to be are inextricable from the arguments offered for them." By extension, rules are constitutive as well as regulative, they enable as well as constrain. They enable agents to act, though within limits.

Nevertheless, critical constructivists maintain that rules exist as relatively stable intersubjective reference points within social life and thus any analysis of social life must begin with them. Crucially, rules are an inescapable condition of social life. In recognising this, critical constructivism does not embrace epistemological relativism, and in this style of reasoning, criteria for validity exist. These truths are not absolute or transcendental, but intersubjective. What critical constructivists attempt to do is to build on social facts that are naturalised and normalised by agents.[33] This inclination enables them to draw upon reified beliefs as a sort of "epistemic foundation" (Adler, 2005). Internalised norms and rules are knowledge that makes the social world come into being. Accepting this premise allows critical constructivism to study what agents

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[33] According to Ruggie (1998:12), social facts are, "those facts that are produced by virtue of all the relevant actors agreeing that they exist".

believe to be true (their subjectivitiy) and how they put these meanings into operation to communicate their interests (their intentions). Their focus thus remains on developing knowledge about social life while remaining agonistic about what is really real. To trace the social and political processes that make the constitution of certain contexts possible, critical constructivists are theorizing on analyzing the narratives in which action is given meaning. By building a narrative, they are able to draw together various historical episodes and actions as they unfold in and over time. Taking inspiration from this, Ruggie (1998: 32) advocates building "narrative explanatory protocols" which show "why hinges are historically *so* and not *otherwise*".[34] Again, this kind of narrative building differs from causal analysis as it stands back to search for variegated meanings rather than absolute antecedents.

Emphasis on the analyses of how reality is constructed through language separates critical constructivism from post-structuralism. Unlike them, post-structuralism denies the possibility of any foundations for knowledge altogether (Zehfuss, 2006; 2002). Instead it de-authorises the view that the world is governed by the act of saying. What remains for post-structuralism are the dimensions of discourse located in and signified by texts. Acknowledging this, the major concern of James Der Derian (1989: 6) is exposing the, "textual interplay behind power politics".

An underlying assumption is that discourse remains performative. Within post-structuralism there is a general turn to "the problematic of subjectivity in international politics rather than the international relations of pregiven subjects" (Campbell, 1992: viii).[35] By emphasising social reality as a text, post-structuralists argue that language itself is the performance, independent of agents or their communicative intersubjectivity. Performativity in this line of scholarship signifies that language performs deeds. As Judith Butler (1997:44) remarks, "what would it mean for a thing to be 'done by 'a word? If a word in this sense might be said 'to do' a thing then it appears that the word not only signifies the thing, but that this signification will also be an enactment of the thing".[36]

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[34] italics in original
[35] See David Campbell (1992).
[36] See Judith Butler (1997).

To focus on interpretation and representation, post-structuralism relies on deconstruction as a technique to unsettle naturalised concepts. The aim is to tease out, "the process by which we have constructed origins and given meaning to particular representations of the past, representations that continually guide our daily lives and set clear limits to political and social options" (Blieker, 2000:25). Consequently it, "is concerned with both the constitution and de-constitution of any totality, whether a text, theory, discourse, structure, edifice, assemblage or institution" (Devetak, 2001: 187).

Post-structural scholarship contends that the way language is organised, the ways its elements are ordered to produce certain effects, explain how language and texts enact meaning. Inspired by structural linguistics, they argue meanings are produced and reproduced in texts as systems of signification and difference. Yet where structuralism ends in a static system of codes, post-structuralists illustrate how ultimately the closure of meaning is impossible (Derrida 1967).[37] As a consequence, they approach language and ideas as free floating meanings. Taking seriously the playfulness (performativity) of language, intersubjectivity becomes a secondary consideration. Derrida's notion of "iterability" brings the looseness or what he terms *jeu* of writing to the fore (1988: 7). An important trait of this term is that neither intentionality nor a receiver is required in order for a text to be understood and communicated.[38] Instead, Derrida insists that although the receiver may be absent, written signs can still be produced, transmitted and read by someone else. According to him, the potential, "infinity of new contexts" means "that there are only contexts without any centre or absolute anchoring" (Derrida, 1988:12).[39]

Arriving at this 'scepticism' regarding 'secure knowledge', post-structuralists argue that any system of meaning, including discourse, will always be unfinished and unstable (Doty, 1996, Hansen 2006). It is in this sense that post-structuralism rejects loading language up with questions of normativity. It is not so much that they ignore the latter, but emphasise the power embedded in norms. They argue that accepting such reified meanings not only serves to control the performativity of language, it

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[37] For a reliable overview of Derrida's work see Cohen, Tom (2001).
[38] The example Derrida gives is of a letter never reaching its addressee.
[39] See Jacques Derrida (1988) (1976).

repical represses it.[40] Instead of studying how intersubjective meanings are used in language, post-structuralism seeks to free discourse from its contextual re-appropriations. Here Michel Foucault's studies are a clear explication of the discourse-producing effect of bringing exogenous elements into texts. Akin to Derrida, he seeks to open up what he calls "discursive formations", or several statements working together, to restore their performativity (Foucault, 1972:31).[41] His notion of discourse is used by post-structuralism in IR in a specialised way to convey the representation of power relationships and, more particularly, difference. Following Foucault, they argue that the way in which statements are linked together produces a particular kind of knowledge and thus a particular kind of hierarchical position from which it alone makes sense (Doty). Anyone deploying the discourse must position themselves as if they are if they were the subjects of the discourse (Foucault, 1972: 95-6). In this vein David Campbell (1998: 7-8) notes that discourse research should embrace, "a logic of interpretation that acknowledges the impossibility of cataloguing, calculating and specifying 'real' causes and should elucidate the manifest political consequences of adopting one mode of representation over the other".[42]

In sum, post-structuralist accounts of language outlined above focus more on how language constrains agency rather than how it helps to constitute the space in which meanings are created. Without denying that power of discourse to construct power differentials, (there seems to be a word missing here) a critical constructivist approach enables us to examine whether this is actually what occurs rather than assuming such differences are inherent features of any discourse.

Section 4: Revisiting the Agent/Structure Debate at the Level of Language

To tie these strings together, this section is dedicated to a theoretical investigation of the agent/structure debate. I suggest that the divides between conventional and critical constructivism, and then critical constructivism and post-structuralism has

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[40] See Nicholas Rengger and M Hoffman (1992).
[41] See also Michel Foucault (1970)
[42] David Campbell (1998): "Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity": University of Minnesota Press.

implications for this thematic field. First, revising the agent/structure debate against the backdrop of the aforementioned divides helps clarify the epistemological issue of whether agency is to be conceived 'objectively' or 'subjectively', i.e. in terms of either 'rational' or 'interpretative' actors. It also provides a resolution to go beyond the back and forth discussion about whether the agent or the structure should be the primary level of analysis, making it necessary to rethink the approach of agents and/or structures underlying the discipline of IR in its present state.

Reshaping the agent/structure debate in light of these two issues is imperative since scholars of critical persuasions seem, on the whole, to have shielded themselves remarkably well from the disquietening effects these issues have on how language is conceptualised. As mentioned, all three theoretical strands reject the positivist ontology of traditional IR theories. Unlike the latter, they do not treat either the agents or the structures as 'ontological' primitives. However, each conceptualises the reflexive relationship between agents, structures and language differently.

Wendt and other conventional constructivists offer a starting point to address the agent/structure duality. However, their bold attempt to amalgamate the divide between action and order remains limited by a positivist epistemology (Wendt, 1987). As noted, conventional constructivists favour examinations of agents and agency in IR.[43] Having made the dialectic relationship between agents and structures the crux of their argument, agents and structures remain bracketed. They are analysed as scientific units or the characteristics of the totality of interactions within the system. In this sense they cannot get beyond the question/impasse of either structures or agents. This stalemate is extremely problematic since it marginalises the points of intersection between agents and structures. The logic of structurationism which 'scientific realism' is based on also overlooks the importance of language as either a constitutive or constraining device. It is sidelined as a mere label to categorise objects.

At first glance, critical constructivism and post-structuralism appear to provide a way beyond the lingering limitations found in conventional constructivist accounts of the agent/structure relationship. Through both we come closer to an interactive interface

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[43] This focus has left them open to criticisms that their approach is overly agentive. See David Campbell for this critique.

between agents and structures. Increasingly recognised in both is that the relationship between actors and social structures needs to be viewed in terms of mutual linkage rather than causal reduction. To resolve this dualism, critical constructivists adopt a social epistemology which recognises the centrality of language and other forms of representation in the construction of knowledge.

Yet, it is at this juncture that the boundary separating critical constructivism and post-structural becomes slippery, albeit important, in terms of understanding the agent/structure relationship. Following post-structural accounts, structures are deconstructed to the point that any kind of structure is conceptualized as a repository of power that needs to be critiqued and questioned. Indeed, this distinct modus operandi aims to break down social structural and institutional frameworks. Within post-structural accounts, structures are conceptualised in an essentially negative way, as simply a constraint on action. Only by moving beyond reified knowledge claims and material structures can agents and discourse be truly emancipated (Doty 1996).

One consequence of this position is that post-structuralism does not succeed in incorporating the dynamic interplay between agents and structures. Instead, it prioritises performativity and interpretation over any structural considerations infused with power, whether material, normative or linguistic. This stance contains a fundamental flaw insofar as it undermines the possibility that some kind of structures of meaning are necessary for action to be possible. While sharing the reflexive impetus of post-structuralism, critical constructivists argue language operates on the premise that intersubjectivity structures not only exist but are necessary to make our world meaningful. As demonstrated, their approach highlights the importance of looking at the meaning of norms and words in use. Unlike post-structuralism, critical constructivist approaches to language still conceive of language in a structural fashion insofar as it remains rule based.

Thus reinforcing an earlier point, it is possible to state that critical constructivism steers a middle course between Wendt's scientific realism which rests on allegedly natural foundations, and post-structuralism, which rests on relative interpretation. Referring this theoretical position to the agent/structure relationship illuminates a different reading of language within this dichotomy. This is achieved by critical

constructivism's ability to show that both agents and structures are created in language. Allowing for both the constitutive and constraining dimensions of language, it offers a nuanced position to understand language as rule-based. By illustrating that language is inherently intersubjective and rule based, critical constructivism acts as a reply to rationalist and positivist assumptions that language is strategic at best and inconsequential at worst. As such it provides language with a stronger platform than that allowed for in conventional constructivist accounts, adding an extra dimension in their attempt to bring agency back in (Adler 1997).[44]

Critical constructivism also provides a different account to language than post-structuralism. In contrast to the idea of free floating ideas, they illustrate how language acts as a structure within which meaning is constructed and communicated. By emphasizing intersubjectivity and rules, critical constructivism links the social and the material in a more distinct fashion. Without diluting the importance of agent or the power language invests them with, taking language as a structure provides a better picture of how choices come to constrain the agent.

Critical constructivism also illustrates the importance of coherence for ensuring that words are meaningful. This adds another layer of constraint. Besides merely justifying their actions in a strategic way, it is necessary for agents to give reasons for their actions. These arguments draw on but also create intersubjective meanings. Any internal inconsistencies within their argumentative strategies have the potential to act as a structure that can constrain an agent. This does not mean that any representation is just as acceptable as any other. While there is nothing in the objective world that tells us to represent something in a particular way, there is still room for intersubjective agreement as to the relative merits of one type of (normatively embedded) depiction compared to another. What we have here in conventional constructivism then is a modified form of structuration, with agents, structures and narratives shaping one another in a complex relationship. Representation presumes there are multiple possible ways of depicting a situation. Action refers to the actual use the rules followed and action towards another, thus interaction.

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[44] Assuming that 'anarchy is what states make of it' they invest the agent with the decisional power to act. See (Wendt 1992).

This more nuanced reading of the agent/structure debate also creates a different level of agency that requires further exploration. This is the interaction between words. Acknowledging that language is constituted by competing sets of meanings illustrates that they draw on alternative and often alternating terms to justify their actions. The way in which the discursive frames are aligned and interwoven will influence the overall legitimacy and coherency of the arguments being presented. In this respect there is a need to acknowledge that different terms oscillate, these interactions have implication for the overall meaning of a particular word, the larger game it is part of and the agents using it. The level of legitimacy a language can and does garner certainly affects the amount of agency an agent will have to pursue their desired course of action. At base the greater the level of resonance their language can shore up, the greater amount of space they will have to manoeuvre to implement their preferences. Language does not cause actors to behave in a certain way; but they certainly provide the constraining conditions under which contingent actors necessarily have to operate.

Section 5: Why Language Matters in Examining the Bush Administration's Justifications for the 2003 Iraq war.

This section turns to explore how language can act as a constitutive and constraining device in international political affairs. The justifications the US gave for the 2003 Iraq war shall be examined as an illustrative point of reference. It illustrates that language is far from cheap. Analyzing the Bush administration's justifications for this war, we see that it expresses and produces power in the course of representing a social 'reality' within which undertaking pre-emptive action in the name of self-defence was legitimate. Showing that language matters provides a new lens for understanding the broader puzzle of how this war became possible even when the grounds for war became extremely contested. Collapsing back into the agent/structure debate outlined above, we find that the Bush administration's language gave them the agency to act on the one hand whilst also limiting how they could act on the other. Both aspects need to be captured.

My main aim is to examine how the Bush administration justified the Iraq war through a series of discursive moves. From this perspective I trace the construction of a particular language game that did not exist before.[45] First and foremost, the language employed to justify the Iraq invasion stems from the security narrative of pre-emptive self-defence that the Bush administration constituted in the wake of September 11, 2001. Although each discourse is woven into the fabric of the other, a causal relationship does not exist between them. Put differently, September 11, 2001 did not automatically result in the Iraq war in 2003. Remembering this is crucial to overcoming the conventional wisdom that war was the only possible outcome of America acting unilaterally. Challenging these assumptions, I show that the Bush administration had to construct an argument to legitimate this foreign policy.

Making a deeper claim, I attempt to show that the Bush administration's language was a constitutive and constraining device. This line of argument highlights that their discursive justifications were not inconsequential, in spite of positivists' claims. In the context of the Iraq war, their language of security created an intersubjective context in which certain rules and identities became meaningful. Through a series of discursive manoeuvres, the Bush administration attempted to build a case whereby Saddam Hussein represented an existential threat which required taking immediate military action. Rationalists could reply that these discursive frames were purely strategic and manipulative devices. While taking this into consideration, I illustrate that even when language is employed instrumentally, it can produce unintended consequences. Indeed, this chapter turns to an exploration of what I term a 'defining moment', when their justifications for the Iraq war were seriously discredited. This occurred when no WMD were found in Iraq in early 2003.

Of particular interest is how the Bush administration responded to this revelation. I claim that they redefined and thus rebuilt their justifications for invading Iraq. From this perspective the language used by the Bush administration to justify the war gave them agency to define the situation in one way rather than another. This is different than claiming that their representations were cheap talk or free floating, however.

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[45] Again this opens up space to conceptualise the foreign policy decisions that the Bush administration advocated and pursued to invade Iraq as a series of choices.

While the Bush administration used language to make their case for war, the choices available to them were not limitless. They were acting in an intersubjective arena which restricted its agency. In order for their narrative for war to become credible it was necessary for the Bush administration to situate it in a broader context which already had meaning. It is here that the constitutive and constraining dimensions of their language become apparent. On a deeper level, examining how the Bush administration moved from a language game which was defined in the name of security and pre-emptive self-defence to one which was legitimated by a broader definition of security that included democracy promotion illustrates that their language became constraining. Subsequent chapters proceed to explain how this new language game constrained what they could do afterwards. The defining moment established the context in which future acts were interpreted, such as the Abu Ghraib abuses.

The empirical section will proceed in three parts. I start by outlining the language of security that the Bush administration constructed post-September 11, 2001. This contextualises their policy of pre-emptive self-defence, a key narrative re-employed to justify the Iraq war. Next, I specify the core arguments made by President Bush and his team in order to legitimate the use of force against Saddam Hussein's regime. My focus is on how their language functioned as an enabling and constraining device in this context. Lastly, I turn to the 'defining moment' in order to show how the Bush administration rebuilt their argument for war, albeit subtly. I argue that these modifications had enormous implications for both the kind of agency as well as the structures that were constituted in the name of security.

Redefining the world After September 11, 2001

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks against America on September 11, 2001, security was prioritised as the overriding concern in the Bush administration's foreign policy.[46] From the outset they vowed to ensure that such attacks never happened

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[46] Of course, this is not the only narrative. However for our purpose, and based on my discourse analysis, it is the language of security that is of greatest concern.

again. Hours after the hijacked planes had crashed into the World Trade Centre, President Bush remarked,

> *"Make no mistake: The United States will hunt down and punish those responsible for these cowardly acts [...] Our military at home and around the world is on high alert status, and we have taken the necessary security precautions to continue the functions of your government. We have been in touch with the leaders of Congress and with world leaders to assure them that we will do whatever is necessary to protect America and Americans. The resolve of our great nation is being tested. But make no mistake: We will show the world that we will pass this test" (Bush September 11, 2001).*[47]

Later in that day he surmised,

> *"Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts [...] Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured, and to take every precaution to protect our citizens at home and around the world from further attacks" (Bush, September 11 2001).*[48]

It is important to note that the acts of violence on September 11, 2001 did not speak for themselves.[49] On the contrary, in the days and months that followed this event the Bush administration had to interpret the attacks in a meaningful way and communicate this understanding to others so that they could also make sense of what had occurred (Jackson, 2005). Language was an important tool employed by the Bush administration to fix a meaning to the terrorist attacks. The compelling way in which they framed September 11, 2001 as an unprecedented security crisis had a powerful reality-making effect (Croft 2006). Within the context of these official framings, the terrorist attacks became the moment that the world changed. More specifically, September 11, 2001 was discursively constructed as a state of exception (Agamben 2005; Aradau 2007; Neal 2006). Speaking on September 20, 2001, President Bush remarked,

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[47] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010911-1.html

[48] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010911-16.html

[49] Some authors even argue that September 11, 2001 created a void and that language failed to adequately regulate the meaning of the unfolding events (Holland, 2009). This thesis departs from this assumption by brining in insights from critical constructivism and Wittgenstein to trace the words used by the Bush administration to give meaning to the events and articulate a solution. I am not arguing that they did not initially struggle to give September 11, 2001 a coherent meaning. However they did use language.

> *"Americans have known surprise attacks – but never before on thousand of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day and night fell on a different world (Bush, September 20: 2002).[50]*

Vice President Cheney announced,

> *"9/11 changed everything. It changed the way we think about threats to the United States. It changed our recognition of our vulnerabilities. It changed the terms of the kind of national security strategy we need to pursue" (Cheney, September 14: 2002).[51]*

The official response to September 11, 2001 as a moment of crisis was strengthened when the Bush administration defined the terrorist attacks as an "act of war" (Bush, September 12, 2001).[52] President Bush's remarks the next day reinforced this terminology when he declared,

> *"the deliberate and deadly attacks which were carried out yesterday against our country were more than acts of terror. They were acts of war [....] Freedom and democracy are under attack" (Bush, 13 September 2001).[53]*

Elsewhere President Bush asserted that *"war has been waged* against us" (Bush, September, 14 2001).[54] A few days later he repeated, *"there has been an act of war declared upon the America [...] a group of barbarians have declared war on the American people [...]*'the wreckage of New York City' was *'the first battle of war'"* (Bush, September 15 2001).[55] Directly linked to this, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld spoke about, *"acts of war, military strikes against the United States of America"* (Rumsfeld, 27 September, 2001).[56] Taken collectively, such ideas and remarks would become their overarching 'war on terror'.

Here it is clear that language really mattered. Classifying the terrorist attacks as 'acts of war' allowed President Bush and his team to pursue a particular preemptive form

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[50] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html
[51] http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3080244/
[52] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010912-4.html
[53] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010913-7.html
[54] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010914-9.html
[55] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010915.html
[56] His speech also distinguished Department of Defense employees that were injured or killed not just was victims of terror but combat casualties who would receive the Purple heart given to those killed or wounded in combat.

of action. Categorising the terrorist attacks as 'acts of war', allowed them to frame their response in terms of accepted legal norms of self-defence.[57]

Showing the first hint of the pre-emptive war doctrine, formally announced at West Point in June 2002, the Bush administration argued that the vulnerability highlighted by the events of September 11, 2001 gave the United States the right to take offensive measures to protect themselves. Secretary Rumsfeld explicitly stated,

> *"there is no question but that the United States of America has every right, as every country does, of self defense, and the problem with terrorism is that there is no way to defend against the terrorists at every place and every time against every conceivable technique. Therefore, the only way to deal with the terrorist network is to take the battle to them. That is in fact what we're doing. That is in effect self-defense of a preemptive nature" (Rumsfeld, October 28, 2001).[58]*

The discursive construction of the war on terror as legal and justified self-defense under notions of international law finds a direct echo in Under-Secretary of State Marc Grossman's expressions,

> *"I believe that Security Council resolution 1368 that was passed on the 12th of September, offers all of the legal basis and requirement that we need, in addition to Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, which is the right of self-defense. And we believe the United States was attacked on the 11th of September and that we have a right of self-defense in this regard (Grossman, 19 October, 2001).*

In other words, the US 'war on terrorism' was a 'just war' because it was legally sanctioned by the authority of international law (Hurrell 2002, 188). As President Bush noted, "*This conflict was begun on the timing and terms of others. It will end in a way, and at an hour, of our choosing*" (Bush, September 14 2001).[59] Making a similar point Attorney General Ashcroft stated,

> *"America has experienced one of the greatest tragedies ever witnessed on our soil. These heinous acts of violence are an assault on the security of our nation. They are an assault on the security and the freedom of every American citizen. We will not tolerate such acts. We will expend every effort and devote all the necessary resources to bring*

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[57] Article 2(4) of the *Charter of the United Nations* reads in part that "Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a member of the United Nations". 26 June 1945, Can. T.S. 1945 No. 7, art. 51 [UN *Charter*].

[58] http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2225

[59] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010914-2.html

the people responsible for these acts, these crimes, to justice"
(Ashcroft, September 11, 2001).[60]

These official assessments that America's best defense was a good offense deserves further attention because of the way in which it equates security and self-defence with pre-emption. The Bush administration's preemptive doctrine proved extremely controversial, especially its presumption that an imminent threat did not need to exist in order for military action to be justified. A close reading of their definition demonstrates a major transformation to the previous understanding of this just war principle. Indeed, Robert Jervis (2006) suggests that the US under the Bush administration sought to establish a new principle into the just war doctrine, while Richard Betts (2003:18) has accused them of using the term preemption in a, "sloppy or disingenuous way". The position of international law on this matter is set out in Article 2(4) of the Charter of the United Nations which holds that, "All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations".[61] While self defense is a legitimate exception to this under the provisions of Article 51, the issue of whether what has been termed as 'anticipatory self-defence" falls under the doctrine of justified self-defense is the subject of heated debate. Pre-emption is only permissible in the narrow circumstance where there is a necessity of instant self-defence that leaves no choice for deliberation. In short, it is a claim to anticipatory self-defence, as a state cannot wait until it is actually attacked before taking action. It is at this juncture that the Bush administration's preemptive policy parts company with the existing doctrine. By contrast, their logic argued that a certain, imminent, threat was no longer the sole trigger for preemption. What mattered, according to the Bush administration, was what adversaries might do in the future. This distinction is important, and in their language it is crucial. As Neta Crawford notes,

> *"their pre-emptive-war doctrine not only encompasses legitimate pre-emption, where a state acts in self-defence to preempt an immediate and certain assault, but, in the context of the pre-emptive doctrine, it becomes a preventive offensive war doctrine" (2004:695).*[62]

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[60] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010911-10.html
[61] The Charter of the United Nations. Available athttp://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/
[62] Also See Neta Crawford (2008), (2003); Elisabeth Zoller (2004)

The Bush administration set out this exact claim in their 2002 National Security Strategy;[63]

> "*We must adapt the concept of imminent threat to the capabilities and objectives of today's adversaries. The United States has long maintained the option of preemptive actions to counter a sufficient threat to our national security. The greater the threat, the greater is the risk of inaction—and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack. To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by its adversaries, the State will, if necessary, act preemptively (September, 2002).[64]*

Vice President Cheney further noted,

> "*For this new century it's very clear what our national security strategy must be. We must maintain a military second to none, and when necessary we must preempt grave threats to America before they materialize*" (Cheney, October 2: 2002).[65]

Their articulation of a new national security doctrine of preemptive action after September 11, 2001 reinforced that the old rules were no longer adequate to deal with threats posed by terrorism. Indeed, their policy of pre-emptive self-defence rested on the view that the contours of warfare had been transformed. Secretary Donald Rumsfeld frequently "*characterised this conflict, this campaign, this so-called war, as being notably different from others*" (Rumsfeld, October 7 2001).[66] And President Bush concluded that, "*the mind-set of war must change. It is a different type of battle. It's a different type of battlefield. It's a different type of war*" (Bush, September 19, 2001).[67] Rumsfeld also remarked,

> "*We are, in a sense, seeing the definition of a new battlefield in the world, a 20th -- 21st century battlefield, and it is a different kind of conflict. It is something that is not unique to this century, to be sure, but it is -- given our geography and given our circumstance, it is, in a major sense, new for this country*" (September 12, 2001).[68]

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[63] U.S., National Security Council, *The National Security Strategy of the United States* (17 September 2002), online: White House <http:// www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html> [*National Security Strategy*].

[64] *Supra* note 1 at part V. in "*The National Security Strategy of the United States*". 17 September 2002.

[65] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021002-15.html

[66] http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2011

[67] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010919-1.html

[68] http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=1619

It was imperative for the Bush administration to communicate why and how this war was different. Establishing the type of enemy that they were fighting was a keystone in making this case. A prominent feature of the Bush administration's war on terror discourse is the black and white distinctions it draws between good and evil.[69] Leading proponents of the Bush Doctrine repeatedly stated you were either with America or you were with the terrorists. As Condoleezza Rice professed, *"this President has rallied a coalition against terrorism not by speaking in shades of gray about what it was we're facing, but in speaking in sharp, morally clear terms" (Rice February 21, 2002).* According to this logic, *"no nation can be neutral in this conflict because no civilized nation can be secure in a world threatened by terror" (Bush, November 6, 2001).*[70] Within this framework, support for terrorism is thus as reprehensible as terrorism itself.

This characterisation of good and evil established something of the nature of the attackers. These representations in the broader 'war on terror' discourse are embedded in a particular conception of Western values and particular conceptions of a civilization-barbarism divide. According to administration officials, the attacks of September 11, 2001, drew 'a bright line of demarcation between *the civil and the savage*' (Ashcroft, 24 September, 2001).[71] These binaries enabled one identification and understanding of agents as opposed to another. As President Bush expressed it,

> *"this conflict is a fight to save the civilized world, and values common to the West, to Asia, to Islam. Throughout the world, people of strong faith, of all faiths, condemn the murder of the innocent. Throughout the world, people value their families -- and nowhere do civilized people rejoice in the murder of children or the creation of orphans. By their cruelty, the terrorists have chosen to live on the hunted margin of mankind. By their hatred, they have divorced themselves from the values that define civilization, itself"* (Bush, October 20, 2001).[72]

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[69] Mark West and Chris Carey (2006) argue that this binary was founded on the Old West fantasy, wherein President Bush is the cowboy fighting the outlaw regimes.

[70] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/11/20011106-2.html

[71] http://www.justice.gov/ag/testimony/2001/agcrisisremarks9_24.htm

[72] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/10/20011021-6.html

Within their narrative, terrorism posed not just a threat of sudden violent death to individual citizens, but a 'threat to the very essence of what you do' (Powell, October 26: 2001),[73] and a threat to 'the peace of the world' (Bush, January 29: 2002).[74]

Most evident in this discursive organization of the dominant discourse was the attempt to place terrorists outside the moral community. A crucial element in the identity construction of the enemy lay in the dehumanization of the terrorist; that is, to depict them as basically non-human. As the President explained,

> *"There is a great divide in our time -- not between religions or cultures, but between civilization and barbarism. People of all cultures wish to live in safety and dignity. The hope of justice and mercy and better lives are common to all humanity. Our enemies reject these values -- and by doing so, they set themselves not against the West, but against the entire world. […]We've seen their kind before. The terrorists are the heirs to fascism. They have the same will to power, the same disdain for the individual, the same mad global ambitions. And they will be dealt with in just the same way. (Applause.) Like all fascists, the terrorists cannot be appeased: they must be defeated" (Bush, December 7: 2001).*[75]

Repeating this sentiment elsewhere he noted, *"Our enemies are evil, and they're ruthless. They have no conscience. They have no mercy. They have killed thousands of our citizens, and seek to kill many more. They seek to overthrow friendly governments to force America to retreat from the world*" (Bush, September 14: 2001).[76]

The key function of this demonizing of the terrorist enemy was an attempt to normalize a policy of violent eradication. According to the Bush line, the only way to effectively and sensibly deal with infectious disease or 'evil' is through physical and ritual purification. Indeed, the Bush administration frequently spoke of the '*curse* of terrorism that is upon the face of the earth' (Ashcroft, 15 September, 2001), while Secretary Powell, referred to "the *scourge* of terrorism" (Powell, 26 October, 2001).

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[73] http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2001/5762.htm
[74] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html
[75] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/12/20011207.html
[76] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010914-2.html

This medical metaphor was restated even more explicitly by Rumsfeld: 'We share the belief that terrorism is a *cancer* on the human condition' (Rumsfeld, October 7: 2001). Bush, in turn, spoke of the danger to the body politic posed by 'terrorist *parasites* who threaten their countries and our own' (Bush, 29 January, 2002). This particular language is actually a precursor to the disciplinary idea of 'the enemy within'; terrorists are the new 'reds under the bed.' Of course, such 'an evil and *inhuman* group of men' (Baker Jr, 23 September, 2001)[77], or these '*faceless* enemies of human dignity' (Bush, May 21, 2003),[78] was constructed as being undeserving of our sympathy or protection. While it would be wrong to treat an enemy soldier inhumanely, or torture a criminal suspect, the same cannot be said for a parasite or cancer.

In a double reflexive move, the identification of those who are good and evil reaffirms the Bush administration's justification for pursuing pre-emptive self-defence. On the one hand, the Bush administration is presented as a victim who has a right to protect himself. In their narrative the nation under attack was represented as '*the greatest force for good in world history*' (Bush, October 12, 2001).[79] The USA sought to protect '*freedom and opportunity*' (Bush, September 11: 2001).[80] Their discourse also draws heavily on a 'hero' narrative, with the USA being represented as the 'brightest beacon' for these values. In a memorial service for the Pentagon victims, Secretary Rumsfeld describes these all-American heroes:

> *We remember them as heroes. […] 'He was a hero long before the eleventh of September,' said a friend of one of those we have lost – 'a hero every single day, a hero to his family, to his friends and to his professional peers.' […] About him and those who served with him, his wife said: 'It's not just when a plane hits their building. They are heroes every day'" (Rumsfeld, October 11: 2001).[81]*

This language serves to predicate the U.S. with positive qualities, and is in particular associated with attributes such as responsibility, determination, unity, and strength—issues that are needed in order to match the enemy's characteristics of cruelty,

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[77] http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror/
[78] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/05/20030521-12.html
[79] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/10/20011012-4.html
[80] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010911-16.html
[81] http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror

evasiveness, and unaccountability. In terms of subject positioning, the U.S. must ''*lead the fight for what is good*'' (Wolfowitz 2001). There is not just ''bad'' in the world, but various texts also indicate clearly specified norms of ''good.'' Freedom and kindness were frequently claimed as being especially representative of the primary ideals of the U.S. As President Bush noted, "*We [the USA] defend not only our precious freedoms, but also the freedoms of people everywhere to live and raise their children free from fear*" (Bush, October 7: 2001).[82] Reinforcing this imaginary elsewhere he stated, "*Our compassion and concern do not stop at our border. They reach across the world*" (Bush, October 12: 2001).[83]

The narratives of identity invoked by the Bush administration have a second function. They serve to reaffirm the enemy they are facing is established as an extreme threat. According to the administration, terrorism posed not just a threat of sudden violent death to individual citizens, but a 'threat to *our way of life*' (Bush, September 20: 2001)[84], and a threat to '*the peace of the world*' (Bush, January 29: 2002).[85]

The frequency of the threat is very high in nearly every political statement given within the one year time period following September 11, 2001. The Bush administration's remarks emphasise the enormous dangers that threaten and will continue to threaten the U.S. The persistence as well as the immediacy of the terrorist threat is perceived as immense, as it is repeated time after time that new attacks could come any time. Secretary Rumsfeld's discussion of the US capturing detainees in this context reaffirms why the US cannot let their guard down. As he put it,

> "*the most important thing, of course, is to try to find out as much intelligence as we can through the interrogations, and that is our principal focus. It is a matter of recognizing that the threats exist against our country, that there were thousands of people who went through these al Qaeda training camps. What we need to do is to just gather as much information as we can and try to prevent additional attacks to the extent that's possible*" (Rumsfeld, January 15: 2002).[86]

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[82] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/10/20011007-8.html
[83] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/10/20011012-4.html
[84] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html
[85] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html
[86] http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2132

Such discursive dichotomies were extremely important in formulating the Bush administration's foreign policy post-September 11, 2001. The identities that the Bush administration constructed between good and evil helped establish why inaction was not an option. The existence of a terrorist threat provided them with a great deal of agency to manoeuvre. In essence, it set the stage for how they moved forward. Directly related to this, administration officials suggested that the threat of terrorism was supremely catastrophic. As Vice President Cheney put it,

> *"The attack on our country forced us to come to grips with the possibility that the next time terrorists strike, they may well... direct chemical agents or diseases at our population, or attempt to detonate a nuclear weapon in one of our cities. [...] [N]o rational person can doubt that terrorists would use such weapons of mass murder the moment they are able to do so. [...] [W]e are dealing with terrorists... who are willing to sacrifice their own lives in order to kill millions of others (Cheney, April 9: 2003).[87]*

In other words, not only were Americans threatened by terrorists eager to kill millions, but Americans were also to be very afraid of terrorists. Within the Bush administration's language, this was a rational and reasonable fear to have; it is in fact, commonsensical. Making this plain Wolfowitz remarked,

> *"So I think you have to think about the worst-case possibilities, then you make some prudent judgments about how far do you go in turning your normal life upside down in order to deal with them. Obviously that's one of their objectives as well" (Wolfowitz, 28 October 2001).[88]*

Yet the Bush administration's language also constituted a structure. In this intersubjective context, certain moves were considered as rational and legitimate while others were not. As shown, it was possible for the Bush administration to undertake pre-emptive measures to secure their own self-defense. In this rhetorical construction, the use of any means necessary came to be understood as a legitimate response to the threat that the US faced. The Bush administration's articulations on this line of argument closed off other possible understandings or representations of what occurred on September 11, 2001. Other accounts that emphasised a range of

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[87] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/04/20030409-4.html
[88] http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2202

different foreign policy responses to terrorism, even if employing violent means, were devalued (Roberts 2005).

To sum up, the reality making effect that the Bush administration's language had after September 11, 2001 problematises the rationalists and positivists claims that talk is cheap. As shown, discourse played a fundamental role in constituting a war that would be waged on several fronts, cost billions of dollars and resulted in many human fatalities. The importance of language is further exemplified in the role it had in facilitating the Bush administration's justification of a war in Iraq as part of their global war on terror. Such discursive linkages enabled pre-emptive action to be undertaken even when the existence of an imminent threat was negated.

The War on Terror as a Narrative for the Iraq War 2003

The Bush administration's war on terror was dominated by a particular perspective on Iraq. Richard Clarke (2004:264) claimed that the Bush administration entered into office, "with Iraq on the agenda". However, a link had to be found between Saddam Hussein and September 11, 2001. Put differently, the Bush administration had to justify why it was necessary to go from 'acts of war' on September 11, 2001 to a war against Iraq. The problem with this, as former British Secretary Robin Cook notes, "is that no one has a shred of evidence that Saddam was involved" (Cook 2003:212-213). It was not clear that Iraq posed an 'imminent threat'. Such a direct claim had to be substantiated and supported with strong evidence that an Iraq threat was inevitable in the immediate future. Language was an essential tool employed to build this discursive linkage. Drawing on the meta-narrative of the war on terror, the Bush administration reinforced the idea of Saddam Hussein's regime as an impending existential danger.

Several of the Bush administration's core justifications for the Iraq war derive directly from the language of security and pre-emptive self-defense constructed after September 11, 2001. In fact, they presented this invasion as another step in their fight against terrorism. The first discursive move thus constituted the possibility for the

second. Put differently, the Iraq war gained meaning in a context where the war on terror was already established as an intersubjectively understood and accepted reality. This existing structure of meaning enabled military actions against Iraq to become a possibility in the Bush administration's foreign policy.

The Bush administration drew discursive linkages between Saddam Hussein and those responsible for the terrorist attacks on America, and at the same time limiting its meaning to the same reference point.
 As President Bush argued,

> *"We learned a good lesson on September the 11th, that there is evil in this world [...]There's no question that the leader of Iraq is an evil man. After all, he gassed his own people. We know he's been developing weapons of mass destruction. And I think it's in his advantage to allow inspectors back in his country to make sure that he's conforming to the agreement he made, after he was soundly trounced in the Gulf War. And so we're watching him very carefully." (Bush, October 11, 2001).[89]*

Suspicions about a looming war against Iraq were strengthened by the Bush administration labeling them as part of "an axis of evil" along with Iran and North Korea in 2002. Through this metaphor President Bush reaffirmed that the Iraq regime was on the side of evil and as such a threat. He made this exposition several times, stating:

> *"Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror [...] This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilized world. States like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger"* [...] *We'll be deliberate, yet time is not on our side. I will not wait on events, while dangers gather. I will not stand by, as peril draws closer and closer. The United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons" (Bush, 29 January: 2002).[90]*

The 'axis of evil' statement began the prolonged countdown to war against Iraq, with subsequent statements seeking to cement the link between Iraq and terrorism. From September 2002 onwards there was a notable shift away from Iraq as part of this

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[89] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/10/20011011-7.html
[90] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html

troublesome trio to the gravest threat posed to US and worldwide security.[91] As Congress was preparing to vote on authorizing the war, the President said the Iraqi regime "*is a threat of unique urgency*" (Bush, October 2:2002).[92] Days later he echoed Condoleezza Rice's image of nuclear devastation, "*Facing clear evidence of peril, we cannot wait for the final proof— the smoking gun— that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud*" (Bush, October 7: 2002).[93] After Congress had voted to authorize the President to use the US Armed Forces against Iraq, President Bush maintained that Iraq was a "*real and dangerous threat*" (Bush, October 28: 2002).[94] In Fort Hood, Texas, President Bush called the Iraqi regime a "*grave threat*" (Bush, January 3: 2003).[95]

The argument that Saddam Hussein possessed WMD and had direct links with Al-Qaeda constituted the most compelling argument that the Bush administration gave for war with Iraq. Making this connection plain, Vice President Cheney asserted, "*We now know that Saddam has resumed his efforts to acquire nuclear weapons [...] Many of us are convinced that Saddam will acquire nuclear weapons fairly soon*" (August 26, 2002).[96] He was even more emphatic about the threat Saddam posed a few months later, stating, "*[We] do know, with absolute certainty, that he is using his procurement system to acquire the equipment he needs in order to enrich uranium to build a nuclear weapon*" (Cheney, September 8: 2002).[97] Substantiating that the Saddam regime represents "*a grave and gathering danger*" Secretary Donald Rumsfeld inferred it also,

> "*has an active program to acquire and develop nuclear weapons. And let there be no doubt about it, his regime has dozens of ballistic missiles and is working to extend their range in violation of U.N. restriction. His regime has in place an elaborate, organized system of denial and deception to frustrate both inspectors and outside intelligence efforts [...] And his regime has violated 16 U.N. resolutions, repeatedly*

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[91] See Peter Howard (2004)

[92] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021002-7.html
[93] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html
[94] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021028-4.html
[95] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030103.html
[96] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/08/20020826.html
[97] http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm

defying the will of the international community without or cost or consequence" (June 11: 2002).[98]

Appraising the Iraqi situation, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz stated,

> *"It is hard to see how we can expect to be successful in the long run if we leave Iraq as a sanctuary for terrorists and its murderous dictator in defiant safety. Saddam Hussein supports and conspires with our terrorist enemies. He lends them both moral and material support. Disarming Saddam Hussein and fighting the war on terror are not merely related, they are one and the same. […]The dots are there for all to see. We must not wait for some terrible event that connects the dots for us"* (Banusiewicz, 2004).

By framing their justifications for war on the basis that Saddam Hussein was an imminent threat, the Bush administration were dependent on the UN to legalise the use of force. This exemplifies an intersubjective constraint on their agency. Since this international body determines the legality of the use of force, gaining its approval would be a conditional albeit important milestone in the Bush administration's decision to invade Iraq. The agency available to them was also constrained on a linguistic level insofar as their justifications for the war had to include an appeal to the UN and its conditions for the use of armed force. To do otherwise would weaken their argument that Saddam actually represented an existential threat as well as their binary depiction of a battle between good and evil. Part of the Bush administration's identity as the leader of this fight required that they were perceived as acting in a way consistent with intersubjective rules and norms surrounding the use of force. In sum, their justifications for taking pre-emptive actions against Iraq rested on the case they had made at the UN.

The arguments that the Bush administration used to make their case at the UN did not depart from their claims that Saddam Hussein and his WMD stockpiles constituted grave and growing security threats that must be confronted. Rather, the UN provided them with another forum to construct their argument that military regime change was the only viable option for dealing with Iraq. Addressing the UN General Assembly President Bush declared

> *"Our greatest fear is that terrorists will find a shortcut to their mad ambitions when an outlaw regime supplies them with the technologies*

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[98] http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=3500

to kill on a massive scale. In one place -- in one regime -- we find all these dangers, in their most lethal and aggressive forms, exactly the kind of aggressive threat the United Nations was born to confront. Twelve years ago, Iraq invaded Kuwait without provocation. And the regime's forces were poised to continue their march to seize other countries and their resources [...] Saddam Hussein's regime is a grave and gathering danger. To suggest otherwise is to hope against the evidence. To assume this regime's good faith is to bet the lives of millions and the peace of the world in a reckless gamble. And this is a risk we must not take" (Bush, October 2: 2002).[99]

The issue of non-compliance was a supplementary building bloc in the Bush administration discursive claims that military regime change was necessary in Iraq.[100] Given Saddam Hussein's previous history of deceiving inspectors and the international community, they argued that the world should be highly suspicious of any promises he gave to cooperate this time around. As President Bush asserted:

"The threat comes from Iraq. It arises directly from the Iraqi regime's own actions -- its history of aggression, and its drive toward an arsenal of terror. Eleven years ago, as a condition for ending the Persian Gulf War, the Iraqi regime was required to destroy its weapons of mass destruction, to cease all development of such weapons, and to stop all support for terrorist groups. The Iraqi regime has violated all of those obligations. It possesses and produces chemical and biological weapons. It is seeking nuclear weapons. It has given shelter and support to terrorism, and practices terror against its own people. The entire world has witnessed Iraq's eleven-year history of defiance, deception and bad faith" (Bush, October 7:2002).[101]

On November 8, 2002 the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1441, which gave Saddam Hussein a final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations that had been set out in several previous resolutions. Resolution 1441 stated that Iraq was in material breach of the ceasefire terms presented under the terms of Resolution 687. Iraq's breaches related not only to WMD, but also the known construction of prohibited types of missiles, the purchase and import of prohibited armaments, and the continuing refusal of Iraq to compensate Kuwait for the widespread looting conducted by its troops during the 1991 invasion and occupation.

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[99] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021002-7.html
[100] The shift to regime change is in and of itself an astonishing alteration in the Bush administration's foreign policy, especially given the President's avid rebuttal of nation-building as a US objective. As he initially maintained, "in this administration we're not into nation building, we're focused on justice and we are going to get justice" (Bush, September 25: 2001).
[101] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html

Resolution 1441 went on to say that if Iraq would not cooperate, it would be in 'further material breach' of Resolution 687 and 'serious consequences' would ensue. As stated, "false statements or omissions in the declarations submitted by Iraq pursuant to this resolution and failure by Iraq at any time to comply with, and cooperate fully in the implementation of, this resolution shall constitute a further material breach of Iraq's obligations".

The wording of Resolution 1441 illustrates the power of language. With Resolution 1441, they moved a step closer to delivering an ultimatum to Iraq and making a convincing case that the pressure must continue on Saddam Hussein's regime and the threat of force should not be removed.[102]

Secretary Powell reinforced the Bush line to deal with the Iraqi threat in his speech to the Security Council just before the war commenced.[103] There he reinforced the game of denial and deception that Iraq was playing:

> "*While we were here in this council chamber debating Resolution 1441 last fall, we know, (omit) we know from sources that a missile brigade outside Baghdad was disbursing rocket launchers and warheads containing biological warfare agents to various locations, distributing them to various locations in western Iraq. Most of the launchers and warheads have been hidden in large groves of palm trees and were to be moved every one to four weeks to escape detection. We also have satellite photos that indicate that banned materials have recently been moved from a number of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction facilities […] The gravity of this moment is matched by the gravity of the threat that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction pose to the world*" (Powell, February 5: 2003).[104]

Measured by such discursive yardsticks, Saddam Hussein's regime is presented as having made the case against itself (Bush, September 14: 2002).[105] Not only had the latter chosen not to cooperate with the demands laid before it by the international community in Resolution 1441, but more worryingly, Iraq had purposefully pursued a

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[102] Full document available at http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/new/documents/resolutions/s-res-1441.pdf

[103] Speech made on September 18, 2002:
http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020918-1.html

[104] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html#2#2FirefoxHTML\Shell\Open\Command

[105] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html

programme of illicit weapons. Outlining a zero sum policy to such a scenario President Bush remarked:

> *"If he chooses not to disarm, we will disarm him. That should be clear to Saddam Hussein and everybody else. And if he chooses not to disarm, we will have a coalition of the willing with us. A lot of nations understand that in order to keep the peace, Saddam Hussein must be disarmed -- decisions he makes. There's no negotiations with Mr. Saddam Hussein. Those days are long gone. And so are the days of deceit and denial. And now it's up to him. And I want to remind you all that inspectors are there to determine whether or not Saddam Hussein is willing to disarm. It's his choice to make. And should he choose not to disarm, we will disarm him […] Zero tolerance. About as plain as I can make it. We will not tolerate any deception, denial or deceit" (Bush, November 13, 2002).[106]*

Subsidiary themes of delivering humanitarian aid to Iraqi civilians were also present in the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war. Issues of liberation and freedom were important frames that they drew on to imbue their actions with morality. According to Bush this was not a war against the innocent Iraqi people:

> *"I've told all the members of the United Nations, America will play its historic role in defeating aggressive tyranny. I hope the good people of Iraq will remember our history, and not pay attention to the hateful propaganda of their government. America has never sought to dominate, has never sought to conquer. We've always sought to liberate and to free. Our desire is to help Iraqi citizens find the blessings of liberty within their own culture and their own traditions. The Iraqi people cannot flourish under a dictator that oppresses them and threatens them. Gifted people of Iraq will flourish if and when oppression is lifted" (Bush, October 16, 2002).[107]*

Closer to the time of the invasion he reaffirmed this:

> *"I think that no matter how Mr. Saddam is dealt with, the goal of disarming Iraq still stays the same, regardless of who is in charge of the government. And that's very important for the Iraqi people to know. And I also want to assure Silvio[108] that should we require military action, shortly after our troops go in, will go food and medicine and supplies to the Iraqi people. We will, of course, win militarily, if we*

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[106] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/11/20021113-1.html
[107] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021016-1.html
[108] The then Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. He was present at this particular press conference given by President Bush.

have to. But we'll also want to make sure that we win the peace, as well" (Bush, January 30 2003).[109]

Marrying the severity of the situation alongside the morality of their endeavor President Bush also remarked,

> *"If Saddam refuses even now to cooperate fully with the United Nations, he brings on himself the serious consequences foreseen in UNSCR 1441 and previous resolutions. In these circumstances, we would undertake a solemn obligation to help the Iraqi people build a new Iraq at peace with itself and its neighbors. The Iraqi people deserve to be lifted from insecurity and tyranny, and freed to determine for themselves the future of their country. We envisage a unified Iraq with its territorial integrity respected. All the Iraqi people -- its rich mix of Sunni and Shiite Arabs, Kurds, Turkomen, Assyrians, Chaldeans, and all others -- should enjoy freedom, prosperity, and equality in a united country. We will support the Iraqi people's aspirations for a representative government that upholds human rights and the rule of law as cornerstones of democracy. (Bush, March 16 2003).[110]*

These lines do more than identify Iraq as a dictatorial and repressive country. They also imbue the Bush administration's case for using pre-emptive action with a sense of morality. Their bid to liberate innocent Iraqi people from the clutches of Saddam Hussein's brutality added weight their claims that this course of action was necessary.

Defining Moment

The Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war created a moment of acute crisis in January 2003. At this juncture the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief weapons inspectors submitted their findings to the U.N. Security Council. In contrast to the Bush administration's constant claims, they reported that no WMD stockpiles existed inside Iraq. Presenting their findings to the Security Council, Dr Hans Blix and Mohammed El Baradei's updates essentially said that the inspections had not discovered prohibited weapons programmes and that more credible proof from Iraq was needed. They also reported that the inspectors would attain their goals given the time to accomplish the task. As Blix said in his briefing,

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[109] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030130-10.html
[110] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030316-1.html

> *"so far, UNMOVIC has not found any such weapons, only a small number of empty chemical munitions, which should have been declared and destroyed. Another matter - and one of great significance - is that many proscribed weapons and items are not accounted for. To take an example, a document, which Iraq provided, suggested to us that some 1,000 tonnes of chemical agent were "unaccounted for". One must not jump to the conclusion that they exist. However, that possibility is also not excluded. If they exist, they should be presented for destruction. If they do not exist, credible evidence to that effect should be presented […] Without evidence, confidence cannot arise". He added that, "As before, we do not know every cave and corner" (Blix, 2003).[111]*

Such revelations clearly undermined the core justification that the Bush administration had used to legitimate offensive military actions against Iraq. Obviously the evidence presented by the inspectors did not fit the discursive templates that the Bush administration used to give meaning to the Iraq war. It stood in contrast to their assertions of the imminent threat posed by Saddam Hussein and his WMD stockpiles. This poses the question, how did the Bush administration respond? How was it possible for them to justify a war in light of such revelations?

Bush Administration's Response

The Bush administration's reaction to Hans Blix's appeal for more time for the new-returned weapons inspectors to complete their search for WMD was dismissive (Doig, Pfifner, Phythian and Tiffin 2007). As President Bush remarked, "the business about, you know, more time-you know, how much time do we need to see clearly that he is not disarming?...This looks like a return of a bad movie and I am not interested in watching it" (De Young, 2003).

Reacting to this outcome, the Bush administration became adamant that anything less than full compliance would not be tolerated. Taking this line enabled the Bush administration to sidestep the lack of material evidence as a problem. Indeed they denied that this was the sole reason for invading. In his January 2003 State of the Union address President Bush warned,

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[111] Speech made on February 14, 2003, available from
http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2003/sc7777.doc.htm

"The resolution presents the Iraqi regime with a test, a final test. Iraq must now, without delay or negotiations, give up its weapons of mass destruction, welcome full inspections and fundamentally change the approach it has taken for more than a decade. The regime must allow immediate and unrestricted access to every site, every document and every person identified by inspectors. Iraq can be certain that the old game of cheat-and-retreat, tolerated at other times, will no longer be tolerated. Any act of delay or defiance will be an additional breach of Iraq's international obligations, and a clear signal that the Iraqi regime has once again abandoned the path of voluntary compliance. If Iraq fails to fully comply with the U.N. resolution, the United States, in coalition with other nations, will disarm Saddam Hussein" (Bush, January 28, 2003).[112]

Reinforcing this hard line for complete disarmament days later, he noted,

"As Dr. Blix said in his report to the Security Council earlier this week, he's not doing that. And therefore, what is important is that the international community comes together again and makes it absolutely clear that this is unacceptable. And the reason why I believe that it will do that is precisely because in the original Resolution 1441, we made it clear that failure to disarm would lead to serious consequences. So this is a test for the international community. It's not just a test for the United States or for Britain. It's a test for the international community, too. And the judgment has to be, at the present time, that Saddam Hussein is not cooperating with the inspectors, and therefore is in breach of the U.N. resolution. And that's why time is running out" (Bush, 31 January 2003).[113]

Closer to the invasion President Bush remarked

"*If the Iraqi regime were disarming, we would know it -- because we would see it; Iraq's weapons would be presented to inspectors and destroyed. Inspection teams do not need more time, or more personnel -- all they need is what they have never received, the full cooperation of the Iraqi regime. The only acceptable outcome is the outcome already demanded by a unanimous vote of the Security Council: total disarmament. Saddam Hussein has a long history of reckless aggression and terrible crimes. He possesses weapons of terror. He provides funding and training and safe haven to terrorists who would willingly deliver weapons of mass destruction against America and other peace-loving countries […] We are determined to confront threats wherever they arise. And, as a last resort, we must be willing to use military force. We are doing everything we can to avoid war in*

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[112] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html
[113] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-23.html

> *Iraq. But if Saddam Hussein does not disarm peacefully, he will be disarmed by force" (Bush, March 8, 2003).[114]*

With this discourse the Bush administration argued that it is not that their request to use military force against Iraq was unworthy of UN authorisation. Instead, they drew on the language of Resolution 1441 to argue that inaction was not a viable option. Once again we can see that language enabled and constrained the Bush administration. Resolution 1441 provided a means for them to make a case for war but prevented them from undertaking this action immediately. As Henry Kissinger put it in early February 2003, "if the United States marches 200,000 troops into the region and then marches them back out, the creditability of American power ….will be gravely, and perhaps, irreparably, impaired" (Scheer et al. 2003: 80).

Quoting the terms of Resolution 1441, the Bush administration also argued that the entire reputation of the UN was in jeopardy. Making this plain, President Bush stressed

> *"This is a defining moment for the U.N. Security Council. If the Security Council were to allow a dictator to lie and deceive, the Security Council would be weakened. I'm confident that when the members assess their responsibilities and the responsibilities of the U.N., that they will understand that 1441 must be upheld in the fullest" (Bush, February 7, 2003).[115]*

Making the case more forcefully Secretary Rumsfeld noted

> *"The stakes are high. Iraq is now defying the 17th UN Security Council resolution. The Council voted to warn Iraq that this was its "final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations." Quote, unquote. The resolution, which passed unanimously, did not say the "next to final opportunity." It said the "final opportunity." And those who voted for it, and they voted unanimously, knew what it said. They were explicitly reminded what it said. The question is did the UN mean it? Did they mean it? We will soon know. Seventeen times the United Nations has drawn a line in the sand-and 17 times Saddam Hussein has crossed that line. As last week's statement by the eight European leaders so eloquently put it, quote: "If [those resolutions] are not complied with, the Security Council will lose its credibility and world peace will suffer as a result" (Rumsefeld, February 8, 2003).[116]*

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[114] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030308-1.html
[115] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030207-3.html
[116] http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=1918

Once more they sold the war based on the present Iraqi threat. Setting this out in clear and simple terms, President Bush stated,

> *"The dictator of Iraq and his weapons of mass destruction are a threat to the security of free nations. He is a danger to his neighbors. He's a sponsor of terrorism. He's an obstacle to progress in the Middle East. For decades he has been the cruel, cruel oppressor of the Iraq people [...]Saddam Hussein has a history of mass murder. He possesses the weapons of mass murder. He agrees -- he agreed to disarm Iraq of these weapons as a condition for ending the Gulf War over a decade ago. The United Nations Security Council, in Resolution 1441, has declared Iraq in material breach of its longstanding obligations, demanding once again Iraq's full and immediate disarmament, and promised serious consequences if the regime refused to comply. That resolution was passed unanimously and its logic is inescapable; the Iraqi regime will disarm itself, or the Iraqi regime will be disarmed by force. And the regime has not disarmed itself"* (Bush, March 16, 2003).[117]

In addition to focusing blame on the Iraq regime for hiding WMD, the defining moment showcases how the Bush administration reconstructed their justifications for the war. As demonstrated, the issue of security remained a paramount concern as did removing Saddam Hussein. What is interesting is that the Bush administration confirmed the morality of their mission by amplifying the democratic components that would be operationalised. These themes were already present in the Bush administration's discursive justification under the rubric of liberation and freedom. After the defining moment, this link between regime change and installing a democratic government was solidified even further. Speaking just days after the inspectors report, President Bush remarked,

> *"The United States has no intention of determining the precise form of Iraq's new government. That choice belongs to the Iraqi people. Yet, we will ensure that one brutal dictator is not replaced by another. All Iraqis must have a voice in the new government, and all citizens must have their rights protected. Rebuilding Iraq will require a sustained commitment from many nations, including our own: we will remain in Iraq as long as necessary, and not a day more. The nation of Iraq -- with its proud heritage, abundant resources and skilled and educated people -- is fully capable of moving toward democracy and living in freedom [...] The world has a clear interest in the spread of democratic values, because stable and free nations do not breed the ideologies of*

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[117] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030316-3.html

murder. They encourage the peaceful pursuit of a better life. And there are hopeful signs of a desire for freedom in the Middle East [...] A new regime in Iraq would serve as a dramatic and inspiring example of freedom for other nations in the region" (Bush, February 6: 2003).[118]

Discussing the future of Iraq after the invasion had begun, President Bush compared the huge improvements that had already occurred

"People who live in Iraq deserve the same freedom that you and I enjoy here in America. And after years of tyranny and torture, that freedom has finally arrived. I have confidence in the future of a free Iraq. The Iraqi people are fully capable of self-government. Every day Iraqis are moving toward democracy and embracing the responsibilities of active citizenship. Every day life in Iraq improves as coalition troops work to secure unsafe areas and bring food and medical care to those in need" (Bush, 28 April: 2003).[119]

The construction of the US mission as democracy promotion also functioned to justify the Iraq war as a legitimised response to the dangers posed by Saddam Hussein. In keeping with the dominant representation, the morality and goodness of the attacks were discursively reinforced by how they compared to the dangers that existed. The Bush administration went to great lengths to demonstration the enormous and invaluable changes they had initiated. As Paul Bremer, the administration for the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, commented

"The Iraqi people are now free. And they do not have to worry about the secret police coming after them in the middle of the night, and they don't have to worry about their husbands and brothers being taken off and shot, or their wives being taken to rape rooms. Those days are over" (Paul Bremer, 2 September: 2003).[120]

Putting this in plain language, President Bush remarked

"Every woman in Iraq is better off because the rape rooms and torture chambers of Saddam Hussein are forever closed. He is a barbaric person. He violated people in such a brutal way that some never thought that the spirit of Iraq could arise again. We never felt that way here in this administration. We felt that people innately love freedom

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[118] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030206-17.html
[119] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/04/20030428-3.html
[120] Cited in *William Saletan (2004)*

> *and if just given a chance, if given an opportunity, they will rise to the*
> *challenge" (*Bush, March 12, 2004).[121]

National Security Advisor Rice, also restated, "*Saddam's torture chambers, and rape rooms, and children's prison cells are closed. The war on terror is greatly served by the removal of this source of instability in the world's most volatile region*" (Rice, 3).[122]

The counterpoints presented in the Bush administration's discursive justifications for the Iraq invasion were congruent with their claims that Saddam Hussein posed a dangerous threat who needed to be removed. They functioned to structure the meanings, logic, and potential policy responses to the events they described. Another crucial element in the justification of the Iraq war on the grounds of democracy lay in the Bush administration's depiction of liberation being for benefit of the Iraqi people alone. Indeed they were very clear to emphasise that America was not acting on imperialist tendencies. When asked about the fact that there were no WMD, and whether they would have gone to war had they known this, Rumsfeld then explained

> "*this country and the 25 million people there that have been liberated and have just fashioned an interim constitution that protects the rights of women and ethnic groups and religious groups – they individually are vastly better off than they would have been. The killing fields are gone. The mass graves are not having new bodies piled up day after day as happened under Saddam Hussein. The prisons have been changed and they are no longer torturing and killing people there, so it's been a good thing. Dr. David Kay came back; he reported that he thought they were about 85 percent through the process of looking; and thus far, except for some ballistic missiles beyond the range that were authorized by the United Nations, they have not found chemical, biological, or weapons in any large quantities. The search goes on. We've got 1,200 people still looking there and we'll know more in the weeks and months ahead*" (Rumsfeld March 19, 2004).[123]

President Bush was more explicit that ultimate responsibility was to be left in the hands of the Iraqi people in his 2005 State of the Union address, since he commented

> "*The United States has no right, no desire, and no intention to impose our form of government on anyone else. That is one of the main*

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[121] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2004/03/20040312-5.html
[122] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/10/20031008-4.html
[123] http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2352

differences between us and our enemies. They seek to impose and expand an empire of oppression, in which a tiny group of brutal, self-appointed rulers control every aspect of every life. Our aim is to build and preserve a community of free and independent nations, with governments that answer to their citizens, and reflect their own cultures. And because democracies respect their own people and their neighbors, the advance of freedom will lead to peace" (Bush, February 2: 2005).[124]

This shift is towards democracy promotion as core to US foreign policy towards Iraq is now taken for granted. In fact, many suggest that the original arguments for the invasion were set to this course. Moving beyond such assumptions, I have demonstrated that their justifications for the war were modified, albeit subtly, to make this justification of action not only possible but probable. Evidently while their discursive categories and justifications were the source of their agency, they were also a source of constraint. Past language constrained their movement forward. They had to make a different set of arguments, but ones that did not challenge the discursive construction too much. This limited the choices available to them

At the defining moment language was extremely powerful. It enabled the Bush administration to construct a justification for war on the basis that Saddam Hussein constituted an existential security threat. The presence of this danger, they argued, legitimated them to act in pre-emptively in the name of self-defence. While this language enabled the Bush administration to act, their discourse also constrained them. The frames that they employed created an intersubjective structure that had to be maintained. As the defining moment demonstrates, the Bush administration had to justify when their arguments were not consistent. Their discursive justifications for undertaking the invasion turned out to limit the Bush administration when no WMD were found in Iraq, challenging their claim that Saddam threatened national and international security. Despite the disputes over what caused the Iraq war, the defining moment showed how it was possible for the Bush administration to draw on a two level game of security to enable the war to go ahead.

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[124] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/02/20050202-11.html

Conclusion

This chapter has set up several core theoretical and empirical discussions unpacked in the course of the entire thesis. The main goal was to show that language is a form of power. It began by establishing the origins of constructivism within the discipline of IR. As indicated, constructivism relies on an explanatory framework that challenges positivist and rationalist logics found in the mainstream. Constructivism's goal is not to predict outcomes or establish scientific truths, but instead highlight the social processes constructing our world, calling upon a mode of explanation that is constitutive rather than causal, examining 'how possible' questions rather than answering 'why' questions. As illustrated, the causal 'why' question found in positivism assumes that objective features constantly exist in the empirical world and may impact on each other in predictable ways. In contrast, the constitutive 'how possible' question assumes that human action is not determined. Rather, actors exercise choice within a world shaped by shared understandings and widespread intersubjective rules and norms. In short, agents and structures are mutually constitutive.

Excavating the internal division within constructivism was the second major discussion point. There it was shown that Wendt and other conventional constructivist accounts turn out to be limited on several fronts. The biggest restrictions emanate from their merger of a social ontology with a positivist epistemology. This line of argument is problematic as it leaves unclear the notion of knowledge and how it is constituted. According to the 'scientific realist' theory espoused by conventional constructivists, our world really exists. The existence of this real world, however, is incompatible with constructivist claims that the world is socially created. Such a mode of analysis excludes language as an important consideration.

Critical constructivism was presented as a more sophisticated constructivist methodology. Departing from Wendt and other conventional constructivists, it merges a social ontology with a social epistemology. Incorporating the latter, it leads to an acknowledgement within critical constructivism that rules and norms only find expression and are constituted only in language. According to them, being in the world and knowledge of the world is inherently interdependent. This understanding

reinforces the interaction between agents and structures rather than collapsing the analysis into one that prioritises either one or the other.

This standpoint brings critical constructivism closely on par with post-structuralism. As illustrated, both share a commitment to explicate social processes of signification and communication as forms of power. This challenges postitivist assumptions that it is possible to stand back and observe a ready made world. Instead, *both* show that being in the world and knowledge of the world is inherently interdependent. Despite these similarities, I illustrated that the tools of explanation critical constructivists and post-structuralists employ to examine the relationship between language and action remains open to significant debate between them. Whereas critical constructivism focuses on normative reconstruction, post-structuralism focuses on textual deconstruction.

Taking all of these divisions into consideration, I have suggested that a critical constructivist research agenda facilitates a new reading of the agent/structure debate within more reflexive lines of IR. This relates to their ability to provide a middle ground between their conventional and post-structural counterparts. The goal was to show that language is neither scientific nor a reflection of a 'real' world. At base, a critical constructivist reading of the agent-structure relationship differs from conventional accounts insofar as the agents are more constrained in a social rather than rational way. Critical constructivists abandon scientific realism's claims that structures remain objective and thus dispose agents to act in a particular way. Language remains unimportant in the latter accounts, while it is important for the former. On the other end of the spectrum, post-structuralism tends to favour the total emancipation of actors, viewing structures as tools of domination and thus oppression. While language is given consideration, the playfulness and iterability of texts leaves it open to being simply free-floating.

To improve on these depictions, I sought to conceptualise language as both a constitutive and constraining device. Contra to conventional constructivism, I showed language is important, and then contra to post-structuralism, I showed it was more than interpretation. Besides providing a way past this impasse, my reading of the agent/structure debate at the level of language introduced underexamined

conceptualisations of how agents and structures interact. Again this was twofold. First I argued language needs to be conceptualized as a structure, and second that in doing so, the interactions between words are brought to the fore. It is this double layer of complexity that increases the utility of language in unravelling how words can enable and constrain.

The complex theoretical lens developed throughout provides a richer reading of the language of security constructed and employed by the Bush administration in relation to the Iraq war. I suggested that the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war provided the framework within which substantive political choices could be and were made. In this respect it created an intersubjective structure which was premised on shared understandings. Within this context, boundaries of identification were drawn between those who were fighting for the good of civilisation and those who were sponsoring evil.

Analysing the Bush administration's speeches as a series of interactions strengthened my claims that the Iraq war was socially constructed. This argument counters mainstream assumptions that America acted unilaterally or was unbound. Instead, I have illustrated that the Bush administration was constrained by social dimensions. Firstly, they were constrained by intersubjective rules that existed before September 11, 2001. In order to justify their policy as lawful and legal it was necessary for the Bush administration to frame them within the boundaries of these shared normative and legal rules. Abiding by these intersubjective boundaries limited how they could act. That the Bush administration exerted so much energy in inculcating binaries between us and them, good and evil, illustrates the importance of conveying their message in a particular way. If America could simply go it alone, I suggest such efforts would have been less of a priority. Even though they were the sole superpower, they could not act as they pleased, at least not without consequences. Moreover, the identity of the Bush administration as being on the side of good was embedded in and dependent upon a perception that the US was putting existing rules into practice. Failure to do so would undermine their arguments that their cause to fight and defeat terrorists was right and moral.

Some would counter that the Bush administration's war plan for Iraq resembles purely strategic actions that maximise their power position. In such rationalist accounts, their discursive justifications are cheap talk that cloak alterative motives. That the Iraq war went ahead without a second UN Security Council resolution appears to indicate that the Bush administration had the material capabilities and thus the capacity to act as they wished.

Without denying the intention of President Bush and his team to fight their war on terror on their own preemptive terms, a critical constructivist position adds an extra dimension to their discursive justifications. It illustrates how their membership in a wider intersubjective community impacted on their decision making process. Their self-identification as the good guys required affirmation by others. This level of recognition could only be garnered by their abidance with international law. As illustrated, they tried to tailor their justifications to coincide with the boundaries of international law. Even when no WMD were found in Iraq, they drew on UN Resolution 1441 to validate their claim for undertaking a pre-emptive invasion regardless. This shows that their actions and agency were constrained intersubjectively.

I seek to show that their agency was constrained at the level of language. I highlighted how the administration was constrained by the very discursive categories they constituted to justify the Iraq war. At the defining moment they had to find a new way of speaking as their central justification for the Iraq war was nullified when no weapons of mass destruction were uncovered in Iraq. In order to do this they had to rebuild their previous arguments. They could no longer justify the war on the grounds of the threat posed by Saddam Hussein. As illustrated, they did not abandon the language of security or the identification of Iraq as an axis of evil. What they did do was to supplement these arguments with a stronger democratic logic.

The unintended consequence of the redefinition was that it constituted but also constrained how the Bush administration could respond to the lack of WMD. On the one hand this redefinition gave them agency at the defining moment. It enabled them to justify the invasion. The inclusion of the democratic discourse also complemented and reinforced the Bush administration and their supporters as the good guys, despite

their arguments being disputed. Indeed the re-definition was made possible by the Bush administration operationlising the more dormant aspects of their justifications of the war, such as freeing Iraqi people.

When we take language as a structure, their response at this defining moment can be seen in an alternative light. The discursive categories that they used to justify their actions illustrate that they had to rebuild their justifications for undertaking the invasion. Their earlier definition of pre-emptive self-defence had to be modified. Again, this illustrates that the Iraq war was socially constructed through a course of interactions. It also illustrates how language constrains their actions. The structures of meaning constituting their definition of security had to remain consistent. This limited how they could respond in a meaningful way. If they distorted their original argument for invading too far then their entire justifications would fall apart. To prevent this from happening the Bush administration did not abandon their original definition of security, but supplemented it. Using more subsidiary themes, they recast their argument in more democratic terms. The path to national and international security was not only through eliminating Iraq's WMD capabilities, but also through democracy promotion.

Overall I argue that the constitutive and constraining dimensions of the Bush administration's language are best captured by a critical constructivist view and the agent/structure relationship it facilitates. Unlike conventional constructivism, it illustrates that the Bush administration's language was crucial to attributing the context with a particular set of meanings. It is also unexpected by post-structuralists who focus on how the most powerful interpret issues to create hierarchies. Considering that the Bush administration was the world's superpower it is expected that their discourse would garner the greatest strength and legitimacy. In this case, the most powerful failed to do so. Moreover, their power was eroded not by an alternative agent, but rather by the internal inconsistencies that arose in their own discursive categories.

A critical constructivist view of language permits investigation into the constitutive and constraining dimensions of language simultaneously. While highlighting that new interpretations and outlooks will arise, it emphasises that any new discursive

categories are always built on a existing context of meaning. As such, the way they can be framed is limited. By re-defining their justifications, thus, the Bush administration re-defined the rules of the game.

However, this intersubjective structure also limited how the Bush administration could act. It was premised on the identity of America fighting a war on the grounds of self-defence, security and threat. The absence of any weapons to substantiate these claims undermined the discursive justification for the war. This fastened the Bush administration into a particular sphere of action. In order to pursue their policy, a threat had to exist. Given that the latter was questionable in the case of Iraq, it became necessary for the Bush administration to construct a narrative in which Saddam Hussein still constituted a threat even if such was not the case. They were acting in a context that already had meaning

An analysis of the Bush administration's use of language to justify the war shows that language matters. While there are many facets to these justifications, security stands out as the dominant discourse that constituted their agency. It created an intersubjective reality in which they could define Saddam Hussein as an imminent threat, linked to September 11, 2001. This in turn provided them with justifications to invade on pre-emptive grounds. In this context the next chapter will turn to the Copenhagen School's securitization framework as a door opener for inserting the importance and power of language in IR and in the Bush administration's security policies.

Chapter 2:

Speaking Security

Introduction

Having established that language matters in the last chapter, the next step is to start developing areas of research where it can be observed to matter. Security seems an appropriate place to start. The purpose of this chapter is to look more closely at the language of security and how it is spoken. As one of the most powerful discourses within IR, exploring how security issues are discussed is worthy of further consideration. Reflecting on this issue also elevates my investigation into the linguistic paradox to another level. Focusing on security as a discourse is a medium to explore the constitutive and constraining aspects of language. In this context I focus specifically on the work of the Copenhagen School (CS), which is heralded as leading theory on security studies.[125] Although the subject of language is difficult to locate within traditional state-military security discussions, it falls squarely within their approach.

Section 1 provides a brief background of the CS research agenda. To begin, I outline the main tenets of their securitization framework and its significance. What stands out is the emphasis that they place upon the social aspects of security. Pushing beyond state-centric and material assumptions, they question what security is and how it comes about. Their securitization framework relies on the idea of the speech act to examine the social construction of security concerns, threats and responses. Yet when the CS speaks of security they refer to more than words. Using speech act theory they present security as inherently a social action. The outcome of speaking security is thus immense for the CS. Indeed, for them speaking security signifies a transition from the

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[125] Although not denying the potential contributions of other theories within security studies might offer to the analysis, the CS's security framework is the approach that most strongly links language with security by explaining how security comes to exist through politics.

realm of everyday (politicization) to the realm of exceptionality (securitization).

While acknowledging that a securitization framework brings us considerably closer to the interface between security and language in Section 3, I then go on to scrutinize the CS approach. I propose three revisions to enable discussion of security to move beyond the moment of utterance, beyond the idea of breaking rules and beyond a singular definition of what security means. Firstly, I argue that the CS concentrates on the moment security is uttered. Throughout their securitization framework they focus on the speech act by which security is spoken. It could be said this outlook is short-sighted and perhaps blinds them to other considerations. What is particularly missing is an account of how definitions of security are modified during the back and forth deliberations between the speaker and their audience that the CS suggests occur during a securitizing move. More problematically, their framework makes no attempt to map the development of securitized speech acts after the moment of speech. Consequently, their framework is unable to cope with what securitized speech acts bring into being and/or how securitized environments function.

A second problem stems from the first. The CS claims that speaking security allows agents to break free of rules results in producing an overly agentive account of the power of securitizing actors in three ways. First, the material and normative structures that initially constitute the possibility for securitization to succeed are subsequently absent or forgotten in their account. In short, the CS shows how speaking security enables agents to break rules, but then is unable to address how securitizing actors draw on existing rules to enter into the realm of exceptionality. Second, they also overlook how rules are created through the speech act. Certain rules are constituted in the act of speaking security. This language not only constitutes the agency to move beyond everyday rules, it also constrains what the agent can say in a meaningful way. The final limitation of the CS treatment of rules is that while an argument is made, exceptional practices are operationalised, there is yet no discussion of what kind of rules apply once security is uttered or a securitized move has been successful.

The third weakness I outline is that the CS framework rests on a narrow definition of what can and cannot count as a security issue. Following their strict formula ignores the multiple meanings that can be attached to this term. The simplicity of their

framework restricts the referent objects that can be deemed worthy of securitization. Multiplicity is ignored in another substantial way. Securitization is premised on a singular definition of security, the designation of threat. Expanding the conceptual and definitional remit of security draws attention to the ability of this term to house several different strands of argumentation. The relationships between these linguistic constellations is important, as they influence the way in which security can be spoken in a particular context, enabling and constraining those speaking security in different ways. All of these weaknesses contribute to what I term the hidden dangers of speaking security. While the CS does an excellent job of demonstrating how speaking security empowers agents, they are less able to show how actors themselves are structured by this discourse.

Section 4 brings the CS framework to bear on the empirical case. Initially I illustrate that a securitized lens highlights several core aspects of the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war. Securitization is especially useful for capturing the terms of exceptionality and threat contained within their discursive frames. It is also able to account for the reality making effect of the administration's security rhetoric, including the inscription of us versus them identities within the context of the Iraq war.

While the CS approach can explain certain aspects of the Bush administration's justifications for the intervention, I highlight key aspects that are missing in their account, each of which reinforces my threefold critique. First and foremost the CS is unable to explain how it was possible for the Iraq war to be justified once the securitized utterances they espoused were disputed. Indeed it is unclear whether the Iraq war constitutes a case of successful or failed securitization. The serious concerns raised over the invasion at the defining moment prevent any concrete conclusion from being drawn. The contestability of their definition of security makes it difficult to appraise whether or not their arguments for war had gained audience acceptance. Another aspect that is not dealt with by the CS is that the Bush administration had to depart from their original justifications for the war in significant ways. The CS approach cannot explain how the Bush administration adapted and reconstituted their justifications. Their speech acts shifted away from a securitizing move based on defining Saddam as an existential threat through his acquisition of WMD to a securitizing move that incorporated democratic components. The implications of this

redefinition pose a unique puzzle for the CS design. Indeed, the Bush administration's justifications for the war blur the foundational boundary they draw between politicization and securitization.

Rules are the second hurdle the CS runs into with regards to explaining the Bush administration's justifications for the 2003 Iraq war. While the President and his team argued the need to alter the existing rules, this does not constitute rule breaking behaviour as the CS suggest. Security was spoken as a pretext for introducing exceptional measures, but this action drew heavily on established rules. This speech act limited what could be said in a meaningful way in this particular context. Making this advance is related to their attempt to redefine the meaning attached to pre-emptive self-defense and interrogation practices in the name of security.

Lastly, the US justifications for the Iraq war involved a complex constellation of speech acts or moves. This multiplicity is important. As shown in this case, the language of security alone was not enough to legitimate exceptional measures. Rather, the Bush administration's definition of security was reconstituted to include democratic components. This new narrative created a different kind of securitized realm, and, in turn a different level of agency and structure available to the Bush administration as they justified their war.

The chapter ends by reaffirming the significant contributions of the CS framework. Its strength is that it creates a space in which speaking security can be recognised as a form of power. Its oversights contribute to what I term the hidden dangers of speaking security. These are twofold. On the one hand, I expose the inability of the CS to capture the transformational dimensions of speech acts and the implications of these changes for the way in which security is spoken. On the other hand, I pause to reconsider their claims that speaking security normalizes the realm of exceptionality wherein rules become less important. The Bush administration's use of 'any means necessary' in the name of security in order to justify the Iraq war and also authorize the creation of prisons in Abu Ghraib make such considerations imperative.

Section 1:Security and Securitization

Security. The issue of security has long been at the heart of IR. Traditionally, the material resources possessed by and the balance of power between sovereign states were central to this subject matter. Adopting a causal mode of analysis, positivist and rational theories contend that correct methods for discovering the laws governing the realm of security are objective. As Stephen Walt (1991:212) defines it, security studies is "the study of the threat, use, and control of military force ... [that is] the conditions that make the use of force more likely, the ways that the use of force affects individuals, states and societies, and the specific policies that states adopt in order to prepare for, prevent, or engage in war". Within these scientific approaches security was related to the idea of states, anarchy and survival (Posen 1993:82; Schultz, Godson, and Greenwood 1993:2; Mearsheimer 1995).

The CS suggests an alternative way of thinking about and responding to security issues. Their ultimate aim is to 'widen and deepen' traditional security agendas.[126] Dissatisfied with restricting security to state survival and material resources they made a serious attempt to integrate alternative factors into security studies, ranging from economic and environmental issues to human rights and migration. To complement the widening of contemporary security issues, the CS also advocated deepening traditional IR approaches. This was to be achieved by moving either down to the level of individual or human security, or up to the level of international or global security, with regional and societal security as possible intermediate points. This attempt is evident in their attempt to locate different dynamics of securitization in different 'sectors' (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998).[127]

Informed by these critical sensibilities, the CS framework is dismissive of attempts to quantify what security 'actually is' or whether an issue is 'really' a threat. Instead, they stress the significance of the social components of security by offering, "a constructivist operational method…for understanding who can securitize what and

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[126] The CS is not alone in this pursuit. See Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams (1996); Jef Huysmans (1998).

[127] Hereafter this core text will simply be referenced as Buzan et al.

under what conditions" (Buzan et al., 1998: vii).[128] Working in this tradition, security is no longer an objective condition but a social construct with different meanings in different societies. According to the CS it is also an enactment of a particular type of self-referential practice, "because it is in this practice that the issue becomes a security issue – not necessarily because a real existential threat exists but because the issue is presented as such" (Buzan et al, 1998:24). This statement reinforces the idea that security is always intersubjective and socially constructed.

The idea of a threat not actually existing provides insight into the Bush administration's justifications for the war. It demonstrates that threats do not have to exist in order for security to be held to be real. The actual presence of WMD in Iraq becomes less pressing in establishing the security stakes in this context. What matters is that the Bush administration placed Iraq in the category of an existential threat, convinced others that Saddam Hussein posed an existential threat and that this argument was accepted. How the threat was discursively framed is thus crucial, again making language matter.

What becomes explicit in the CS account is that the process of constructing a threat is not politically neutral. Instead, they argue that under extreme circumstances the boundaries of identities can be hardened and thickened in ways that exacerbate conflict and make creative resolutions difficult if not impossible. This goes to the core of their focus on 'identity politics' (Buzan et al., 1998: 119–126). Again, this signals a major break from traditional concerns about security. According to the CS, what is threatened in times of heightened security is the very cultural identity that rationalist and positivist understandings take as given. They argue that identities are intrinsically linked to the construction of security perceptions, risks and threats (Weiner, 1992-3). In their account, security is not only about the survival of states but also about the survival of societal (group) identities. In sum, "societal security refers to the level of collective identities and actions taken to defend such 'we identities' (Buzan et al., 1998:120).[129] This emphasis is particularly evident in the CS emphasis on binary oppositions at the heart of security (Wæver 1995). Security and insecurity are

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[128] The CS position as constructivist is perhaps a meeting point between Buzan's more realist tendencies and Wæver's post-structuralist roots.
[129] Individually they argued that 'the main threats to security come from competing identities and migration' (Buzan, 1993: 43). Thus 'culture becomes security policy' (Wæver, 1995: 68)

intimately related. The latter is a necessary condition for the former to be convincing. Knowing who 'they' are makes it easier for 'us' to survive. It is from the construction of an issue as a security issue, and of the 'other' as a threat, that exceptional policies that lead to security are approved, what the CS calls securitization. Again this is seen in the Bush administration's discourse that 'they' were fighting a war against 'evil'.

Securitization. Most important for our purposes here is the relationship between speech acts and the CS central concept of securitization. To explain how security threats are framed and constructed, the CS relies on speech acts theory. Building directly on the work of John Austin (1962), they claim that discursive utterances do things. In this tradition, it is the saying of something does more than simply label an object or directly represent its meaning. What is also being undertaken is an act of social commitments.

The speech act concept allows the CS to show that speaking security does something of significance. Taking Austin's considerations on board, Wæver (1995: 55) has defined security as a speech act which positions particular actors/issues as existentially threatening. In their fullest statement on the securitization concept Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde (1998: 23-25) define it as the positioning of particular issues as an existential threat to security, which in turn, enables the emergency measures. Specifically, "'security' is the move that takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue either as a special kind of politics or as above politics" (Buzan et al., 1998: 22). Securitization has as its basic argument that speaking security is a political action. By uttering 'security', a state representative moves a particular development into a specific area, and thereby claims a special right to use whatever means are necessary to eliminate the threat. This understanding endows securitization with enormous power. The argument put forward by the CS is that the securitizing process represents the move beyond the realm of everyday politics or what they term politicization into the realm of exceptional politics or securitization.

The conceptualization of security as the 'site of exception' or the broader suspension of 'normal politics' is crucial in making sense of the normative dimension of the CS theorizing (Browning and McDonald 2007). It assumes that the use of the concept of security modifies the context. Ultimately, the CS assumes that securitization

represents a failure. According to them, it is indicative of a breakdown at the level of politicization. The exceptionality invoked by speaking security metamorphoses into a different suspension of democratic procedures (Aradau, 2004 391-92, Williams 2003). Since security becomes the 'site of panic politics' (Buzan et al. 1998:34), the best option is to pursue the removal of issues from the security agenda.[130] Although the CS acknowledges that it may be better to deal with some issues within the realm of rather security than outside it, particularly those which require the use of exceptional measures, desecuritization is defined as the general ideal (Wæver 2000:251). Their concept of de-securitization captures the refusal to use the language of security in regards to a particular issue, thus undermining the extent to which democratic processes can be overridden. Put succinctly, desecuritization is a normative goal, or, "the shifting of issues out of emergency mode into the normal bargaining process of the political sphere" (Buzan et al. 1998:34).[131]

In the last instance we must keep in mind that securitization is significantly more than just speaking security. While the speech act is imperative to the securitization process, it alone does not constitute securitization per se. To be securitized, issues have to be accepted as constituting an existential threat. By extension, securitization can never be imposed, since it is necessary for securitizing actors to justify their propositions and actions. Nor is it guaranteed that securitization will succeed. Taking these factors into consideration, the CS outline a 'securitizing move' as a process of convincing as much as claiming (Buzan et al.1998: 25). The idea of a securitizing move reaffirms that securitization represents a reciprocal interaction between the securitizing actor, (whomever is speaking security) and their audience (the receiver). While actors can certainly frame a certain issue as a security threat and attempt to securitize, it is the audience which decides whether this proposal is accepted as a common narrative, i.e. whether the proposal will be intersubjectively held as real. In fact, the CS contends that the move between politicization and securitization lies at the discretion of the constituencies. To transcend the threshold between a securitizing move and successful securitization, the agent speaking security must convince others of the magnitude of the threats and vulnerabilities that exist. More importantly, the audience must judge

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[130] Daniel Deudney (1991) made this point in cautioning against the including environmental issues on the security agenda

[131] For an alternative view see Rita Taurek (2006)

such claims as an appropriate response to the level of threat presented. For, "a discourse that takes the form of presenting something as an existential threat to a referent object does not by itself create securitization – this is a securitizing move, but the issue is securitized only if and when the audience accept it as such" (Buzan et al.1998: 25). Speech acts thus do not securitize unless they are 'backed up'.

Here, the CS outlines two core 'facilitating conditions' which might enable a securitizing move to succeed, or securitized speech act to be accepted.[132] The first focus is the internal, linguistic-grammatical content of the act. The second is the external, contextual and social. Regarding the first aspect, the CS means that agents must speak security in a particular way in order for it to count as securitization. Indeed, the CS formula sets out a strict format wherein a speech act must, "be staged as existential threats to a referent object by a securitizing actor who thereby generates endorsement of emergency measures beyond rules that would otherwise bind" (Buzan, et al. 1998: 5). In short, a security claim is made confirming the existence of a concrete threat and a possible way to extinguish it.

Apart from following a grammatical blueprint, a successful speech act must also, "hold a position from which the act can be made" (Buzan et al, 1998: 32). The external conditions are twofold. They have to do with the social capacity of the actor and the threat condition. In the CS account, securitizing actors should be in a position of authority. Their account focuses on the articulations of capable agents,[133] most predominantly political leaders who are able to marshal the resources needed to deal with the threat. As Wæver (1995:57) argues, "security is articulated only from a specific place, in an institutional voice, by elites". Jef Huysmans also notes, "statesmen representing the state and uttering security in the name of the state are the privileged agents in the securitizing process" (2002:54).

Certain referent objects can aid the creditability of a securitizing move. For instance, "[i]t is more likely that one can conjure a security threat if certain objects can be

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[132] The development of these benchmarks can be seen as part of the CS attempt to prevent the endless widening of security to include any and all threats to human security. On this point see Huysmans (1998:482)

[133] Didier Bigo (2002) contends securitising professionals should be in charge of creating and commanding the kind of specialised knowledge required to deal with existential threats.

referred that are generally held to be threatening – be they tanks, hostile sentiments, or polluted waters" (Buzan et al, 1998: 33). The presences or absences of these two facilitating conditions have an enormous impact on making some situations more or less prone to successful securitization. Put differently, some cases of security threats are easier to construct than others. The Iraq war and the US war on terror are examples of situations where securitization was a more probable outcome. Saddam Hussein's history of aggression and deception made it easier for the Bush administration to construct a security narrative which identified his regime as an existential threat, and for this narrative to have meaning. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 also added to weight to their claims that inaction was not an option. The latter context provided a platform from which the Bush administration could point to the presence of direct and existential threats. The outcome of the terrorist attacks, in terms of human fatalities alone, served to substantiate their justifications that there was a pressing need to prevent such security threats from materialising again. Thereafter the dangers of security risks and threats became widely accepted conclusions. Such linguistic and external conditions made it more likely that the Bush administration's securitizing move would succeed. Their securitized speech acts and moves did not determine or cause the Iraq war, rather they constituted a world in which it became necessary and therefore possible.

Yet, as argued by the CS, it is the audience who determines whether a securitizing actor's claims will be accepted as a security issue. It is only then that special powers will be granted to allow securitizing actors to break free of rules that would otherwise bind.

Section 2: Critiquing the CS:

The applicability of the CS approach to the discursive construction of particular issues as security threats has not been without criticism. It is not my intention to extensively review the myriad of debates that seek to clarify and amend the concept of

securitization.[134] Although this thesis obviously constitutes a part of this body of work, my aim is to move the CS framework beyond the moment of utterance, beyond an account of rule breaking and beyond a singular definition of what security means. These are my contributions. Some existing criticisms are relevant to this objective and in that sense will be acknowledged. The paucity of references in the section of rule breaking is a reflection of the scarcity of substantive work done in this area, and the same applies to the discussion on securitized environments. It is also worth noting that I do not wish to abolish the CS securitization framework. However, the amendments I advocate will hopefully help to improve securitization as a conceptual apparatus that can facilitate more robust examinations of language as both a constitutive and constraining device.

'The Moment of Utterance'

As noted, the CS account of securitization focuses on the moment security is uttered to position particular issues as security threats. With relevant consent, this moment signals the implementation of emergency measures and the suspension of normal politics. Issues become security threats at particular moments.

Without denying that speaking security performs an action, I argue below that focusing solely on the speech act is too shortsighted. What we gain is a snapshot of the language of security rather than a holistic picture of the larger intersubjective processes that a case of securitization constitutes. A speech act view of security does not provide an adequate grounding upon which to examine security as a practice. The context of the act is narrowly defined, with the focus only on the moment of intervention or utterance. Such a narrow view has serious ramifications as it obscures crucial elements from the construction of security during the process of securitization or beyond. Each will be addressed separately below.

To begin with, focusing on the speech act overlooks transformations that may occur to the definition of security on two levels. On the one hand, the CS omits any

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[134] See among others Aradau, Claudia, (2004); Thierry Balzacq (2005); Didier Bigo (2006) (2005), Ken Booth, (2005); Jef Huysmans (1998 a), (1998b), (2000), (2002) (2004); Bill McSweeney (1996): 1998); Paul Roe (2004); Michael C. Williams (1998), (1999), (2003); Richard Wyn Jones, (2005).

modifications that may arise as securitizing actors speak security during the securitizing move. On the other, their focus on the moment of utterance excludes the larger securitized environment that the speech act brings into being. As a result, they fail to examine how security is spoken within securitized realms and whether changes arise in how agents speak security within both contexts, either during securitization or in securitized environments.

The securitization framework's focus on the moment security is uttered shortens the timeframe in which security is spoken; consider that articulations of threats occur at a particular moment. Such an approach is not without appeal in dealing with radical changes or responding to perceived moments of political crisis (Croft 2006). Yet dealing with security in this way makes it difficult to pinpoint when securitizing actors draw on discourses that already have meaning, and thus resonance with the audience, during a process of securitization. Concentrating on the immediate, or at least the present, pushes the historicity of future utterances into the background. However, the larger set of meanings within which the speech act is embedded may be the crucial factor that enables and constrains the agent undertaking the securitizing move. Pre-existing meanings often inform how security is spoken or understood at the moment of utterance, thus informing and structuring the terms of debate. There may be instances in which past events influence associated perceptions of present and future security threats. As Ronnie Lipschutz (1995:8) has suggested, discourses of security and threat are, "the products of historical structures and processes, of struggles for power within a state, of conflicts between the societal groupings that inhabit states and the interest that besiege them".

The Bush administration drew on a language of security that already had meaning against the background of September 11, 2001 in order to justify the war they undertook against Iraq in 2003. In essence, their securitizing move in relation to the Iraq war was not the first time they had spoken security to legitimate the use of exceptional measures. Nor did they speak security in the exact same format as September 11, 2001, when they attempted to justify the Iraq war. Instead, the Bush administration modified this discourse in response to changing circumstances which, in turn, influenced the potential of gaining audience acceptance. What occurred

therefore should be viewed simply as a series of securitizing moves or utterances rather than a single speech act.

For the CS, securitization is a speech act in the sense that uttering this word is the act that convinces an audience of the legitimate need to go beyond otherwise binding rules. However, the role of the audience and their actual involvement in the securitization process is underspecified (Stritzel, 2007). Apart from stating that their approval is required, the CS pays very little attention to how the voice of audiences influences the securitized speech act. It is worth noting briefly that questions about what constitutes an audience also arise in the CS framework. What happens, for instance, when there is more than one audience? What happens if and when their opinions conflict? What if the audience prompts the speaker to speak? Even Wæver (2003:12) acknowledges that the role of the audience is underdeveloped in the CS account, as it, "varies according to the political system and nature of issues".

To the extent that there is engagement with the relationship between the securitizing actor and their audience in the CS, it has come in a central form; acceptance. The constant back and forth deliberation that occurs between the audience and the speaker underscores the CS framework, yet there is no room for incorporating modifications that the audience may make to the way security is uttered. This lack of argumentation is problematic. In principle, securitizing actors may alter the way in which they speak security in light of the reception their utterance receives from the public. Likewise, audiences may accept parts of the speech act whilst rejecting others. Making much the same point, Ronald Krebs and Patrick Jackson (2007:43) illustrate how agents have accepted the frame, i.e. that a threat exists, but may reject the implication, i.e. the policy changes that will accompany the frame. This suggests that actors may sometimes need to rearticulate the threat in such a way that, over and above the audience's acceptance of the danger, their proposed policy responses also achieve the required level of agreement. Alan Collins (2005:572) asks, "what if, after having already convinced an audience that an existential threat exists, the securitizing actor does not adopt extra-ordinary measures and a solution is sought via the political process?"

Given their ability to transform how security is spoken during a securitizing move,

these feedback loops are extremely powerful, particularly from a social constructivist perspective since the effects of the speech act cannot be controlled by the agents themselves. A change in the way security is uttered will affect the kind of agency that the securitizing actor as well as their audiences will have. If the items that are being securitized are altered then a different kind of securitization can said to be under construction. For instance, in our empirical example the Bush administration's re-definition of their justifications for invading Iraq constituted a different sphere of action. Security was still being spoken, but it was now being uttered in a different way, not least because the threat was no longer existential to the US. Acknowledging the transformation of the Bush administration's speech acts, or any securitizing actors, is imperative to understanding how securitization is made possible. Such modifications are given short shrift in the CS account of what constitutes as a securitizing move. The process whereby issues are placed on the security agenda and where the response to this issue is thereafter established requires further examination.

It is worth asking whether the role of the audience is underspecified for a reason. Thierry Balzacq (2005) has argued that this gap in the securitization framework is linked with the CS reliance on the concepts of speech act methodology. For Balzacq this set up reduces the work done by the negotiation between the articulator and the audience at whom the speech act is directed. As he notes, the priority within the CS framework resides with the articulation of the speech act (that is its illocutionary effect) rather than what the speech act does (its perlocutionary effect).[135] Such an explicit or "decisionistic" (Williams, 2003:521) approach fails to explain how audiences grant the securitizer the permission to override the rules that would otherwise bind. Indeed, the CS expend very little energy on questions surrounding why particular utterances have resonance. This makes the role of the audience purely reactionary. Following the CS account, the audience is depicted as recipients of an already formulated narrative. Agents speak and frame security, i.e. provide the stimuli, audiences respond to this stimuli either by accepting or rejecting it (Doty

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[135] According to Austin (1967) each sentence can convey three types of acts, the combination of which constitutes the total speech act situation — (i) locutionary — the utterance of an expression that contains a given sense and reference; (ii) illocutionary - the act performed in articulating a locution and (iii) perlocutionary, which is the 'consequential effects' or 'sequels' that are aimed at evoking the feelings, beliefs, thoughts or actions of the target audience. Jürgen Habermas (1984) summarizes these different aspects in the following way — 'to say *something*, to act *in* saying something, to bring about something *through* acting in saying something' (emphasis in original).

1999:80). The intersubjective establishment of a threat turns out to be more of a monologue than a dialogue.

By privileging the speech act, the CS view of security does not provide adequate grounding upon which to examine security practices in 'real situations'. Focusing on the moment of utterance is analytically problematic as it closes down the time-frame in which security is spoken. However, arguments usually take place over long periods of time. Consequently, issues can come to be perceived as security issues or threats over an extended duration. As Dider Bigo (2002) has argued, security issues can come into existence and even be institutionalized without dramatic moments of intervention, such as immigration.[136] Taking such potentially long-term processes into consideration may enable us to glean insights into why audiences become attached to particular security utterances rather than others. Echoing an earlier point, focusing on the moment security is uttered does not help us understand how securitization becomes possible. Assuming there were previous rounds of deliberation, why then, in a particular context, did a particular actor undertake a securitizing move, and why was that actor supported?

Improving the relationship between the speaker and the audience is an important stepping stone in understanding what speaking security does and how securitization becomes possible. However, I would argue that focusing on how audiences approve exceptional measures is not enough to grasp the constitutive and constraining dimensions of language comprehensively. In order to understand the construction of a security discourse in a more robust manner, it is necessary to think about issues that arise to challenge and even alter the original utterance apart from the audience. Although the speaker and the listeners are key agents in the process of speaking security, neither controls it per se. Instead, they participate in an intersubjective realm regarding the construction of a language of security, a point to which I will return in subsequent chapters. The origins of securitized speech acts and their evolution seem to be mutually reinforcing.

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[136] Jef Huysmans (2000) makes a similar point with regards to immigration as a security issue in the European context

The transformative potential of securitized speech acts is given even less consideration once a securitizing move is successful. Once the securitizing actor crosses this threshold, they enter into the realm of emergency politics. What is missing from the CS account, and several of their critics, is how the securitizing actors put their words into use. The exclusive emphasis the CS places on the speech act and the moment of utterance downplays the progression of security speech acts, or how agents mobilize this discourse. Yet it is highly unlikely that agents stop speaking security once securitization occurs. On the contrary, it is more probable that they will speak security more frequently as part of operating in a securitized context. It will also be necessary for the audience to draw on this vocabulary to renew their acceptance or rejection of securitization as this process unfolds. Consequently, there will be an increase in the number of people speaking security. Securitization should recognise the potential for a multiplicity of voices to emerge beyond the moment of utterance. Expanding the grounds of deliberation opens up the possibility for greater levels of contestation. Through these communicative exchanges de-securitization becomes a more realistic option.

What is problematic, however, is that securitization is viewed as short-hand for the construction of security: the meaning of this term is not questioned. Speaking security is seen to entail the same consequences across time, imbued with notions of immediacy, survival and threat. This fixing of the meaning undermines the notion that such meanings may change over time.[137] In fact, securitized speech acts are rarely interrogated beyond the moment they are spoken. The CS conceptualization of securitization requires the acceptance of something's "security-ness". However, it does not also require the actual employment of extraordinary measures. In fact, the CS make it clear, "we do not push the demand so high as to say that an emergency measure has to be adopted, only that the existential threat has to be argued and gain enough resonance for a platform to be made from which it is possible to legitimize emergency measures….that would not have been possible had the discourse not taken the form of existential threats" (Buzan et al, 1998:25). Extra steps are needed in order to examine the actual employment of emergency measures underscoring the securitization concept.

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[137] For a genealogy of security see Rothschild (2005); Haftendorn (1991); Dillon (1996)

Speaking security to securitize an issue is one thing, while actually putting securitization into practice is quite another. The speech act is an action, but it is only one action, often representative of a much broader linguistic process. Moreover, security is uttered with the expectation that things will be done, that resources will be mobilized. The very act of waging war is necessarily different to linguistically establishing the conditions of war. Thus it is necessary to look at how agents put the language of security into use. How do they speak security? For what purposes? With what outcomes? Paul Roe acknowledges (2008:620) that after the phase of identification, there is a stage of 'mobilisation'. Nicole Jackson (2006:313) offers up a similar observation that, "once an issue is rhetorically adopted, it must affect the development of a policy for it to be effective in practice. Otherwise the activities have only been rhetorically securitized with no practical result". The war in Iraq is a good example of the need to go beyond the moment of utterance and to integrate competing narratives.

Taken together, the CS neglect of actual processes of interaction and debate during the securitizing move and after securitization, creates a static picture. The stage of identification and the stage of implementation require further development. Such potentially long-term processes and practices fit uneasily within the CS framework with its focus on the moment of utterance. The securitization framework would be weakened if the speech act was only part of the securitizing process rather than the act itself. As Rita Abrahamson (2000:59) has argued, "focusing on a moment at which an issue ceases to be a political issue and becomes a security one suggests an either/or approach to politics, in which there are no gradations or continuum of issues".

'Breaking Rules'

The CS contends that securitization makes it possible for agents to legitimize emergency measures. As noted, their account maintains that successful securitization moves issues from the realm of the everyday to that of the exceptional. That different sets of rules exist for different contexts is obvious; applying the rules of golf in the realm of foreign policy would be nonsensical. The claim that securitization enables

agents to break free from rules that would otherwise bind is more contentious.

The CS representation is problematic on three interrelated levels. First, it fails to capture instances when agents do not attempt to break free of rules but instead use them as part of their securitizing move. Second, defining securitization as rule breaking action under-specifies the kind of rules that are created by speaking security or operational in securitized environments. Third, the CS account ignores the rules by which certain acts or words have meaning. All in all, it is misleading to hold that if conventional rules are suspended by producing an utterance, rule-guided security actions cease to exist. This relates back to conceptualising language as a structure.

A topic that deserves closer attention is the idea that agents can use and follow rules when uttering security. The CS undermines the extent to which agents draw on existing rules as a prerequisite to speak security. In order to make their securitizing move succeed, agents often draw on existing rules to build their case. By invoking established rules, actors strengthen the appropriateness of the proposed action. Their securitizing move, in other words, is dependent on rules rather than independent of them. In this sense, rules can be considered a facilitating condition. This complicates the boundary that the CS draws between politicization and securitization. Taken to its logical conclusion, securitization implies that agents possess the autonomy to relegate everyday rules to the sidelines. In this framework, securitization removes issues from the political agenda. Their assumption of the 'suspension of normal politics' ignores the resilience of existing rules. Much like the concepts development, rule following and use has not been properly understood by adherents of the CS. Does politicization reach a complete standstill once securitization starts? Contra to the picture painted by the CS, the rules of the everyday are not always suspended. Rather, they can continue to exist alongside securitization. To reiterate, there are continuums of issues, problems and threats.

Relaxing the sharp boundary that the CS draws between politicization and securitization also opens up the possibility of securitization becoming reified, of exceptionality becoming the rule. Within this context it is no longer a case of simply upgrading an issue from the normal to exceptional politics but also allowing the possibility that securitized issues might be placed at the centre of normal politics.

Built around this, exceptionality can become the rule (Van Munster 2004; Jabri 2006). Going beyond the moment of utterance, such situations are more likely. Even though the exceptional component of the security discourse is present from the beginning of the speech act, it is paired with an expectation that this securitization is a temporary suspension of the norm or the breaking of it. Securitization should not last indefinitely. Yet in the case of the Bush administration's war in Iraq, we find an ongoing conflict or a war without a definitive end. Again, this was part and parcel of conducting a different kind of war. What started as a temporary transition mechanism underlying the decision to go to war quickly became and remains a permanent feature of the US state. Since security is still being spoken, one would expect that, according to the CS, the rules of the everyday are still being suspended. While this war arguably continues under President Barak Obama's administration, there has at the same time been a relaxation. By being prolonged in time, securitized environments end up leading to the absolute elimination of rules, especially if de-securitization never materializes. The risk of such a permanent state of exception seems inconsistent with the CS understanding of desecuritization as the ideal.

The CS also overlooks the contestability of rules themselves. Much of this would seem consistent with the focus on the speech act in their work. As mentioned earlier, the securitization logic paints security less as a site of negotiation than one of articulation (McSweeney, 1996:85). This weakens any account of how rules themselves come to be defined and redefined via a securitized speech act. When the CS speaks about rules being broken they are referring predominately to existing intersubjective norms and laws. The boundaries that they claim are being transcended in a securitization process are those that define what constitutes 'normal' politics. "Extraordinary" in their account is a reference to a deviation from what is considered normal and thus acceptable. The supposition that existing rules are suspended in times of security is problematic, as mentioned earlier. It also fails to address the rules of speech. By speaking security, agents are undertaking an inherently rule based activity. This goes to the core of the understanding of security as a speech act: the utterance does something. Following that same framework, however, overlooks the linguistic rules constituted in as well as by the speech act itself. Any utterance will determine what the speaker of a securitized speech act can and cannot say. The kind of rules in question here are different to the CS claims that one set of rules are suspended with

another, that normal rules are suspended when securitization occurs. Different kinds of rules may be in play aside from the rules of normal politics. Unlike existing intersubjective and normative rules, the rules of speech are impossible to suspend. Without them the speech act would be meaningless as these rules maintain the structures by which the words have meaning or sense.

This deeper type of rule making is understated in the CS framework. In short they fail to examine how uttering security instills an understanding of what can and cannot be said in that context. This discursive act is rule-guided. It constitutes the space in which certain actions are deemed legitimate while others are not. A caveat: as noted, the CS does stipulate that securitization must follow the rules of the act. Securitization can only come into application, according to the CS, if three building blocks are met: firstly, the fact that there is an existential threat to survival; secondly, the notion that exceptional measures are taken to fight it; and thirdly, the justification which allows these measures to suspend democratic procedures. Within this theory, power is derived from the use of 'appropriate' words in conformity with established rules governing speech acts. In other words, the security concept is limited to the event of an existential danger such as the outbreak of war.

This account oversimplifies the constitutive power of language as a rule guided behaviour. The rules of the act, so to speak, must be upgraded to explore how agents are forced to work within the confines of their discourse. Taking language as a structure, in other words, draws attention to how any speech act constrains agents speaking security. There are limits to what they can and cannot say once security is uttered. By virtue of being spoken, or uttered, securitization is imbued as a rule based procedure. Retaining a broader focus, it is possible to examine language has an intrinsic force to manufacture rules whereby agents are to be held responsible for their words. Put succinctly, uttering security establishes a space of manoeuvre, with boundaries, that is not adequately taken up by the CS.

These two levels of rules, those that exist as normal reference points intersubjectively and even legally, and those that are made through the process of speech itself, are co-constituted. An example of how these two different levels of rules operate can be found in the empirical case study. Subsequent sections show that it is easy to establish that the Bush administration attempted to suspend existing intersubjective rules of

everyday politics, and even those encoded in international law, when they spoke security to justify the Iraq war. This is evident in their claims of undertaking pre-emptive self-defence. Yet their utterance of security also constituted a set of rules which defined the boundaries of what the Bush administration could and could not say as a consequence of uttering security. It is this second aspect that is missing from the CS framework.

The claim that speaking security frees agents from everyday constraints runs into difficulties on another level. CS fails to clarify what rules are now operational. For the reasons put forth here, and consistent with the vocabulary of the speech act theory spelled out earlier, one must ask what rules the securitized speech act brings into being? What do the rules of exceptionality look like? How do they function in principle and in practice? A close inspection of their securitization framework reveals that such considerations are not addressed. In fact, the CS offers no insights on how securitized environments function in principle or in practice. This is surprising because, as a social construction, a successful securitization should be followed by a post-securitization process. Once the issue is securitized, the role of rules changes. In the CS account, the securitized environment is given very little attention. Yet moving into the sphere of special politics does not mean that this language disappears. What follows is not silence. There is need for an ongoing maintenance process whereby issues are repeated in order to convince the audience. This normalization of security practices suggests the creation of some kind of rule system. But the CS has very little to say on the topic. Securitization leaves unanswered what exceptional or special politics means legally.

'A Singular Definition'

The two preceding criticisms suggest that the CS framework rests on a narrow definition of what can and cannot count as a security issue. Many argue that the threat-security nexus underpinning securitization processes encourages a conceptualization of security politics as inherently negative and reactionary. In this sense, Ken Booth (2005:271) claims that the CS is "only marginally critical" in theoretical orientation. For the CS to speak security is to distinguish enemy from

friend, an idea that is heavily indebted to Carl Schmitt's idea of the political (Schmitt, 1996). Similar to the CS framework, a Schmittian logic presents the differentiation of friend and foe as a key dichotomy. However, this vision is restrictive insofar as it reifies the meaning of security to an agnostic scenario. Making this point, Jef Huysmans (2006:136) stresses, "exception refers to the ideas that an order is constituted in the definition of what is exceptional to it, what is seemingly outside. Paul Williams (1999. 2004:144) has also argued that the CS commitment to strict boundaries of inclusion and exclusion is parasitic upon a realist conception or discourse of security.

Defining security in relation to what is outside, or legitimating exceptional measures on this basis, is potentially dangerous. The CS commitment to the idea constituted in oppositional terms centers on the oppositional. That such representations can occur is not questioned here. What is questioned is whether approaching security exclusively through the designation of threat overlooks the myriad of ways in which particular identities and referent objects are socially constructed. As seen in the case of Abu Ghraib, such discursive categories can lead to the dehumanization of those framed as an enemy. The ability of a language of security to place these actors outside of the rules of the everyday reinforces aforementioned claims about taking rules much more seriously than has hitherto been the case in securitization works and debates. That said, important inroads have been made to understand the designation of the 'other', and negation of 'otherness', as something that is not inherently threatening (Hansen 2006; McSweeney 1999,1996).

The CS formula of defining security as an existential threat also neglects the multiplicity of meanings that a single security utterance can contain. Acknowledging that a securitized speech act may be embedded in a structure opens up the space for it to contain multiple meanings. While security may be the overarching category expressed when a securitizing actor speaks security, this term may not stand alone. Rather, it may be reliant on or co-constituted by subsidiary structures of meaning. To be more explicit, the discourse of security are not just speech acts uttered by officials, but structures of meaning within a larger web of societal discourses upon which they draw and depend. In short, there are many different formulations. For example, the Bush administration's security utterance to justify the Iraq war was composed of

multiple sets of meanings that were housed within their securitized utterance. These ranged from discussions of Saddam Hussein's possession of WMD to their claims of liberating Iraq. Therefore, while they spoke security, and this speech act constituted a crucial action, this discourse was made meaningful by the presence of more than one utterance. Here we see the Bush administration speaking security in multiple ways, all of which are inherently interdependent. Focusing on their definition of threat is essential, but it captures only one aspect of the highly complex linguistic constellation that can be said to constitute how the Bush administration uttered security to justify the Iraq war.

Opening up the space to think about security speech acts to be constituted by more than one term facilitates thinking about alternative narratives within the securitization process. The CS argue that one of the consequences of securitization is the placement of an issue within the field of exceptionality. However, they overlook the extent to which alternatives may coincide or conflict with this narrative. This vision tends to see security as the dominant discourse, as a rationale which ends up affecting all other issues. The power of a security utterance renders all other discourses at a disadvantage. How do alternative utterances come to compete with a security utterance in order to make the issue worthy of exceptional measures? If the language of security is the most powerful utterance, then how do alternatives compete?. Stefan Elbe (2006, 2002) touches upon the dilemma of over-speaking security to the extent of normalizing it as a prerequisite of getting issues heard. His work addresses how speaking security may become the only game in town in order for issues to be considered worthy of exceptional measures.

The need to increase the conceptual plurality of securitization links back to aforementioned points about the need to move beyond the moment of utterance. Likewise, exploring how security is spoken in greater depth facilitates analysis of what kind of rules are being made and remade in the name of security. Each critique, in other words, strengthens the other. Moreover, they serve to improve the CS framework and equip them with better tools to address a growing number of critics.

Incorporating my threefold revisions also acts as a methodological canvas to prevent and even pre-empt what I term the hidden dangers of speaking security. As noted

above, the CS claims that securitization legitimates a suspension of normal politics. This leaves them in a weak position in terms of making de-securitization a serious possibility. The relationship between securitization and de-securitization is not clear. The twin concept in their securitization framework is presented as a potential mode of transformation, a way for agents and structures to find their way back to everyday politics. However, de-securitization is under-theorised in the CS framework. When discussed, the move back to politics leaves the logic of security intact. The CS only attempt to shift security in the realm of social relations. When is it possible to return to the political? Even when we do so, are we still speaking in the same language of security? Should it not have changed in light of the securitization context that proceeded it? The CS can show that speech acts can transform a situation. However, they do not explicate how the language of security itself transforms either at the moment of utterance or beyond the securitizing move.

The concept of security overall, as conceptualized by the CS, can be broken down into an agentive approach. Undoubtedly, they show the power of speaking security to enable actions, though there is little space in their framework for a more holistic consideration of language. Through the triadic critique outlined above we can thus illustrate that the CS proposes an understanding of the language of security as a facilitating condition without exploring how it also constrains. This has important methodological implications. Focusing on the moment of utterance overlooks the larger linguistic and intersubjective contexts that are constituted in and by the speech act. To this extent, the speech act concept of security undermines how the language of security can be contested and even transformed. Again, this weakens any limitations that may be placed on those speaking security. This problem is addressed (but not fundamentally redressed) by the CS (Buzan et al, 1998:41).[138] A scheme premised on the principle of rule breaking is also suggestive of an agentive bias. Securitization is conceptualized as a rule breaking process, rather than one in which agents employ rules or even create them by uttering security.

As the preceding section established, a securitized lens demonstrates that language

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[138] Here the CS acknowledge that, "one danger of the phrases of *securitization* and *speech act* is that too much focus can be placed on the acting side, thus privileging the powerful while marginalizing those who are the audience and judge of the act". Emphasis in original

matters. It provides a methodological step towards understanding how language has the power to enable and constrain agents. When we turn to the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war, however, the three aforementioned weaknesses become particularly apparent. Analyzing the defining moment under investigation, and later on the case of Abu Ghraib, reaffirms why it is beneficial to move beyond securitization to explain how it was possible for the Bush administration to justify the Iraq war in the name of security. In both we find it is necessary to reflect on what sort of practices are legitimate in the name of security.

Section 3: The Bush Administration's Justifications for the 2003 Iraq War: A Case of Securitization?

Striking parallels exist between the Bush administration's justifications for the 2003 Iraq war and the CS securitization framework. The language of security is undoubtedly a feature found in both accounts. As the previous chapter demonstrated, the Bush administration relied heavily on security discourse to constitute and communicate the 'securityness' of the situation in the Iraq context. Through this medium they established an argument about the need to employ exceptional measures, or what they termed pre-emptive action, to overthrow Saddam Hussein. Put succinctly by Under Secretary Rice: "By both its actions and its inactions, Iraq is proving not that it is a nation bent on disarmament, but that it is a nation with something to hide. Iraq is still treating inspections as a game. It should know that time is running out" (Rice January 23, 2003).[139]

At first glance, the Bush administration's discursive justifications for the intervention satisfy all the prerequisites necessary in the CS securitization framework. In fact, it appears to be a perfect fit. In the case of the Iraq war we find a securitizing actor (the Bush administration) undertaking a securitizing move by presenting a referent object (Saddam Hussein's terrorist regime) as an existential threat (via their possession of WMD) that necessitated the adoption of emergency measures (a war of pre-emptive self-defence).

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[139] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030123-1.html

As the CS suggests, the Bush administration's security utterance created a platform from which it was possible to legitimize emergency measures to suspend normal politics. In fact, President Bush and his team contended that it was only by adopting strong security agendas that normal freedoms could survive. The survival of politicization was dependent on securitization being invoked. Soon after Vice President Cheney stated,

> *"The fact of the matter is thousands of Americans were killed without warning, here at home, by terrorists acting on our soil. And just as we were vulnerable, so is anybody else in the world, in effect. And what was required at that point, I think, was exactly what the President decided that very first afternoon of the crisis, on September 11th: that we would aggressively pursue and destroy those people who launched that attack against us, and who anticipated being able to repeat it at various times in the future"* (Cheney, February 15: 2002).[140]

As 2002 unfolded, the Bush administration intensified its claim that America's security was constantly and existentially threaten by the Iraqi regime and their WMD. Stating this plainly, President Bush asserted "*containment is not possible when unbalanced dictators with weapons of mass destruction can deliver those weapons on missiles or secretly provide them to terrorists allies*" (Bush, 1 June: 2002).[141]

These discursive constructions associated Saddam Hussein with an elevated and existential threat, which, they argued enabled certain types of practices to be instigated while marginalising others. Motivated by this security logic, the Bush administration sought to establish that the Iraq regime needed to be dealt with outside the realm of normal politics.

As Vice President Cheney warned, the costs of inaction would be much higher than the costs of action: "*Simply stated, there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction. There is no doubt that he is amassing them to use against our friends, against our allies, and against us.*"

He also stressed that Iraq was intent on acquiring nuclear weapons and would likely use those weapons against the United States:

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[140] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020215.html
[141] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020601-3.html

> *"Just how soon, we cannot really gauge. Intelligence is an uncertain business. . . . Let me give you just one example of what I mean. Prior to the Gulf War, America's top intelligence analysts would come to my office in the Defense Department and tell me that Saddam Hussein was at least five or perhaps even 10 years away from having a nuclear weapon. After the war we learned that he had been much closer than that, perhaps within a year of acquiring such a weapon." He then postulated that Saddam was likely to acquire nuclear weapons "fairly soon" (Western 2005: 122).*

Similarly the President noted,

> *"I talked about an axis of evil, because I firmly believe that nations need to be put on notice that this nation will not allow our citizens to become threatened not only by terrorist acts, but by nations which develop weapons of mass destruction which could easily, or eventually be used against us. We will not be intimidated. I will not allow nations to hold us hostage, or our friends and allies hostage. Terror is our mission" (February 6, 2002).[142]*

The lines of identification that the Bush administration drew between themselves and the terrorist other are also easily explained by the CS framework. Moreover, these divisions are important. Within the CS framework the self-other, or us versus them binaries constructed by the Bush administration to distinguish them from Saddam Hussein are granted greater significance than they would be in rationalist or positivist approaches. Examining the discourse that they used in the last chapter demonstrated that their case for invading Iraq made repeated references to the Iraqi leader as a threatening other. The frequency at which such assertions were made reinforced this identity relationship as something which could be accepted as accurate. Making this link Secretary Powell stressed,

> *"The nexus of poisons and terror is new. The nexus of Iraq and terror is old. The combination is lethal. With this track record, Iraqi denials of supporting terrorism take the place alongside the other Iraqi denials of weapons of mass destruction. It is all a web of lies. When we confront a regime that harbors ambitions for regional domination, hides weapons of mass destruction and provides haven and active support for terrorists, we are not confronting the past, we are confronting the present. And unless we act, we are confronting an even more frightening future" (Powell, February 5, 2003).[143]*

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[142] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/02/20020206-8.html
[143] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html

The presence of the Iraq threat empowered the Bush administration to claim that removing Saddam Hussein would create national and international security. Tying all of these themes together, their securitized speech acts enabled the Bush administration to frame the case for war in Iraq not as a war of choice, but as one of necessity to meet a "grave and growing threat." Their message was clear: new threats required new thinking. America was fighting 'a different kind of war'. Making this explicit in relation to Iraq, President Bush proclaimed,

> "*I made it clear to the President of China that I am interested in seeing to it that the United Nations is effective -- effective in disarming Saddam Hussein. That's what the United Nations has said for 11 years, that Saddam ought to disarm. And, therefore, any resolution that evolves must be one which does the job of holding Saddam Hussein to account. That includes a rigorous, new and vibrant inspections regime, the purpose of which is disarmament, not inspections for the sake of inspections*" (Bush, 25 October : 2002).[144]

Addressing the link between al-Qaeda and Iraq, then Under Secretary Rice clarified,

> "*Al Qaeda is not more dangerous today than it was on September 11th, but you don't have to make that choice. Al Qaeda is dangerous. And we're going to have to pursue them and we're going to have to defeat them, and we're going to have to change the context in which they operate by working to develop a different kind of Middle East, in which you don't have ideologies of hatred; in which people fly airplanes into buildings [...] when Iraq is democratic, you're going to have one of t lynchpins of a very different kind of Middle East. And after what happened to us on September 11th, I think all Americans would agree that we've got to have a different kind of Middle East, because it was the center of gravity from which al Qaeda came (Rice, March 28: 2004).[145]

Such representations tell us about the so-called enemy in question and the core values underpinning the Bush administration's security policies. On the one hand, the dominant security discourse constituted a vilified threat, which in the Iraq case was Saddam Hussein. To quote President Bush, he was a, "*student of Stalin*" (Bush, October 7, 2002).[146] On the other hand, the Bush administration linked its identity to narratives of core values such as freedom and emancipation.

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[144] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021025.html
[145] http://2001-2009.state.gov/s/ct/rls/rm/2004/31105.htm
[146] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html

At a deeper level, the Bush administration security speech acts did not only reflect the issues being debated in the lead up to the Iraq war. They partly constituted the context in which the war itself became possible. If Saddam Hussein had not been classified as an existential threat, the Bush administration would not have been able to undertake a securitizing move to legitimate a military invasion against Iraq. Without the existence of a threat, in other words, the Iraq war would not have been considered either necessary or politically feasible. Speaking security was a prerequisite to legitimate the use of exceptional measures. As Secretary Powell suggested,

> *"President Bush has also made it clear that we reserve the right, the United States reserves the right, in the absence of international action to disarm Iraq, to act with like-minded nations to disarm Iraq. And we are positioning ourselves for whatever eventuality might occur. And as the President has also said, he hopes for a peaceful solution, but we will be ready to act otherwise if that is what is required to make sure that Iraq is disarmed of its weapons of mass destruction" (Powell, 10 January: 2003).*[147]

Restating this point, Rice concluded,

> *"The rationale has been the same from the very beginning. Saddam Hussein was a very dangerous man, in the world's most dangerous region. This is someone who had acquired weapons of mass destruction, used them before, been sanctioned by the United Nations for 12 years, by his refusal to give them up. In Resolution 1441, had been ordered by the international community to finally disarm, and had failed to do so. He had invaded his neighbors, he had gassed his own people" (Rice, 1 June, 2004).*[148]

Section 4: Problems:

'The Moment of Utterance'

The first problem with using a securitized lens to explain the Bush administration's

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[147] http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2003/16553.htm
[148] http://2001-2009.state.gov/e/eeb/rls/rm/33017.htm

justifications for the Iraq war is that it creates an overly agentive account of their actions. Consistent with the CS's formula, President Bush and his team uttered security to legitimise the use of exceptional measures. This line of reasoning appears in the claim that Saddam Hussein would be overthrown by military and pre-emptive action if necessary. However, focusing on the Bush administration's securitized speech act is incomplete in order to fully grasp how the Iraq war became possible. To begin with, focusing on the way in which they uttered security to justify this invasion overlooks the broader context in which the speaker spoke security. Consequently, it does not address the wider intersubjective contexts in which the Bush administration spoke security to undertake this move. For example, existing rules for legitimating the use of force made it necessary for the Bush administration to speak security in a particular way. The speech acts they used at the UN demonstrate that the President and his team were speaking in a context where certain acts, such as invading a country militarily, already had meaning. These pre-existing frameworks influenced and limited how the Bush administration could speak security in a legitimate way to justify their decision for war. The principle of pre-emption is one example. The rules of self-defense are another.

Placing the Bush administration's speech act in the wider context in which it was uttered demonstrates that it was not the first time they had spoken security. Instead, as noted in Chapter 1, the definition of security they employed to justify the Iraq war was built upon the webs of meaning attached to the September 11, 2001 episode. The CS does not sufficiently embed the speech act in a context to pick up on the repetition of their security terminology or its implications. Leaving out the way in which the Bush administration uttered security after September 11 fails to ascribe the particular and powerful meanings that they carried over into the Iraqi context. Put simply, it skips over the beginning of the story that they were narrating and thus the way security was conceived in the present.

The CS focus on the moment downplays the importance of development and, more acutely transformation, in the securitized speech act. Recognizing that speaking security represents a series of utterances, rather than a single utterance, highlights the possibility that the way an actor speaks security will alter over the course of time. Even within the moment security is uttered there is chance that speakers will modify

their arguments as they interact with their audience. An example of such subtle readjustments is found in the Bush administration's security discourse to justify the Iraq war.

Another gap emerges when we use securitization to understand the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war, especially at and after the defining moment. To recall, at this point their justifications for war were severely challenged and disputed when no WMD were found in Iraq by UN inspectors. Such findings raised serious questions over the Bush administration's claims that Saddam Hussein posed an immediate and existential threat so grave that pre-emptive action was necessary to for international security. Firstly, the outcome of the Bush administration's efforts does not amount to a clear case of successful securitization. According to the CS, the audience determines whether or not securitization will occur. Securitization can only be legitimate when audiences back the speaker's securitized speech act. Otherwise all we have is a 'securitizing move'. Yet a complete conviction from a single audience was absent in the case of the Iraq war. As the defining moment illustrates, the Bush administration's actions to resort to exceptional politics did not fail. Nor did they fully succeed. While their argument that Saddam Hussein posed an existential threat was startlingly widespread, resonance was not unanimous. From the outset the US public was sympathetic to the idea of removing Saddam Hussein, though only a small minority of Americans were ready to go to war with Iraq without UN Security Council approval. The majority was inclined to believe that Iraq had a WMD program and was supporting al Qaeda.[149] However, important dissenting voices were heard (Scowcroft 2002; Carter 2002).

Second, the Bush administration spoke security to several audiences, not just one, as suggested by the CS. The reception that their securitized arguments received varied considerably from context to context (Thrall, 2007; McDonald 2007). While the President's decision to go to war received substantial support, the planned US military invasion met fierce opposition from national and international audiences.[150] A Trevor

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[149] For facts and further discussion of the levels of support and opposition for the Iraq war see Kull, Ramsay and Lewis (2003/2004); Kaufmann (2004)

[150] At the time of the Iraq war Washington Post/ABC News polls recorded that only 19% of Americans strongly opposed the invasion. See http://usiraq.procon.org/viewresource.asp?resourceID=673#I.I. Reflecting growing scepticism within the UN Security Council on 15 February 2003 an estimate of 2

Thrall assessment of the domestic debate in the US suggests that what was politically important in terms of public support for intervention was not the truthfulness of the claims regarding Saddam's WMD but the extent to which their representations resonated with core American values. For our purposes what is most important is that the Bush administration's securitizing move to present Saddam Hussein as an existential threat did not receive complete audience consent. No resolution passed the Security Council and thus there was no mandate for war. The claim made by President Bush and other members of his administration that Resolution 1441 justified the use of force was highly contested. United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan drew the implications of those facts directly, telling a group that the UN Charter, "*is very clear on the circumstances under which force can be used*". He went on to declare, "*If the US and others were to go outside the Council and take military action on their own, it would not be in conformity with the Charter*".[151] What we have then is a case of partial securitization, a scenario not accommodated for by the CS framework.

The abovementioned problem maps on to another in terms of explaining the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war through as securitized lens. Despite gaining complete audience consent, it was still possible for the US to undertake an exceptional measure, i.e. to conduct pre-emptive warfare. According to the CS this is not possible. Security speech acts must be backed up in order for securitization to occur.

It was a rebuilt argument. The Bush administration were still speaking security but in a different way. At this juncture the two discursive frames of, security and democracy, were complementary. Stating the Bush administration wished to dispose of a tyrant and liberate Iraqi civilians reinforced America's identity as a protector of freedom. These themes had been present. As such it was not a radically new discourse, but rather a redefinition of priorities and how they would respond to this security claim. What matters ultimately is that the Bush administration was able to employ sufficient measures to counter the lack of WMD.

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million of people took to the streets in London to protest against the necessity of the invasion. According to the BBC between six and ten million people took part in protests in up to sixty countries over the weekend. See http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/2765041.stm

[151] Quoted in John Prados (2004:263-264)

As Cheney commented,

"Critics of the liberation of Iraq must also answer another question: what would that country look like today if we had failed to act? If we had not acted, Saddam Hussein and his sons would still be in power. If we had not acted, the torture chambers would still be in operation; the prison cells for children would still be filled; the mass graves would still be undiscovered; the terror network would still enjoy the support and protection of the regime; Iraq would still be making payments to the families of suicide bombers attacking Israel; and Saddam Hussein would still control vast wealth to spend on his chemical, biological, and nuclear ambitions. All of these crimes and dangers were ended by decisive military action. Everyone, for many years, wished for these good outcomes. Finally, one man made the decision to achieve them: President George W. Bush. And the Iraqi people, the people of the Middle East, and the American people have a safer future because Saddam Hussein's regime is history. Having now liberated Iraq, the United States and our allies are determined to see all our commitments through" (July 24, 2003).[152]

Breaking the Rules

The neglect of rules in securitization can be traced to the overemphasis that the CS place on the actor's utterance as the act rather than what is accomplished in and by this action. More particularly this stance leads the CS to overlook the importance of rules in the entire securitization process. The picture that emerges out of their framework is that when successful, securitization breaks the rules of everyday politics. What remains unaccounted for in the CS account is what rules, if any, operate in a securitized realm. Assuming that rules do apply, the question still remains as to what securitized rules look like and who determines how they are constituted, implemented and legitimated.

Ignoring the role of rules in securitization is extremely problematic when it comes to analyzing the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war, as well as their response to the defining moment. In general, the Bush administration's security speech acts did attempt to change the rules of everyday politics.[153] Nevertheless, rules

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[152] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/07/20030724-6.html

[153] For instance, the US Patriot Act introduced on October 26, 2001 encroached upon and suspended several individual rights in the name of security. Amongst other things it increased the ability of law

remain a critical aspect of their security utterances and moves. Contrary to processes found in the CS framework, the Bush administration's security discourse illustrates how they drew upon existing rules to legitimate the use of force against Saddam Hussein. Preemptive self-defence, while contentious, is still a legal action, although preventive war - which is a more accurate category for the invasion - is not. Members of the Bush administration also argued that their definition of pre-emption was consistent with the existing protocols. For instance, Condoleezza Rice said "*The National Security Strategy does not overturn five decades of doctrine and jettison either containment or deterrence. These strategic concepts can and will continue to be employed wherever appropriate*" (Rice, 1 October: 2002).[154]

In January 2005, when Alberto Gonzales was being confirmed as Attorney General, Senator Russ Feingold asked him whether he believed the President could violate existing criminal laws and spy on U.S. citizens without a warrant. Mr. Gonzales answered that it was impossible to answer questions concerning a "hypothetical situation", but that it was "*not the policy or the agenda of this president to authorize actions that would be in contravention of our criminal statutes*".[155] Such statements suggest that rather than breaking the rules, the Bush administration were setting the world on the right path (Hongju Kho 2006). The point is not so much that the administration was not breaking existing rules in practice, but to establish that speaking security did not enable them to break free of rules that would otherwise bind. In addition, any modification had to be justified, limiting their actions.

Further evidence of the Bush administration using existing rules rather than breaking them is found in the fact that they went to the UN to legalise the war, which suggests they at least wanted to appear to be playing by the rules. Even avid UN skeptics such as Vice President Cheney and Secretary of State Rumsfeld recognized this was a necessary step to deal with the Iraqi regime. Their responses on Late Edition (CNN) and on Fox TV in Prague respectively are worth quoting at length to demonstrate how the Bush administration was constrained by pre-existing intersubjective rules.

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enforcement agencies to search telephone, e-mail communications, medical, financial, and other records. See http://www.fincen.gov/statutes_regs/patriot/.

[154] http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/wl2002.htm

[155] Confirmation Hearing on the Nomination of Alberto Gonzales To Be Attorney General of the United States: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on the Judiciary, 109th Cong. 116-17 (2005). 2356.

Q: Are you still committed to trying to get U.N. weapons inspection teams back into Iraq? Because, as you know, some critics -- Senator Fred Thompson, for example -- said that would be a waste, that they're just going to give a runaround.

Cheney: What we said, Wolf, if you go back and look at the record is, the issue's not inspectors. The issue is that he has chemical weapons and he's used them. The issue is that he's developing and has biological weapons. The issue is that he's pursuing nuclear weapons" (Cheney, March 24, 2002).[156]

Rumsfeld made a similar assertion

Q: Why even go through the U.N. with Iraq? You've expressed doubts, as has the vice president, about the efficiency of arms inspections and what they generate. It seems that Saddam's strategy, if we look at the past, would be to cheat around the edges, to stall, not to do anything that would unite the Security Council. Doesn't that carry the risk that we could be thrown into limbo here for who knows how long?

Rumsfeld: It does. Yes, it does. The president knew that. He looked at the pluses and the minuses and said, look, there are disadvantages. We can get into our quagmire, where he strings along the U.N. Every time they are almost ready to find something, then he stops them. Then they get mad, and then he finds a way to acquiesce. He's a professional at this. [...] The president saw that and said, well, that's the disadvantage. The advantage is, people have a chance to think about it, talk about it. It's a new security environment we're in the 21st century. It's different. People do need to get comfortable with the fact that, historically we've been organized to train and equip to deal with armies, navies, and air forces in other countries. Here there's no country, in the case of Al Qaeda. There's no army, navy, or air force that's a particular impediment. And yet the threat is a very, very serious, lethal threat. And so we need time to think about that, and I think the President made the right judgment. And if and when something is required by the way of force, he will have a large coalition of willing countries. (Rumsfeld, November 21, 2002).[157]

Although this can be seen as a case of rational calculation and cheap talk on the Bush administration's part, at the very least it demonstrates what they themselves saw as legitimate standards that needed to be taken into consideration when making their case for war. While making it clear that the US would disarm Saddam Hussein if

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[156] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020324-2.html

[157] http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=3314

necessary, they presented this as a lawful and legitimate action given the security threats they faced. Rules are also extremely important in the Bush administration's response at the defining moment. At a quick glance, this juncture appears as an extreme example of rule-breaking insofar as the US defied the UN. However, a closer investigation of the Bush administration's language illuminates that even when no WMD were found, they drew on rules to frame the need for action. In fact, Resolution 1441 becomes a benchmark in the justifications for the Iraq war. Stripping the facts down to it most basic, Secretary Powell stated,

> *"we took the case back to the United Nations last fall, got a solid resolution, 1441, which gave legitimacy to the use of military force if he didn't comply with his many obligations over a period of ten years. He didn't comply with those obligations, force was used, and now his regime is no longer" (Powell, 12 April: 3002).[158]*

Instead of breaking free of rules that would otherwise bind, what is at stake in the Bush administration's securitizing move is the use of existing rules to justify their actions.[159] What appears at the forefront in their securitizing moves is how rules are constantly remade to support their justifications for war. This point will be developed in more detail in the next chapter. For now it is sufficient to show that the CS cannot explain a speaker's attempts to speak security to use and even redefine the rules rather than break or suspend them.

Addressing the importance of rules is imperative in the empirical case for another reason. As noted, the Bush administration sought to conduct a new kind of war. The supposition is that this new war would be fought according to a new set of rules. The specifics of what kind of rules the Bush administration had in mind are vague, even in retrospect. Using security as an overarching theme, the Bush administration claimed that they had to keep all options open,

> *"because as we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns -- the ones we don't know we don't know. And if one looks throughout the history of our country and other free countries, it is the latter category that tend to be the difficult ones"* (Rumsfeld,

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[158] http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2003/19581.htm
[159] This point will be developed in more detail in Chapter 4

February 12, 2002).[160]

Securitization fares poorly in relation to situations of such gross uncertainty, or when the meaning of security is unknown. The CS framework encourages a conceptualization of security as something that can be clearly identified and classified as an existential threat. It is this conviction which enables security to be spoken in a specific way to frame values in need of being secured and the policy to be implemented to defeat it. While the Bush administration's security utterances did identify an existential threat, Saddam Hussein and his WMD, their actual plans for defeating him were far from certain.

A Single Definition

Examining the Bush administration's discursive justifications for the Iraq war demonstrates that their securitizing move was not based on speaking security alone. While security was the dominant speech act, it coexisted with other narratives, even critical ones. As noted, a range of actors did contest the dominant logic of their security discourse. At a superficial level this neglect is a relatively minor analytical concern. While some debated the policy of war, there was little debate on the framing of the conflict in terms of security or terrorism (Gershkoff and Kushner 2005). To the extent that this discourse survived as a core rationale for undertaking pre-emptive strikes against Iraq, the CS would argue this critique is relative to the context in which the act took place. Framing the war in Iraq in a securitized way connected it with the right to use extraordinary measures.

Even putting to one side the inability of the CS to seriously include these consenting views within a process of securitization, due to their focus on a particular utterance at a particular moment, their framework pays insufficient attention to a single speech act to potentially contain several structures of meaning. This is evident in the CS commitment to the set of criteria to be met in terms of the act, as well as its internal logic or grammatical rules. The problem here is that the Bush administration's definition of security was understood as standing for more than security per se. Other

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[160] http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2636.

frames, such as democracy, were embedded within this speech act to make the Bush administration's justifications powerful and convincing. Put succinctly, while there may be a single utterance, it may contain layers of meanings.

The CS lack of attention to multiplicity, both in terms of contexts of contestation and internally, sells the constitutive nature of language short. Without a doubt, securitization demonstrates that words can change things, moving issues from the realm of the everyday to emergency politics (Buzan et. al, 1998). However they stop short of examining how the language of security alters either in principle or in practice. As such, they do not allow for the appearance of new issues in the processes of securitization. However there is strong chance that new issues may be incorporated into a securitizing agenda at different stages, such as the securitizing move or in securitized environments. This picture seems more in tune with the Bush administration's securitizing move to legitimate the Iraq war. As shown, their security utterance was initially uttered in terms of Saddam Hussein constituting an existential threat because of his past behaviour, terrorist affiliations and possession of WMD. As they constructed and communicated this case from 2002 onwards, however, a larger number of issues came to be subsumed under this securitized speech act. Supplementary narratives included Iraq's failure to fully disarm, and later the benefits of installing a democratic regime in Iraq to remove the security issue. Evaluating a series of securitizing moves or utterances rather than a move or single speech act is up for question in the CS framework.

In addition to highlighting the multiple issues woven together to constitute the Bush administration's security utterance, another issue becomes apparent. A closer reading of the defining moment demonstrates that the relationship between these various words mattered. Put differently, how the Bush administration defined security mattered. Making a case for war premised on WMD is very different from justifying a war on the grounds of democracy, not least because democracy in Iraq was not an existential concern for American in the way that WMD was made out to be (although the claim that WMD presented an existential threat was debatable). Each discourse creates a different set of meaning about what kind of action is or is not possible. They also construct different structural constraints on the speaker. For the Bush

administration to preempt a growing threat through military actions was controversial but still legal. But for them to go to war to democratize and liberate Iraq, it was not.

In light of this background, the Bush administration never stopped speaking security or consistently linking Iraq with dangerous terrorists. Rather, they began to express this security discourse according to a different set of meanings, above and beyond the Saddam threat. Their prevailing security speech acts had real consequences for the military operations they were undertaking. As Secretary Powell's speech exemplifies, the subjects of security and democracy were intertwined on a regular basis, giving the impression that the latter was a logical extension of the former discussion.

> *"At times like these, we are reminded of the fundamentals, of the basics. We are reminded of how precious life and freedom are. We are reminded of how blessed we are as a country. We are reminded of the sacrifices that Americans of every generation have made, not just to preserve and protect and defend our way of life, but also to help others around the globe secure the blessings of liberty for themselves and for their children [...]The American people can be proud that they will be here and that we are helping the men and women of Iraq realize their long-held dream of freedom. American foreign policy is all about helping to build hope across the globe. For the sake of our most cherished values and our most vital interests, President Bush is deeply committed to working with friends and former foes around the world to build a world of hope where tyrants and terrorists cannot thrive"* (Powell, 6 December:2004).[161]

This combination of security and democracy in the Bush administration's securitization of Saddam Hussein raises is important as it raises an unexplored issue, namely the securitization of democracy. There may be instances (albeit relatively rare) when democracy is communicated as a security issue. It is in this context that the sharp division which the CS draws in politicization, securitization and de-securitization becomes problematic. In excluding substantive representations of the overlaps between these multifaceted processes, the CS limits our understanding of the processes through which security issues are constructed. Shifting the emphasis away from a concern on the speech act may be of little interest to the CS, going against their desire to providing a coherent theoretical framework not a broader securitization agenda (Buzan et al, 1998). But perhaps they should at least begin to consider a vision

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[161] http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2003/26987.htm

of security that hints at the various issues that arise when we try to go beyond the moment of utterance, beyond rule breaking actions and beyond singular definitions of what security means.

Section 5: Conclusion:

The important point that stands out from this chapter is that language matters. Suggesting that speaking security has serious ramifications should make rationalists and positivists sit up and take notice. These skeptics have long argued that security is an objective condition, referring traditionally to states, threats and the control of military force. In these zero sum terms the most powerful prevail. From this viewpoint language is cheap, as actors will lie to pursue their own self-interests.

It is against this backdrop that the CS offer an invaluable contribution to critical debates that seek to widen and deepen how security is conceptualized in IR. Incorporating societal aspects, particularly identity, the CS critique the maxims of positivist and rationalist IR. Their central arguments locate long-standing security issues such as enmity, survival and threats within debates about the construction of security. Drawing on Austin speech act theory, they accentuate the power of language. At the core of their organising principle, securitization, is the contention that speaking security does something. More specifically, the CS argues securitized utterances creates a certain kind of social situation whereby issues are designated as threats, which in turn justifies moving issues into a special category where emergency rules apply. In this capacity language really matters. With the consent of the audience, a securitizing move has the power to transfer issues from the realm of everyday politics (politicization) to the realm of exceptional politics (securitization).

This chapter has argued that while an important and innovative contribution to our understanding of security and its construction, securitization is problematically narrow in three basic respects. These are interrelated. The first inadequacy is that securitization is premised on the enunciation of security itself, on the speech act. While it is useful to focus on the moment security is uttered, I have argued this viewpoint limits our understanding of the broader construction of security. Although

the concepts of speech act seem to be important to the CS, their approach is too silent about the exact mechanism of speech and too unspecific about the substance of their terms. To fully capture this action as a constitutive practice, it is necessary to place speech acts in the wider context in which it is spoken.

Contextualizing the speech act reveals the transformative potential of discourse. This pertains to securitization processes in two direct ways. On the one hand, a more equal exchange can occur between the speaker and their audience. Moving beyond the moment of utterance enables speakers to modify their speech acts, even subtly, depending on the reception they receive. Subsequently the audience more directly influences how security is spoken. The CS allows for this exchange, but they do not provide enough insights into how contestation mechanisms work in practice. On the other hand, focusing on the moment of utterance implies that this is where the action occurs. However, as shown, speech acts often have a long history, especially security ones. As such, different versions of a securitized speech act may become operational during the securitizing move, and thus, sustainable for longer periods.

Disregarding the larger context in which a speech act is spoken produces another tension. The CS fails to examine what securitization brings into being. They clearly argue that speaking security does something, but they overlook what exactly is accomplished by a securitizing move. This stems in part from the lack of attention securitization pays to the evolution of speech acts either during the securitizing move or in securitizing environments. The way in which agents speak security in either sphere may alter as agents put this language into practice. Such transformations may be deliberate and calculated, but securitizing actors may also have to respond to unintended outcomes and issues. Incorporating these changes requires enlarging the analysis of how security is uttered.

The second major problem I have identified in the securitization framework is that it focuses on rule breaking. A particular theme that runs through securitization is that speaking security enable agents to break free of rules that would otherwise bind. Without denying this can occur, I have suggested the need to think more broadly about the different types of rules that agents draw on in a context of security. For a start, rules from the everyday can persist even when security is spoken. This focus

undermines the CS claim that securitization can be neatly separated from politicization. Their framework focuses on absolutes. Either we have politicization or securitization, or securitization or de-securitization. My argument is that there is far more overlap than is commonly acknowledged, in terms of shared concerns and shared rules that exist in times of normal politics as in times of exceptional politics.

Securitization can also create rules. Indeed, rather than fading away, rules can appear to be an inherent feature of functioning securitized environments. Apart from the brief period of suspending the rules, if this is even possible, it will be necessary for agents to act in one way as opposed to another. This is not simple utopianism. Rather, values, rules and norms must be asserted as part of a strategy to speak and find security. The discursive construction of security subscribes to a logic. As the CS show, the speech act seeks to capture the essence of an issue. It defines what the problem is and how to think about it and what, if anything should be done to remedy it. In light of the above, the CS framework should be viewed as shorthand for the construction of rules rather the breaking of rules.

In contrast to the CS focus on agents breaking free of rules that would otherwise bind, I also drew attention to the ability of language to constrain speakers of security. Again this suggests the issue of rules as a core feature in the construction of security. The CS does claim that security is spoken in a specific way, according to specific grammatical rules. This provides a first step towards theorizing how language structures agency. These specific criteria do limit those uttering security. However, the type of rules the CS address in terms of speech acts ignore the possibility that agents can be constrained by this discourse at a deeper level. Regardless of the audience, agents speaking security are also inhibited in what they can and cannot say once the speech act is spoken. In that sense language provides a structure. Apart from establishing the boundaries of meaning in which securitization exist, the speech act is linked to the actors goals and their capabilities. Thus they have less choice in how they can act.

This last point is linked with the third critique of the CS, that the meaning of security is more complex than securitization allows for, which is due to the CS's wish to speak security in a particular way which is too exclusive. Their tendency to fix an identifiable goal, in order to establish when securitization occurs, discounts

multiplicity. The clusters of meaning embedded within a single security utterance are not considered. Yet these internal dynamics have consequences. On the one hand the range of meanings embedded in a securitized speech act provides the agent with different options, as when they utter security to construct particular issues as security threats. On the other hand, the intersection of different meanings within a speech act will enable and constrain the speaker and the audience in different ways, depending on how these alternating narrative strands are put into use.

Joining these three elements together raises questions about the hidden dangers of speaking security. There is much about the construction of security that is missed in the securitization framework. Analytically, the latter ignores transformations in the way security is spoken by focusing solely on the moment of utterance. This short timeframe is too narrow to fully establish what exactly is being constructed under the rubric of this discourse and how this policy will unfold. Normatively, the securitization framework demonstrates that the exceptional politics installed during securitization turns into a dangerous undertaking for democracy. This logic is far from inevitable and should be contested rather than accepted as a normal repercussion of invoking a security discourse. The suspension and breaking of rules, in other words, should not simply be reified as the way things are once securitization occurs.

The Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war offered a point of departure to think about the CS framework in a more robust fashion. The limitations are not obvious. On the contrary, the CS can explain the terms of danger, threat and exceptionality characterising the securitized speech acts that the Bush administration employed to make a case against Saddam Hussein. Consistent with the CS suggestions, a member of the administration presented the Iraqi dictator and his regime as a 'grave and gathering' threat that legitimated the use of extra-ordinary measures such as pre-emptive strikes. Moreover, their discourse constructed a clear distinction between us and them.

Although a securitized lens captures fundamental aspects of the way in the Bush administration spoke security to legitimize their highly controversial move against Iraq, it runs into three difficulties when it comes to fully explaining how this

securitized move became possible. Each element highlights a theoretical aspect of my triadic critique.

Firstly, focusing on the moment the Bush administration spoke security is too narrow. If we focus on the moment that security was uttered alone we only gain a snapshot of a much larger linguistic constellation, inherited from September 11, 2001.Without the existence of the 'war on terror' discourse, the Bush administration could not have uttered security to justify the Iraq war, at least not to the same extent. Surprisingly, the CS presents an ahistorical account of the construction of security, wherein this discourse does not leave a significant trace. Analytically this is problematic in the empirical case under review, as the origin of the Bush administration's securitized speech act for the Iraq war lies elsewhere.

The second problem with remaining at the moment of utterance to understand how the Bush administration's securitization of the Iraqi threat, is that the CS framework cannot account for the transformation that appeared in the way they deployed this discourse to communicate and justify their actions. Again, this is largely because they do not look past the moment of speech to examine how this securitized discourse is put into use. To be sure, the CS deals with change. However, the transformation they focus on is the ability of speech acts to facilitate a change from the realm of normal politics into exceptional politics. Very little attention is given to how the meaning of security itself is contested or modified in response. While the US defined their justifications for the Iraq war, the defining moment signals a softer version of their security discourse. Their shift towards democracy promotion within their securitizing move became more prominent from 2003 onwards, when the Bush administration began to seek recognition for the invasion when no WMD were found in Iraq. These discrepancies are worth noting as they raise new issues for the CS to consider. Indeed it is certainly possible to think about the Bush administration's securitized speech acts as a case of partial securitization. On the one hand their securitizing move is not an example of failed securitization (as certain audiences did not reject the issue as security) but nor is it a successful securitization, as the means necessary to deal with the issue were not intersubjectively established.

What this shows is that although the stage of identification and acceptance of the label

of security are fundamental parts of the securitization process (rhetorical securitization) the success or failure of a security policy rests firmly on the stage of mobilisation. At this stage the role of an audience grows in importance, except in the CS framework. Instead, the audience disappears once securitization starts to be put into practice. There is little mention of how the audience, if anyone, keeps securitized speakers in check thereafter. In such a context there is a real danger of talk becoming cheap. In fact, the potential arises that words can become vacuous. At the defining moment what we witness is that the way in which the Bush administration spoke security is severely challenged. Here it is the very issue of security which is being contested. To grapple with this paradox it is necessary to find a way to examine the constitutive and constraining dimensions of language, a duality that CS downplays. Their focus is on the agentive side, how agents speak security to the expense of a thorough investigation about the consequences that are incurred by uttering this word.

Exploring the Bush administration language of security is crucial in terms of rethinking the way in which the CS treat rules. While the US defined their security policies in more aggressive and preemptive terms after September 11, 2001, they argued that their actions were still law abiding. Along with speaking security, they consistently spoke about rules. This pattern does not coincide with the CS claim that speaking security enables agents to break free from rules that would otherwise bind or suspend the rules of everyday politics. To some extent, this was the case, as the Bush administration claimed that they were fighting a 'different kind of war' that legitimated the use of exceptional measures. What proponents of the CS fail to capture is the rules that were operational. Ultimately speaking, security served to construct rules. For example, with the Bush administration we find an attempt to make exceptional practices become the rule in the name of security. Rather than breaking with the rules, such as pre-emption, what we find is that they engaged with existing rules in order to redefine them. To that extent it is possible to point to a final kind of rule-making with the Bush administration's justification for the Iraq war, especially as part of their war on terror. As mentioned, by uttering this word they were able to construct an intersubjective realm in which certain assumptions became considered as common sense. In short, their language created the rules of what could and could not be said in a meaningful way within this context. These rules should be given greater consideration in the CS framework. Crucially, such engagement has

largely been narrow or vague, having little impact on those speaking security at the moment of utterance or beyond. Linking this back to the empirical case is troubling insofar as a consequence of the particular meaning that the Bush administration gave to the notion of pre-emptive self-defence, there is a growing possibility that risks will not need to be proven in order for 'extra-ordinary measure' to be undertaken. In such scenarios the boundary between politicization and securitization become increasingly blurred. Everything is a danger.

Lastly, it is clear from the preceding discussions, that security was not the only speech act allowed for with regards to the US military invasion of Iraq. By contrast, the Bush administration opted for one of many possible strategies. On closer inspection, the interplay between different speech acts, different security utterances become increasingly apparent. As this Chapter has shown, their framing of the situation underwent several rearticulations: from an initial emphasis on Saddam's possession of WMD capabilities, through to his links with al-Qaeda and later through an emphasis on democracy to eradicate Saddam's human rights abuses. In this context the use of exceptional measures was not legitimated by speaking security alone. Nor was security uttered once as the Bush administration played out their securitizing move. Rather, what we find is a sequence of utterances and moves that all reinforced Iraq was a securitization issue. This diversity is unexpected in and thus unaccounted for by a securitization lens.

To conclude, the CS are correct to emphasise that the speech act is a powerful action. However, to limit our understanding of the constitutive power of language to this kind of act alone undermines what exactly this discourse can accomplish. Speaking security is not the same as doing security. To capture how securitization processes become possible at the moment of utterance and evolve thereafter, the transformational aspects of language leads us back to the main question of how language enables and constrains. Are there different ways of speaking security? If so how? The next chapter turns to Ludwig Wittgenstein's notion of language games to flesh out the more intersubjective dynamics involved in the construction of security.

Chapter 3:

Beyond Securitization:

Introduction

The previous chapter analysed the concept of securitization as a step towards conceptualising language as a constitutive and constraining device. This chapter takes a further step, exploring whether or not there are other ways to speak security at a theoretical level and to speak security in practice. I outline Ludwig Wittgenstein's argument about language games as an alternative angle for examining the relationship between language and security. By way of reference to the title, this moves us beyond securitization. Unlike the CS, a Wittgensteinian approach resolves the linguistic paradox by conceptualising language as a site of agency and structure simultaneously. This emphasis on process or processes reaffirms the power of language.

The chapter starts with a synopsis of Wittgenstein's later work. He portrays language as an inherently social and rule based phenomenon. Through his metaphor of a language game, Wittgenstein emphasises the importance of analysing meaning in use. This highlights the multiplicity and diversity of language, filling the gaps in rationalist and positivist assumptions outlined in earlier chapters. However, Wittgenstein is clear that language use is not purely interpretation. Consistent with the nuanced reading of the agent/structure debate outlined in Chapter 1, Wittgenstein acknowledges that words are constitutive of certain sets of intersubjective understandings which enable agents to know how to go on. This separates his approach from post-structuralism insofar as it acknowledges that shared understandings create contextual rules. Rules are not to be deconstructed. The point is less of demonstrating rules than examining meaning in use. Rules limit what can and cannot be considered as legitimate in certain contexts, and thus provide a point of departure for rethinking the relationship between agents and structures.

Section 2 unpacks the conceptualisation of rules implied by Wittgenstein's philosophy of a language game, which reinforces the constraining or structural side of language without diminishing its constitutive possibility. Rules make agency possible but within limits. In conceptualising the link between rules and language, Wittgenstein distinguishes an act of interpretation. His understanding of the latter refers to the substitution of one set of rules with another. Building upon this contrast provides a nuanced way to link language and legitimacy, demonstrating how rules are not only used and abused, but redefined. In this sense, Wittgenstein addresses how rules can be called into question and potentially altered. Acts of interpretation have the capacity to change rules on two levels. On the one hand, they attempt to replace an existing intersubjective rule that already exists. On the other, they propose an alternative language game in play. Language constrains as well as enables in both respects.

Section 3 presents language games as a remedy to the limitations of speaking security through a securitized framework. As shown, incorporating elements of Wittgenstein's thought pushes the CS framework beyond the moment of utterance to focus on ongoing practices, beyond speech acts as breaking rules to the idea of rules being redefined and beyond a singular definition of security to a clustered one. Added together, these supplements provide a more robust account of the ongoing and transformative capacity of language. By concentrating on the constitutive role played by language in shaping the normative architecture of (any given) society, Wittgenstein observes language as a twofold process. Firstly, language games in his account are portrayed as sites of constant contestation. Whereas the speech act is premised on an action, a language game functions through a series of actions and interactions. Secondly, his discussion forefronts the larger, intersubjective processes that language helps constitute. Concentrating on meaning in use, Wittgenstein illuminates the implications of putting language into practice and the larger realms of action that subsequently emerge. By extension, his philosophy makes it possible to address transitions from one language game to another. Finally, Wittgenstein's language game approach provides a point of departure for thinking about a more sophisticated conceptualisation of security. Introducing this level of conceptual plurality makes the interaction between words increasingly significant, especially in terms of understanding how language enables and constrains.

Section 4 brings these theoretical insights to bear on the Bush administration's security discourse for the Iraq war. Here I follow Wittgenstein to 'look and see' what language games they constructed to define and legitimise this foreign policy. Adopting this approach reaffirms the socially constructed nature of the Iraq war. Incorporating language games also paints a more complex picture of the Bush administration's security utterances than is available through a securitized lens. It facilitates explorations into how the language of security was put into practice. This provides a more substantial framework for tracing transformations in the Bush administration's security discourse. In addition to showing how it was possible for justifications of the Iraq war to be redefined, a Wittgensteinian lens demonstrates how such a discursive shift enabled and constrained the Bush administration's agency. Such insights shed new light on how they spoke security at the defining moment to constitute their arguments for war even when it was highly contested (or precisely because it was so highly contested). Acknowledging multiplicity, Wittgenstein's thought illustrates that the Bush administration did not simply speak security to legitimise the US invasion of Iraq. Wittgenstein's conceptualisation of multiplicity also provides a lever to examine how two speech acts, security and democracy, relate to each other within the Bush administration's language game of security. This revelation provides nuanced insights into how the Bush administration was enabled and constrained by their language of security as it responded to the Abu Ghraib scenario.

To deepen these insights, Section 5 engages in a discussion of how existing rules were simultaneously validated and violated in the Iraq context. First off, a notion of a language game provides the tools to demonstrate that the Bush administration actively drew upon rules to justify their actions in the Iraq context. Again this signals a departure from the assumption that they acted unilaterally or broke rules. Taking Wittgenstein's claims about language and rules seriously raises a second issue. It illustrates that by changing the way in which they defined security, the Bush administration changed the rules of the game constituted in and by their own speech acts. From a language game perspective, a change in language counts as a change in the rules of the game. The addition of the democratic discourse altered the parameters of what was and was not acceptable. Since the Bush administration was not speaking

security in the same way, they were no longer playing the same game of security from the defining moment onwards. Addressing these issues is crucial to analysing how the Bush administration's language of security changed at the defining moment and the consequences of those changes. Wittgenstein's claims about interpretation also represent a novel way to examine the modifications to the Bush administration's language game of security. Analysing their attempts to substitute one set of rules provides a point of departure for understanding how they redefined the rules of their security game as well as the rules found within international law.

The final section brings the main arguments and insights of this chapter together. Drawing these discussions to a close provides a means to open up the larger question of the relationship between language and legitimacy, or, more particularly, what language legitimates. These themes will be given greater attention in Chapter 4 where I turn to the case of Abu Ghraib. This abuse scandal provides a stark reminder of why it is necessary to examine and perhaps revise the way in which we speak security.

Section 1: Language Games

It is necessary to specify that Ludwig Wittgenstein was not an IR scholar, but a philosopher interested in language and meaning. Translating his discussions to a different academic domain requires a shift in the analytical level. He does not provide a theory that can be neatly applied. Instead, Wittgenstein's work provides a philosophy of language that is useful for thinking about how we analyse meaning in use. Important inroads have been made to show the contribution of incorporating Wittgenstein's theoretical insights about language to the realm of social and political reality. The work of K.M. Fierke (2009, 2007, 2002, 2001, 1999, 1998, 1996), Nicholas G. Onuf (2003, 1998, 1989) and Friedrich Kratochwil (2006, 2000, 1989, 1987) immediately stand out.[162] These authors all fall within the 'critical constructivist' stance outlined in Chapter 1. This linking point demonstrates the possibility of a language games approach as a way towards a more consistent methodological and linguistic position in IR. These authors also highlight the relevance of Wittgenstein's work to reach some conclusions regarding the complexity

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[162] See also Shane Mulligan (2006, 2004)

of language as a constitutive and constraining device. All in all, these authors exemplify that language matters.

This thesis aims to provide a solid contribution to this line of work. My point of departure is to draw on a Wittgensteinian approach to juxtapose the CS speech act theory with that of a language game. I argue that this can help us to reach a more sophisticated understanding of language as a both a constitutive and constraining device, and consequently the process of change itself. Bringing language games to bear on the securitization framework also instigates a debate about whether or not it may be beneficial to find different ways of speaking security in IR. Drawing on Wittgenstein's body of work to analyse the Bush administration's justifications of the Iraq war also offers a nuanced account of the way in which they spoke security. Adopting a language game approach is also interesting in terms of this case because it illuminates how they transferred from one kind of language game to another, and thus how they were enabled and constrained as they spoke security at different stages of the Iraq war. The theoretical and empirical lines of inquiry I raise can thus be seen as original contributions.

Wittgenstein presented the notion of language games in *The Philosophical Investigations* (1958). This book signalled a major departure from his earlier work, *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus* (1922).[163] Where the early Wittgenstein was concerned with simple propositions and how these statements mirrored the world, his later considerations progressed away from a picture theory of language towards that of a game (Fierke 2002, Bloor 1983). As he remarked, "a picture held us captive. And we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably" (Wittgenstein, 1979, §115:48).

An essential part of Wittgenstein's revision was to convey language as being fundamentally constitutive of the 'reality' within which we find ourselves.[164] Drawing on the notion of a game, he presented language as an interactive activity.

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[163] Wittgenstein's early work was similar to the rationalist and positivist approaches addressed in Chapter 1. Indeed the main arguments outlined in the *Tractatus* were founded on the assumptions of logical positivism, which saw language as a structure which attached names and labels to things. See Ludwig Wittgenstein (1922)

[164] Wittgenstein is not the only theorist to make such assertions. Also see Peter Winch (1958). Post-structuralists including Foucault and Derrida asserted similar claims, albeit in a different way.

From this perspective, participants do not merely act and react in a causal or predetermined manner. Nor do they experience language as an external aspect of their life. On the contrary, they live it and reproduce it through their everyday practices. Simply put, "to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life" (Wittgenstein, 1979, §19:8).[165]

This constitutive position renders positivist attempts to find definitive and verifiable truths futile. As Chapter 1 argued, positivists employ scientific ways to quantify material things in an objective reality. Rationalists, on the other hand, suggest that language is cheap as agents strategically manipulate and even lie to pursue their own interest. In this sense the concept of a language game should not be confused with game theory. While both provide tools to explore interaction, they do so in contrasting ways. Given its emphasis on 'hard' rational choice by isolated and instrumentally inclined actors, game theory represents the opposite of the relational and the intersubjective (Brams, 2004; Morrow,1994; Snidal, 1985). The formality of such models often limits their ability to capture endogenous issues that influence decision making within a game. These can be said to include "actors' beliefs about the nature of the interaction, their beliefs about other actors beliefs, and the means by which actors convey and infer intentions to and from one another" (Duffy, Frederking and Tucker, 1998: 271). Drawing on a language game perspective is beneficial for incorporating these additional factors. In this broader conceptualisation, a game is an intersubjective context of rules, dependent on a language, which define the identities of actors and the moves available to them.

Assuming no pre-existing world exists 'out there' for us to uncover, Wittgenstein contended that social reality is something that we learn and is revealed to us through our participation within specific language games. Keeping with this line he argued that, "the meaning of a word is its use in language" (Wittgenstein, 1979, §43: 18).[166] His notion of 'meaning in use' emphasises multiplicity. Conceptualising language as an ongoing construction, Wittgenstein conveys the infinite potentiality for such

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[165] Elsewhere Wittgenstein maintains that "the term language game is meant to bring into prominence the fact that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or a form of life." (Wittgenstein, 1979, §23: 11, italics in original)

[166] This notion of meaning in use is crucial to Wittgenstein since, "it is only in a language that I can mean something by something" (1979, §38: 18).

arrangements. Indeed, from his perspective there are as many worlds as there are language games through which they are expressed at any particular time.[167] As he asks: "But how many kind of sentences are there? Say assertion, question, and command? – There are countless kinds: countless different kinds of use of what we call 'symbols', 'words', 'sentences'. And this multiplicity is not something fixed, given once for all; but new kinds of language, new language games, as we may say, come into existence, and others become obsolete and get forgotten (Wittgenstein, 1979, §23: 11).

Reinforcing that humans constantly construct social meanings and realities through their actions and interactions Wittgenstein contends a plurality of 'moves' are always available in a language game.[168] As Wittgenstein put it, "I shall also call the whole, consisting of the language and the actions into which it is woven, the 'language game'" (Wittgenstein, 1979, §7: 5). Agents may also participate in more than one game concurrently. Either way, people face and make choices as they act and interact in any social context. These decisions are not fixed, and Wittgenstein stressed that no two games will be identical. The possibility of different outcomes opens up the space for unintended actions and thus change.

Multiplicity operates on another level in Wittgenstein's account. He acknowledges that each language game may contain multiple meanings, highlighting how various language games connect with one another at a myriad of points.[169] He terms such similarities 'family resemblances'. Such resemblances do not generate hypotheses or

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[167] Consequently, Wittgenstein shied away from providing a fixed definition of a language game. Justifying this decision he notes, "here we come up against the great question that lies behind these considerations. – For some might object against me. You talk about all sorts of language games, but have nowhere said what the essence of a language game and hence language is: What is common to all these activities, and what makes them into a language or parts of a language. […] Instead of producing something common to all that we call language, I am saying that these phenomenon have not one thing in common which makes us use the same word for all- but that they are related to one another in many different ways. And it is because of this relationship, or these relationships, that we call them all language" (Wittgenstein, 1979, §65: 31).

[168] For instance, a chess player can choose to situate different pieces into different positions at different times, just a footballer can choose to strike, pass or score depending on the state of play when they are in possession of the ball.

[169] He draws an apt analogy between language and a city stating, "our language can be seen as an ancient city: a maze of little streets and squares, of old and new houses, and of houses with additions from various periods; and this surrounded by a multitude of new boroughs with straight regular streets and uniform houses" (Wittgenstein, 1979, §18: 8). Elsewhere he describes language as a "labyrinth of paths. You approach from one side and know your way about; you approach the same place from another side and no longer know your way about" (1979, §203: 82)

causal outcomes. Rather, they are part of the overall grammar that constitutes the social fabric of society. "For if you look at them you will not see something that is common to them all, but similarities, relationships and whole series of them at that. And the result of this examination is: we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing; sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail. I can think of no better expression to characterise these similarities than 'family resemblances': for the various resemblances between members of a family: build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, etc. overlap and criss-cross in the same way" (Wittgenstein, 1979, §66-67: 32). These shared understandings enable agents to know how to act and go on in the particular games they are playing.

According to Wittgenstein, the way in which words are linked and grouped together has ramifications. Consequently, the relationship between words matters. The linguistic composition constituting any language game will influence the meaning of each term used within the course of play and, by extension, the meaning of the overall language game in which they are used. For Wittgenstein, the way in which words crisscross will determine the kind of language game that it is possible to play as well as the rules according to which that specific game unfolds. A different linguistic arrangement will constitute a different sphere of action. In this capacity, alterations in words influence the kind of agency and structure that are operational in a given context. As mentioned, the way in which the Bush administration defined security on the basis of pre-emptive self-defence and WMD constructed one kind of game. The way in which they defined security on the basis of pre-emptive self-defence and democracy constructed another. While both can be seen as constituting a language game of security which share family resemblances, each is premised on a different mode of action and rules. Thus the levels of agency and structure operational are not the same in each game. As shown later, these different meanings produce a tension at the core of the Bush administration's language of security.

Assuming any actor is imbedded in several language games, and that these language games may be comprised of several sets of meanings, raises the question of how people distinguish one game from another. What does a 'valid move' look like? Wittgenstein does not evade such issues. For him, however, the multiplicity afforded through a language games approach is a help rather than a hindrance. The very fact

that social reality is so complex necessitates approaching it with a fluid mode of analysis. Consequently Wittgenstein encourages us to 'look and see' what sort of language game is being played in specific contexts. This, he argued, enables us to discard a static picture theory of language. Part of Wittgenstein's primary argument for a more constitutive notion of language was to constantly rethink and critique the state of play. He argues this helps us to overcome the tendency to become blinded or bewitched by our own language use (Wittgenstein 1979: §206, 219). To prevent this from occurring, he advocated opening up everything to view in our language, in order to see more clearly how language constitutes human action and meaning. "Consider for example the proceedings that we call 'games'. I mean board-game, card-games, ball-games, Olympic games and so on. What is common to all of them? – Don't say: 'There must be something common, or they would not be called games' – but look and see whether there is anything common to them all" (Wittgenstein, 1979, §66: 31).

A crucial point that follows when we 'look and see' is that each move does not carry equal weight or legitimacy. Falsehood is thus possible in language games. This occurs when the world as revealed by a particular language game fails the tests of truth associated with the game. According to Wittgenstein each move only makes sense to players in the context of the language game in which they are immersed. Once removed from the specific context of the given game, the ascription of meaning alters. Allied to this one game can say little about the validity of the other games since they are constituted by differing types of meaning and behaviour. Indeed, the concept of language games sensitises us to the fact that the 'right names' are determined in the process of interaction. Unlike positivism, what is true and false is constituted in the game. As he remarks, "So are you saying that human agreement decides what is true and false? – It is what human beings say that is true and false; and they agree in the language they use. That is not agreement in opinions but in form of life" (Wittgenstein, 1979, §241:88, italics in original).

Section 2: The Rules of a Language Game

Earlier chapters have called for a deeper engagement with the nexus between language and rules. Wittgenstein serves as an entry point into this kind of discussion.

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For him, determining which meanings hold true in a given language game presupposes a system of rules. As in other types of games, rules operate as structuring devices that govern the behaviour of the participants. Crucially, they establish the parameters of acceptability within specific spheres of interaction. These guidelines have an important role in simplifying the numerous choices available to actors as they go about their daily life. Basically, they enable individuals to know what validates or violates the intersubjective understanding accompanying each game. This is beneficial. Unlike post-structuralist accounts which see discourse as a predominantly regulating or coercive structure, a language games approach relies on the idea of rules as a source of agency and structure in which people engage each other. According to Wittgenstein's perspective, meanings constituted in and by our language are far less harmful than assumed by post-structuralism. Games, including a securitized game, are based on rules which are meaningful because they are shared. We are only capable of communicating in words and actions because we are socialised into and share a range of intersubjective understandings.

Without denying the regulatory side of rules, Wittgenstein stressed that they do more than dictate how people behave. Accentuating the constitutive properties, he argues that they are a necessary part of learning a language. They define the very nature of social reality. In fact, the rules for naming are the beginning point for agents to know how to proceed. For, as he argued, to obey the rules of the game, participants must understand them. The ability to project and learn the rules is a necessary part of conveying meaning in any language. By following a rule, people construct and reaffirm a status quo reality. They accept these assumptions as a matter of course in order to participate in the game. When people fully understand a rule and take it into account in order to 'carry on', Wittgenstein contends that the state of play is taken for granted.

This level of internalisation underpins his notion of 'knowing a rule' or 'knowing how to go on' (Wittgenstein 1979, §134-155). At this stage rules are an automatic part of how individuals make sense and understand their surroundings. They are no longer questioned. As Wittgenstein expressed, "how am I to obey a rule?" – if this is not a question about causes, then it is about the justification for my following the rule in the way that I do. If I have exhausted the justifications I have reached bedrock, and my

spade has turned. Then I am inclined to say, "this is simply what I do" (Wittgenstein, 1979, §217:85). When rules are constitutive they do not need any authority figure to ensure their enforcement. Instead they are part of the very nature of our interactions. Their familiarity is evidenced by the very fact that agents draw upon them repeatedly as a matter of course, we obey the rules blindly (Kratochwil, 1989). The structure of the context is expressed in the use of language. In this respect, Wittgenstein's analysis is not merely about language, but about the construction of a way of life, charaterised by particular gestures and collective patterns of behaviour.

However, stating that rules are socially and linguistically constructed is different than asserting they are cheap or open to pure interpretation. On the contrary, Wittgenstein is very clear that rules have a structural logic which stands apart from personal mindsets. How people understand the rules for interacting with one type of object as opposed to another does not originate inside actors' heads. Instead it is learned (Fierke, 2009). It is here Wittgenstein stresses there can be no such thing as a private language (§243-275). Maintaining this division between pubic and private is crucial because once the rules of any game become the property of individuals, they cease to operate as overarching frameworks of meaning. According to him,

> "this was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be made out to accord with the rule. The answer was: if everything can be made out to accord with the rule, then it can also be made out to conflict with it. And so there would be neither accord nor conflict here" (Wittgenstein, 1979, §201:81).

With this claim he reinforces that language games and their rules enable agency while constituting the structure in which any act has meaning.

Acts of Interpretation

Clearly the constitutive and regulative function of rules are inherently interrelated in Wittgenstein's work (Onuf, 1989). Nevertheless, this dualism does not capture a third dimension of the concept of rules found in Wittgenstein's work. This is an act of interpretation. Emphasising that rules can provide some guidelines, he locates the power of rules in the space they leave open for interpretive strategies. This

combination of certainty (through the presence of rules) and uncertainty (in the possibility for new rules to be created) emphasises the constitutive capacity and variety of rules. Actors can interpret rules in different ways. In the realm of international law, for instance, people employ the vast vocabulary of rules in many different ways, taking many different forms to explain what they are doing (Lang 2007; Lang, Rengger and Walker, 2006; O' Driscoll 2006). Such creative licence is found in the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war on the grounds of pre-emptive self-defence. Looking at their use of international law, we can see the ambiguous associations they drew between the legality of their security practices and those codified in existing rules. In short, it gave them agency to act in one way rather than another. Their use of this language enables them to make a case that security can be a justification for acting in a way that is inconsistent with existing rules. As the Bush administration claimed, 'this was a different kind of war'.

Although acknowledging diversity in interpretation, Wittgenstein asserts that the language of rules provides a commonly accepted codification of meanings. This prevents them from being exploited for the pursuit of self-interest. As noted, the meaning of language and words lies in their use and thus they must remain intersubjective. What also becomes apparent in the Bush administration's interpretation of pre-emptive self-defence is that these categories are not the property of individuals. On the contrary, they are part of the shared language which is constitutive of the identities and practices of the Bush administration. The existence of these shared understandings limits their agency by influencing how the Bush administration were able to speak security to legitimise this foreign policy. Thus, while members of the Bush administration may have disobeyed existing law, by putting forward a legal argument they were also attempting to engage with and redefine it. This kind of persuasion can be seen at both the defining moments, and each required the Bush administration to reconstitute their language game of security in response to the context in which they were acting.

To ensure that rules remain intersubjective rather than subjective properties, Wittgenstein draws a fundamental distinction between 'following' or 'breaking' a rule on the one hand and 'interpreting' it on the other. With this distinction, individualistic mindsets are clearly delineated from shared understandings. He maintains that the

term *interpretation* should only be employed when we witness one set of meanings being replaced with another. Thus,

> "there is a way of grasping a rule which is not an interpretation, but which is exhibited in what we call 'obeying the rule' and 'going against it' in actual cases. Hence there is an inclination to say: every action according to the rule is an interpretation. But we are out to restrict the term 'interpretation' to the substitution of one expression of the rule for another" (Wittgenstein 1979, §201:81).

Wittgenstein presents the example of a pointing arrow to elaborate on his meaning of interpretation. He argues that we do not interpret the meaning of this sign. Rather, it is a commonly accepted rule that an arrow pointing in a particular direction is a particular kind of signpost. According to him, 'The sign-post is in order—if, under normal circumstances, it fulfils its purpose" (Wittgenstein, 1979,§87). We recognise this meaning immediately.[170] While understanding and accepting the original meaning of this sign, it is possible we might add an interpretation in which it would mean something else. That is,

> "every sign is capable of interpretation; but the meaning mustn't be capable of interpretation……assume that you take the meaning to be a process accompanying the saying, and that it is translatable into, and so far equivalent to, a further sign. You have therefore further to tell me what you take to be the distinguishing mark between a sign and the meaning" (Wittgenstein, 1958:34).

To put this into context, within international law it is commonly acknowledged that the arrow pointing to pre-emption signals that the threat is inevitable and certain, that is, imminent. Agents act to thwart a credible source of harm, an immediate threat. Yet when we examine the Bush administration's definition of pre-emption we find an attempt to interpret this same arrow as pointing to pre-emption as the likelihood of a potential threat materialising in the future. Within their interpretation there is no need for states to wait for an imminent threat to actually exist. Instead, the use of anticipatory measures are justified to make sure such a threat never materialises. Such strong language substitutes the definition of pre-emption in international law with

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[170] The signs on a road would be an obvious example

another.[171]   Similar substitutions are also found in the Bush administration's interpretation of the Geneva and Torture Conventions. These will be explored further in Chapter 4.

It is important here to reflect on the differentiation of breaking a rule and interpreting it. Arguably both kinds of behaviour challenge pre-existing rules. Yet the dividing line for Wittgenstein is that breaking a rule still assumes that there is a rule in place to be broken. Acknowledging that it is possible for people to oppose enshrined rules of the game, or that one makes up or alters the rules as one goes along, Wittgenstein argues that such considerations are still informed by the presence of these overarching structures of meaning (Wittgenstein, 1979 §83). Thus the actual validity of the rules is not in doubt. Alternatively, the actor has understood what the rules of the specific game are. Based on this knowledge they have decided not to follow them for whatever reason. By knowing what the rules are, people who disobey them are still defined by them. Rule breakers draw on existing rules in the course of reaching conclusions about how to behave. Part and parcel of this awareness is an acceptance that deviance from the rules has consequences.

With acts of interpretation, however, the rules of a game are challenged in a far more dramatic way. In such scenarios it is the internalised rules themselves which are questioned. During acts of interpretation the actor/actors making this move seek to instil a completely alternative rule system. Whereas rule following and even rule breaking work to maintain the status quo, acts of interpretation seek to alter it. At this point the participants are no longer obeying rules blindly. Instead they are seeking to replace them with an alternative set of rules. This is extremely disruptive to the fabric of social reality. Once the intersubjective consensus about what rules mean starts to crumble, people no longer know automatically how to go on. As Wittgenstein remarks,

> "it is only in normal cases that the use of a word is clearly prescribed; we know, are in no doubt, what to say in this or that case. The more abnormal the case, the more doubtful it becomes what we are to say. And if things were quite different from what they actually are –; if rule

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[171] Again see Neta C. Crawford (2004) for a detailed discussion of these alterations and their consequences.

became exception and exception became the rule, or if both became phenomena of roughly equal frequency - this would make our normal language-games lose their point" (Wittgenstein, 1979, §142:36).

Rather than signalling a mere disagreement with the rules, acts of interpretation challenge the meaning of these rules. They are not simply interpreting the rules differently at a subjective level, but attempting to inscribe them with a new intersubjective meaning. This again is evidenced in the Bush administration's claims that the nature of war had changed after September 11, 2001. To paraphrase, they were fighting a different kind of war, one that defined and redefined the existing rules of the game.

Given the important implications interpreting rules has for the entire meaning structure of a language game, Wittgenstein is careful to outline that substituting one set of rules for another is no easy feat. Rather, departing from the old rules, or interpreting them differently, requires some form of justification. Because rules are shared intersubjectively a case must be made as to why such a substitution is necessary and/or beneficial to the overall game rather than just the participant undertaking the act of interpretation. Although the impetus may come from a single actor, for an act of interpretation to succeed it can never be a unitary act. Nor is it guaranteed to succeed. In some cases, the proposed 'interpretation' would not even be thinkable. Wittgenstein's distinction does not preclude the possibility that an interpretation will become the rule. This can occur. A new set of rules can become thinkable. However, the possibility of an interpretation becoming a different kind of rule, or installing a new structure of meaning, rests on convincing enough people to change their patterns of life in correspondence with this new form. Put plainly, they must begin to live according to a different set of rules. This change is structural. To create a new set of rules, the person undertaking an act of interpretation must be able to convince others.

Acts of interpretation are constraining on another level. Wittgenstein clearly argues they cannot occur as a one-off. This is central. For the new interpretation of the rules to become meaningful it must be put into use. It has to be repeated frequently in order to be accepted as a common practice. As he says,

> "Before I judge that two images which I have are the same, I must recognise them as the same. And when that has happened, how am I to know that the word 'same' describes what I recognise? Only if I can express my recognition in some other way, and if it is possible for someone else to teach me that 'same' is the correct word here. For if I need a justification for using a word, it must also be one for someone else" (Wittgenstein, 1979 §378:117).

These stipulations of repetition draw attention to a long-term process.

As conceptualised by Wittgenstein, new interpretations and potentially new rules are not created in a vacuum. On the contrary, any new language would have to be developed on the basis of the one already possessed. To make the act of interpretation meaningful, those undertaking this action must clarify how the new set of rules they are proposing relate to existing ones. Existing criteria enable dissimilar modes of identification to occur. The success of conveying knowledge of the alternative set of rules requires that the agent undertaking the act of interpretation is able to teach others who must both understand and adopt the words. Naming and substituting objects requires continuously projecting them into new contexts in the present and in the future. Again, this is done on the basis of existing rules. The latter enables agents to translate and substitute one set of meanings for another.

> "If language is to be a means of communication there must be agreement not only in definitions but also (queer as this may sound) in judgements. This seems to abolish logic, but does not do so – it is one thing to describe methods of measurement, and another to obtain and state results of measurement. But what we call 'measuring' is partly determined by a certain constancy in results of measurement" (Wittgenstein, 1979, §242:88).[172]

Interpretation understood this way is different from interpretation understood by post-structural accounts. What it highlights is that inter-subjectivity remains key in determining how the new rule will be constructed and put into practice. Acts of interpretation are not primarily a matter of seeing something or interpreting a text differently. Instead it is an acknowledgment of such differences actually existing. When undertaking acts of interpretation, agents are acting on the basis of socially shared rules. These rules are learned within a particular social context. Moreover,

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[172] Brackets in original text

when they are undertaking acts of interpretation, they are not doing so subjectively. They are acting in an intersubjective context, attempting to persuade others.

Establishing that following a rule and interpreting it are two separate forms of action reveals a deeper level of change. It also reveals the construction of a different set of rules and a deeper kind of legitimacy. Acts of interpretation draw attention to the creation of rules through speech. It is not enough for agents to just discard the rules of the game as they please. They must also constitute a new set of rules, a new way of speaking, and persuade others to adopt this dialogue. Since, "it is only in a language that I can mean something by something" (Wittgenstein, 1979, §38: 18). Building on this feeds into deeper examinations of how it is possible for words to change meanings in the process of interaction. What Wittgenstein highlights is that a discourse contains the grounds for meaning, but also the grounds for contestation. This duality makes it necessary to conceptualise language as a structure as well as a vehicle of agency. This links back to the agent-structure debate. On one level, Wittgenstein emphasises the constitutive nature of language. A possibility always exists that a new set of meanings can be introduced through acts of interpretation. However, his approach also encapsulates a more constraining picture of language. For an act of interpretation to be successful, individuals undertaking the interpretation have to learn the parameters of this new language no less than any other person who might join in. This emphasises a learning process in which agents must constantly engage in process of interaction. Once they stop putting their language into use it becomes meaningless.

Section 3: Juxtaposing a Speech Act with a Language Game

Having outlined Wittgenstein's notion of language games, this section observes the theoretical insights it brings to the CS securitization framework. Below I argue that it moves security speech acts beyond the moment of utterance to focus on ongoing processes or games, beyond agents breaking rules to agents using rules, even in an attempt to redefine them and beyond a singular definition of security to a clustered one. Each step will be discussed extensively below.

Beyond the Moment of Utterance

The first contribution a language game approach brings to the securitization framework centres on processes. This emphasis is twofold. First Wittgenstein's notion of a language game demonstrates that language itself is an ongoing language game or process rather than a single speech act or utterance. Speaking security is thus remade as a constant form of communication. The metaphor of language as being part of a game rests on a second assumption, that it constitutes a larger realm of action and interaction. Putting words into practice create intersubjective realities. Accordingly, there is constant need to 'look and see' how meanings are being generated and used in specific contexts. Again this takes us beyond the utterance to examinations about how language is put into practice. Here Wittgenstein's emphasis on meaning in use is advantageous as it does not conflate an utterance or speech act with language use in a broader sense. The notion of a language game highlights a different kind of action with speech. The speech act is representative of a very specific move. A language game provides an overarching framework within which this move takes on a larger, intersubjective, meaning. Wittgenstein's thought helps to shift away from a search for how agents speak security at the moment of utterance to an emphasis on language as a form of life, expressed in historically and culturally specific language games. It is useful to think about this in relation to securitization processes, both in the short-term and long-term.

Although the CS does view language as a social act, their analytical scope concentrates predominantly on the beginning of linguistic processes, that is, how the language game is started. Securitization occurs at the moment that security is uttered to designate an existential threat that an audience accepts as real. While useful in some instances, such as the moment of utterance, this analytical framework does not fully address the argumentative processes that unfold throughout securitization or in securitized realms. This is problematic as it implies that security is spoken once and thus that the meaning of the utterance stays the same. Drawing on Wittgenstein's notion of meaning in use highlights how even a single utterance may alter in the course of play. By focusing on the moment of utterance the CS also overlooks the possibility that these actors have spoken security before, or, alternatively, are drawing on speech acts that already have meaning within a particular context. A

Wittgensteinian depiction of language games as forms of life and meaning in use highlights the extent to which previous utterances enable and constrain the way in which security can be spoken at a given moment. A language game analysis adds historicity by focusing on the meanings that are generated through language use. This paints a clearer picture of the structures of meaning that are already in play at the moment security is uttered and how these pre-existing meanings shape the way in which agents speak security at this particular moment in time.

The CS could argue that they do not provide an absolute blueprint for how securitization will unfold. For them the outcome of any speech act is neither fixed nor readymade. On this basis, determining what is produced in the end is somewhat less important than understanding how securitizing moves become possible in the beginning. While this constitutive approach is admirable, and consistent with Wittgenstein's thought, it deflects attention away from examining how the concept of security is used within the contexts they create. They examine how the language of security is constructed, but less *what* it constructs. Speech acts only gets us so far in examining real life, everyday security discourses and their consequences.

Examining language games offers a means to explore language as a constantly evolving process long after the moment of utterance. This provides an entry point to examine how language changes. Adopting a language games approach illustrates not only how certain speech acts come into being but also how they evolve in and over the course of interactions.[173] Concentrating on meaning in use allows greater vigilance in spotting modifications that occur in languages over time. Taking Wittgenstein's approach provides a window into what sort of security is being spoken, who activates it and for what purposes. Examining these larger cycles of argumentation amplifies the way in which the term security is used by agents in the course of acting, reacting and interacting. Wittgenstein's game analogy provides a deeper cut into the series of utterances that underpin a securitizing move as well as the process of securitization that materialises thereafter. This provides a nuanced entry point to examine securitized environments and how the same function. A language game takes us

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[173] Stating that language games are suited to long-term studies of language does not disqualify them from undertaking short-term investigations as well. Rather Wittgenstein encourages us to 'look and see' without delimiting a fixed timeframe.

beyond the utterance to examine how the language of security is spoken thereafter. This is extremely beneficial as it enables the transformative dimensions to be mapped.

Broadening the analytical horizon in this fashion highlights that the concept of security is not static. This is not to say that the meaning and use of the word are without variation, but that the possibility for change remains. This fluidity allows for security to be spoken in different ways during a securitizing move as well as a process of securitization. Such diversity is helpful when it comes to thinking seriously about the concept of de-securitization and how it becomes possible. The CS framework outlines de-securitization as the exit from securitization. Yet the design of their approach stops short of exploring how this change may occur. A language games approach helps to fill this gap. It provides us with the tools to examine how the language of security is put into use after the moment of utterance. Within this framework the creation of an alternative narrative, such as de-securitization, is always possible in the course of play. Such an undertaking makes it easier to identify competing narratives that arise to challenge and even replace securitized speech acts. Through a language games approach we gain a better understanding of the way in which the language of security may fall out of use or come to acquire a set of meanings that was initially unthinkable as the preferences and interests of the actors of this specific language game transformed.

Taking such considerations on board provides a way to allow for a more serious level of contestation between the speaker and the audience. This deepens the dialectical relationship at the heart of the CS framework. The CS asserts that securitized speech acts may not be accepted as legitimate by the audience. This counts as a case of a failed securitization. However, they do not provide enough avenues to examine such realms of contestation. Nor do they examine how the meaning of security utterances may come to be disputed and redefined during a securitizing move or as agents speak security thereafter. As such the CS oversimplify a very complex set of transactions. A language games approach provides a better point of departure than securitization for capturing how speakers and audiences might interact over time rather than within a once off. The notion of a game suggests involving others. In this capacity Wittgenstein's approach allows the audience to gain an active rather than reactive role in determining how security is defined and spoken. His argument that there is no such

thing as a private language game also creates a space for thinking about how securitizing actors may modify their original utterance in line with deliberate exchanges they have with their audiences. Through these back and forth negotiations a re-securitization may occur insofar as the securitizing terms may be altered. Put differently, audiences may directly influence the way in which securitizing actors speak security. Such input would, in turn, influence the meaning of security and the actions legitimated by this language game.

Paying constant attention to how the language of security is being used and the meanings embedded within it also adds accountability to the securitization process. It instils an expectation that speakers of security will be held responsible for their words by audiences on an ongoing basis. Throughout the course of securitization, the securitizing actor must constantly justify the need for exceptional measures. To give a reason is to open up the space for the other to be engaged and respond (Fierke, 2010:87). Inculcating this norm is important since, as the CS state, there is a danger that actors may feel empowered by the lack of regulative constraints upon them. A notion of language games provides a tool to analyse that actors have justified and must constantly justify their actions, not only when they speak security but also as they continue to put this speech act into use. Pursuing Wittgenstein's claim that there is no such thing as a private language renders the secrecy of security less removed from ongoing critical evaluation. As a two-way relationship, the interaction between the speaker and the audience is not merely about who is speaking security and who is accepting their speech act. Instead, the meaning of security in any given utterance also becomes dependent on some degree of implementation in order to gain legitimacy. Through Wittgenstein the intersubjectivity of language becomes increasingly important. It is due to the existence of a language game that practices and actions have sedimented meanings which can change over time, but are temporarily stable in that context. A language game is an ontological and epistemological pillar in the sense that meaning is established by the interaction between agents and words.

Beyond Breaking Rules

Besides increasing the lifespan of securitized speech acts, Wittgenstein's notion of language games offers a point of departure for thinking about the relationship between rules and language. His presentation of language as an inherently rule-bound practice offers a methodological contribution to the CS conceptualisation of rules within the process of securitization and in securitized environments. Importantly it shifts the focus of enquiry away from rule breaking behaviour as the predominant mode of action. Additionally, a language game perspective allows for instances of securitization that entail rule following as well as acts of interpretation that attempt to redefine the rules. In the main, the CS looks at how securitized speech acts place issues beyond traditional rules of the game, that is, how they enable actors to discard rules that would otherwise bind. As noted, Wittgenstein does deal with the notion of rule breaking but his discussion on this topic is different to the CS. Deviations from the rules are sanctioned. Consequently those speaking security cannot do so without any inconvenience to themselves. As the CS stress, speaking security is a political move. What a language game adds is that this move also has costs. Firstly a Wittgensteinian analysis reinforces that any departures from existing social rules must be situated in a different intersubjective situation. Second, the construction of new rules necessarily draws on older ones. There is not an automatic break; one game does not have to be suspended in order for another one to come into existence. Finally, since all rules are fundamentally languages that enable us to go on, they can never cease to exist. According to the CS, who focus primarily on regulatory rules, these can be suspended through the process of securitization, whereas according to Wittgenstein, they can never be.

Why is it important to envision the act of speaking security as an inherently rule based activity? At this point it is worth recalling the CS justification for distinguishing securitization as something separate from normality. This is done to prevent the security routine, a worthy point and concern. For them "security should be seen as a negative, as a failure to deal with issues of normal politics" (Buzan et al. 1998: 29). A language game approach is well situated to ensure that speaking security to instil exceptional rules remains a separate kind of process from normal politics. It allows for more than one kind of game to be in play, each of which act according to different sets of rules. It does add an extra dimension: the CS idea of a state of exception suggests an absence of (regulatory) rules, that elites are free to act without constraint.

However, from a language games perspective this is never the case because they have to continue speaking security to an audience. If we continue to 'look and see', we find that rules and language games are still in operation after the initial speech act is uttered. Indeed, since language is how we make our world, it will continue whether securitization succeeds or fails.

Using Wittgenstein's notion of a language games pays greater attention to the kind of rules that agents draw on to legitimise securitization in the first place. This alternative avenue is more moderate than the CS treatment of rules. Representing more of the gray zone between securitization and politicization, language games show where these discourses of the exceptional and the normal criss-cross and intertwine. Again, this provides a better indication of how one set of rules can replace another. Where the CS emphasise the suspension of normal rules with exceptional ones, enabling elites to act as they wish, a Wittgensteinian approach highlights that this instead represents a shift from on type of language game to another. From this reading the rules that hold in politicization are part of the background which enable the definition of securitization to become possible. Moreover, the rules of politicization can continue to coexist and function alongside those operational in a securitization process. A language games approach helps to trace realms of continuity that may occur during a securitizing move or securitization process. Beyond simply enabling change to occur, these older structures remain partly constitutive of its meaning. A securitized speech act is not very meaningful unless we understand the overall context and grammar in which it is embedded.

Although the CS describes securitization in reference to rule breaking acts, through a Wittgensteinian lens they present a context where elites try to substitute one set of rules for another, or substitute an interpretation for more accepted rules of play. Following the CS logic, the move from politicization to securitization causes the substitution of one set of rules with another. Securitising actors are not breaking the rules of normal politics or questioning their legitimacy. Instead, securitising actors invoke the language of security in response to what they perceive as existential threats. They are in fact trying to secure the legitimacy of the game itself. However, securitising actors are no longer playing the same game. On the contrary, as the CS maintains, uttering the word security alters the context, intersubjective meanings and

the range of moves available to different actors. Hence Wittgenstein's notion of interpretation provides a useful framework for thinking about the securitization process. Just as Wittgenstein argues that an interpretation of any intersubjective rule must be put into use to become meaningful, the CS maintain that securitization requires the recognition of others or, to be specific, an audience. Much of the tension between the CS speech act theory and Wittgenstein's notion of language games can be resolved by viewing securitization as a process of interpretation rather than a process that enables actors to break free of existing rules. Agents cannot proceed without putting this meaning in use.

The significance of seeing the transition from politicization to securitization as an act of interpretation is that it points to a different structure of rule making and breaking. The CS framework rests on the idea that existing intersubjective rules are suspended. Acts of interpretation allow for this. However, Wittgenstein's definition of interpretation highlights the idea of substitution, that is, one set of rules being substituted with another. This brings the idea of redefining rules, which occurs at the level of language, into the equation. His distinction between rule and interpretation provides greater insights into how new rules are made, and what type of rules are constituted by speaking security. How do these rules function when they are put into use beyond the moment of utterance?

Wittgenstein's concept of a language game brings us a step closer to examining how language enables and constrains. The rules of speech become an inherent feature that agents cannot escape. In this sense it becomes possible to explore what it is possible for the speakers to say in a meaningful way when they speak security. From a Wittgensteinian perspective the speech act constitutes a practice that is replicated in the acts of the participants. He draws attention to the constraining effects of language. For even if the speaker faces little or no obstacles at the moment of utterance, the kind of agency made available to them by speaking security can be altered in the course of play, depending on how they put this language into use.

In moving from a notion of suspending rules to redefining them through acts of interpretation, rule-like patterns remain in place. Put differently, the notion of agents breaking free of rules that would otherwise bind as the foundations for action

dissolves. Instead, it is the construction of an alternative set of rules must be addressed. While the shared rules of a language game can often be broken, agents are not acting. Speaking security thus looks more like a tapestry of overlapping rules, some of which may contradict, rather than a straightforward blueprint of rule breaking actions. The idea that a replacement is created through an act of interpretation is another important distinction in terms of conceptualising the rules of exceptionality. Wittgenstein's argument about an act of interpretation is more nuanced. These kind of rules do not exist as a static totality but nor are they purely representative of the speaker's interpretation. An interpretation differs from rule breaking. For the former to exist and maintain legitimacy it must be put into use.

Beyond a Singular Definition

As noted, language games recognise the plurality of meanings. Given the diversity of everyday life, it is assumed that the same word can have multiple meanings depending upon how it is used in particular circumstances.[174] Agents can participate in multiple games as well as making multiple moves within a single game. Whether by accident or design securitization dilutes such diversity of meanings. It has already been established that the CS contends that securitization follows a formal, resting on a nexus of the designation and acceptance of existential threats (Buzan et al. 1998:6). This strict definition leaves little room for security to be constituted as anything that falls outside these benchmarks (Hansen, 2006; Williams, 2003). The narrowness of potential and valued referent objects reinforces certain assumptions about what it means to speak security.

From a Wittgensteinian perspective such a reading is overly simplistic. Omitted from the analysis are the clusters of meaning subsumed within a security speech act.[175] Whilst security may be the dominant discourse, his language game approach highlights that it can never stands in splendid isolation. Rather conceptualising security as a language game instead of a speech act situates and embeds the term in a

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[174] For instance the word security can be used by politicians to refer to national security, international security, financial security or social security. However each operates according to a different logic and thus a different set of appropriate practices

[175] For a more extensive engagement with the idea of clusters of meaning relating to security see Karin Fierke (2007): "Critical Approaches to International Security": Polity Press.

wider web of meanings. Taking these extra dimensions on board demonstrates that competing sets of meanings can be subsumed within a language game of security. Wittgensteinian language games rest on alternating and interfacing structures of meaning. It starts with the discovery that different language games can jostle and compete with each other as agents put them into use. This brings the relationship between words into the equation and how different sets of meaning interrelate as part of the larger grammar of a language game.

The CS clearly stipulates that the meaning of security is intersubjective. What they do not reveal, however, is that this term cannot be neatly separated from the subsidiary discourses that give it meaning. From a language games perspective the definition of security is open to contestation anew in each act of securitization. This does not suggest that it will be, but rather as Wittgenstein notes there is always a possibility that it will be. A language games approach thus opens up the possibility that the meaning of security itself may become contested in the process of securitization and beyond.

Wittgenstein's argument about multiplicity also provides a way to explore the presence of interfacing language games. The composition of these structures has enormous implications for how security is uttered. Evidently, different words have different meanings. A different definition provides a different realm of action. There are different ways of speaking security during a securitization process. Again these will be determined in the course of play. There is no ultimate ground or formula. Given the lack of ultimate foundation for what securitized speech acts mean, we cannot talk about formulas or law-like behaviour. However we can talk about rule-guided behaviour, informed by human traditions informed by traditions and practices. This is simply what we do and build on in order to participate Thus there are patterns to be identified, but these patterns are contextually specific rules.

Language games draw attention to the criss-crossing aspects of speech acts. This enables us to see security as a set of coexisting and often competing narratives jostling with one another. What Wittgenstein depicts are alternating and interfacing games. This paints a more complex picture of the language of security. Adding to the CS approach, it does not assume that when security is spoken that this term stands alone.

For even when security is the dominant discourse, Wittgenstein recognises that what we call security is composed of multiple meanings that may be fragmented or connected in less that obvious ways. This offers a more reflexive angle from which to view the word security.

This allows the transitions from politicization and securitization to unfold without determining the exact form this process will take. Whereas the CS posits a blueprint of how security will be spoken, from the perspective of a language games there is always more than one way to speak security. Their formulaic matrix may very well be an accurate representation of how that reality is being framed. Such discoveries can only be made by looking and seeing how people are using the language of security.

Agent-structure debate:
Building on the points raised above it is worth reflecting on how a language game view coincides with a new reading of the agent/structure debate outlined in Chapter 1. What becomes clear is that analysing language games does not weaken any of the constitutive functions of language but strengthens the constraining and structural dimensions of analysis. This realigns a balance between agents and structures by showing how language constitutes and constrains rather than simply showing how agents are enabled by a security utterance.

In the CS framework the main agent in the securitization process is the speaker of security and, in turn, the greatest agency lies with them. While the CS hold the success of the securitising move is depended on an audience, the speaker still has an advantage insofar as ultimately it is they who define the situation as a security issue. In this set up the audience has a more reactionary rather than participatory role in the action.

The inequality of this interaction is not overly problematic from a Wittgensteinian perspective. As with any game it is possible, if not likely, for one player to be stronger vis-à-vis others. However the two approaches diverge on the emphasis they place on the ability of one agent to change the rules of a language game. Wittgenstein plainly says that changing the rules of any game cannot be achieved by one person or speaker. To recall there is no such thing as a private language game. Due to their

inherent intersubjectivity such changes require public justification. Obviously this stipulation mirrors the CS requirement for audience support. However, whereas securitization makes this relational reciprocity a secondary requirement, i.e. only after security is uttered does the audience really factor into the equation, Wittgenstein's concept of language games would see it as a prerequisite for security to be uttered at all. Not only must the audience accept the new rule, which in the CS case is securitization, they must also put it into practice.

By the same token they must fully understand what the terms of the language game are. This level of enquiry takes us beyond the mere speech act of the speaker, and even the reciprocated recognition of the audience, to legitimate a speech act to the actual application of discursive utterances. Language games therefore provide a way to examine how the term security is used in a securitized environment. It also adds a greater degree of relationality and proportionality to the agentive account presented in the CS by advocating that such acceptance is not a once off occurrence. Put differently, a language game highlights that it is not enough to simply change the rules of the game once, or through a single utterance. New rules must be built up and put into regular use before they are transformed into accepted principles and practices. This gives the audience and other players greater scope to determine the validity of the changes introduced as well as extra time to adjust. These modifications reveal the constraining dimension of language. Language does not simply change with an utterance. Nor is it legitimated by mere acceptance. Instead from a language games perspective both aspects are constructed through constant and often gradual processes of communication. Taking these considerations on board helps remove the cause-effect communicative relationship between the speakers to the addressees endowed by the CS.

Relating back to an earlier point, the CS process of securitization rests on a definition of security that is already constructed or taken for granted. Conversely their examination raises a question about how the very definition of security is constructed. We must constantly 'look and see' how this term is being used and the meanings created in the process. This highlights that the definition of security is constituted in the interactive process. Definitions of security are constructed in the process of play. Meanings emerge from the game itself. Thus the audience does not simply accept or

reject the securitized speech act. Instead the definitional process is mutual, even if it originates from one mouth.

Wittgenstein's distinction between rule and interpretation provides a more robust grounding on this issue than the agentive CS outlook or the rules underpinning speech acts. Significantly, he presents rules as structures that cannot be amended or substituted one off. Even acts of interpretation which seek to redefine existing rules must be put into constant practice. This can happen. However it requires a longer timeframe than that constituted by a speech act. Speaking security is a powerful step, which must then be followed up with others. Again this suggests a deeper level of process and interaction than available in the CS framework.

Language games provide a more structural reading of language than the CS at another level. Operating from a more complex definitional matrix of security than the CS, language games demonstrates that security can be a structure in and of itself. Assuming that security is a clustered concept of meanings presumes it contains multiple logics. This, in turn, presumes the presence or possibility of competing narratives within any single language game or speech act. Acknowledging this diversity allows language to remain constitutive and at the same time highlights the constraining side of the same. It also reaffirms language as a rule based rather than a rule breaking procedure. Just like speakers of security, participants in language games remain able to perform communicative activities and thus actively influence the course of events. The Wittgensteinian notion of language shows how words become embedded in a web of expectations. By speaking security, for instance, the agent is structured by this discursive framework. At the discursive level this word limits what else can be said both at that moment and later on. Labelling something a security issue silences other words.

A Wittgensteinian lens also highlights how the meaning of words can change and even lose their original meanings. Concentrating on meaning in use acts as an entry point to 'look and see' how words that legitimatize a certain type of agency in one instance may not necessarily function in this capacity at a later stage. In some instances, such as the Bush administration's language game of security, the presence of multiple meanings can produce irreconcilable tensions. Such discrepancies must be

justified by the agent, limiting how they can respond in a meaningful way. The unexpected twists that language takes in the course of the language game may produced meanings other than those intended to by the players. What Wittgenstein reinforces is that language is something that is beyond the control of agents, whether it be the speaker or the audience. Securitizing actors are not only answerable to an audience, they are also answerable to their own words. Unless the securitizing actor, or any other agent, can express themselves in a meaningful way their legitimacy will crumble.

Taking Wittgenstein's insights of language use on board are pertinent to examining the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war. Moving from a securitized lens to the notion of a language game provides clearer insights into not only how the Iraq war became possible through a language of security but also how the grounds of this language game came to be contested. As shown, language and rules may exist and function in a way that retains their legitimacy even as they are collapsing. To show places where such anomalies occur we must look and see how security is spoken during securitization but also beyond.

Section 4: Empirical Case: The Bush Administration's Justifications for the Iraq war: A Language Game of Security

 So far it has been argued that the language games approach provides a more diversified way of speaking security than securitization. What follows is an attempt to bring these extra theoretical dimensions to bear on the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war. Viewing their definition of security as a language game rather than a speech act offers a richer reading on three levels. First, in going beyond the moment of utterance it provides greater insights on how it was possible for the Bush administration to continue to speak security even after the 'defining moment'. Wittgenstein enables us to 'look and see' how this discursive redefinition became possible along with its implications. This raises a question of what sort of game the Bush administration was now playing. Changing the linguistic frames of the Bush

administration's original justifications was equivalent to changing the rules of that game. Wittgenstein's language game approach is well equipped in coming to terms with the Bush administration's redefinition of the rules, here bringing in the other two levels. One level shows how they drew upon existing rules to create new, securitized, ones. On another level, it highlights that the rules of their own language game of security had altered. The notion of multiplicity and meaning in use advanced by Wittgenstein are also advantageous in terms of examining how the Bush administration was enabled and constrained by their language of security during the Iraq war. Arguably, these two preferences have better success in finding a clustered definition of security rather than a single speech act within the Bush administration's foreign policy narrative for the invasion. As a framework for addressing interfacing and crisscrossing language games, Wittgenstein's approach allows for a deeper investigation into the relationship between words. This offers new insights on the way in which security and democracy were associated and expressed in the Bush administration's overall justifications for the Iraq war after the defining moment. In the broadest terms, an important consideration is the extent to which a tension exists between these two narratives as the Bush administration put their security discourse into use, a theme I return to in Chapter 4.

Revisiting the Defining Moment

Chapter 2 ended with the conclusion that the CS securitization approach confronts two particular problems in explaining the way in which the Bush administration spoke security to justify the Iraq war at the first defining moment. On the one hand, an imminent threat was no longer certain, just a potentiality. On the other hand we do not have complete audience acceptance. In this respect, the Bush administration's justifications for the war represent a case of partial securitization at best.

The interesting question arises then as to how it was possible for the Iraq war to still be defined under the rubric of security? How was it possible for the Bush administration to justify the war in the name of security when both their securitized speech act and securitising move had been so badly undermined? How was it possible for the language of security that legitimated exceptional measures to survive?

A language game approach provides us with a way past the question of whether or not this was a successful or unsuccessful case of securitization. The focus falls on how the Bush administration put their language of security into practice. In other words, we need to 'look and see' how they spoke security at the defining moment. Taking this avenue highlights that although the Bush administration was still speaking security they were speaking it in a different way. This is important as the new language game enabled and constrained them in unexpected ways.

Beyond the Moment of Utterance: An Empirical Reflection

An analysis of meanings in use provides extra insights into the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war. Firstly, it serves to place their security speech acts in a much wider discursive and material context. Widening the scope of analysis to that of a language game illustrates that this was not the first time that security had been uttered by this group. Indeed the discursive linkages between the language of security that the Bush administration constructed post-September 11, 2001 and the one they employed to legitimate the invasion in March 2003 shine through. As mentioned, the US argued that, *"Disarming Saddam Hussein and fighting the war on terror are not merely related, they are one and the same"(Wolfowitz, December 2 :2002).* These previous security utterances constitute essential parts of the particular grammar that dominated the Bush administration's language game of security in the specific context of the Iraq war. In Wittgenstein's view, these systems of meaning-production are intimately related to practices of power – the power to define and defend 'reality'. As Secretary Powell remarked,

> "*And so we're making the case to our friends, and it's a case that is increasingly hard to deny, that this regime is a real and present danger to the world, and to the region especially; and that we believe it is in the best interest of the world and the region and the Iraqi people for the regime to be changed […] We have a right to defend ourselves and defend our friends from the kinds of weapons that he is developing that could cause thousands upon thousands of casualties. He has shown previously that he would use such weapons against his neighbors and against his friends. And what we have to do is persuade the international community that this is a real and present danger*

requiring political, diplomatic and perhaps military action to resolve"
(Powell, July 18, 2002).[176]

Engaging with the residues of the security utterances of the US 'war on terror' in the Bush administration's securitization of the Iraq war is essential in order to to grasp how this government was actually speaking security and what exactly it was legitimating. Similar to the CS, a language games approach helps to map and trace the discursive strategy that the Bush administration adopted at the moment of utterance. More importantly, it allows us to examine how their thinking and discourse evolved over time.

Moving to the idea of an ongoing language game highlights key transformations in the Bush administration's language of security as it was put into use. Wittgenstein's conceptualisation of meaning in use suggests that modification will be securitized speech acts during the process of securitization and beyond. With regards to the context of securitization, Wittgenstein's approach highlights that the meanings of words will be determined in the course of play. As agents act and interact, they are constantly engaged in communicative exchanges. This alters the type of relationship that exists between agents. Following Wittgenstein, there is no such thing as a private language game. In this respect, the speaker of security must constantly act on the basis of intersubjective understandings in order for their actions to become meaningful. This sheds light into why the Bush administration had to constantly justify their securitized actions. Even in his farewell address President Bush defended his position for going to war with Iraq;

> *"Over the past seven years [...] Iraq has gone from a brutal dictatorship and a sworn enemy of America to an Arab democracy at the heart of the Middle East and a friend of the United States. There is legitimate debate about many of these decisions. But there can be little debate about the results. America has gone more than seven years without another terrorist attack on our soil. This is a tribute to those who toil night and day to keep us safe -- law enforcement officers, intelligence analysts, homeland security and diplomatic personnel, and the men and women of the United States Armed Forces" (Bush, 15 January: 2009).*[177]

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[176] http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2002/11919.htm
[177] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2009/01/20090115-17.html

The acknowledgment that the language of security must be constantly put into use reaffirms that the securitized speech acts the Bush administration used to justify the Iraq war were never fully fixed. To be clear, the CS do not make this claim. Rather, the point being made is that a language game is a better option to pursue inclusion and removal of issues from the Bush administration's security agenda. A Wittgensteinian lens would also try to identify fluctuations in how the US categorised and communicated their intentions within the securitized reality that their security utterances constructed. This paints a more accurate picture of the way in which the Bush administration spoke security to justify their claim to use pre-emptive measures to remove Saddam Hussein.

Related to this, a language game perspective also reveals how the Bush administration language altered at the defining moment. By encouraging us to 'look and see' how meanings are being put into use by language, Wittgenstein's approach is well placed to pick up the ways in which the Bush administration modified their security discourse in order to justify the Iraq war. They did so on the grounds of disarming Saddam Hussein and his WMD and ending his support of terrorism to a justification that emphasised the role of the US in bringing freedom, democracy and universal good to the people of Iraq. Secretary Powell made this link explicit when he stated,

> *"Until that regime is changed, [Hussein's] neighbors have much to fear, and quite frankly we have much to fear. We would like to see a regime come in that represents all the people of Iraq" (Powell, February 18, 2002).[178]*

In 2003 President Bush reinforced the naturalness of the connection between security and democracy in justifying the Iraq war when he noted,

> '*Some have said we must not act until the threat is imminent. Since when have terrorists and tyrants announced their intentions, politely putting us on notice before they strike? If this threat is permitted to fully and suddenly emerge, all actions, all words, and all recriminations would come too late. Trusting in the sanity and restraint of Saddam Hussein is not a strategy, and it is not an option […] The dictator who is assembling the world's most dangerous weapons has already used them on whole villages -- leaving thousands of his own citizens dead, blind, or disfigured. Iraqi refugees tell us how forced confessions are obtained -- by torturing children while their parents are made to watch.*

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[178] Full speech available at CNN.com - Powell, Rice defend Bush's 'axis of evil' speech - February 18, 2002

International human rights groups have catalogued other methods used in the torture chambers of Iraq: electric shock, burning with hot irons, dripping acid on the skin, mutilation with electric drills, cutting out tongues, and rape. If this is not evil, then evil has no meaning [...] And tonight I have a message for the brave and oppressed people of Iraq: Your enemy is not surrounding your country -- your enemy is ruling your country. And the day he and his regime are removed from power will be the day of your liberation" (Bush, January 28 2003).[179]

The employment of both aspects simultaneously indicates the ways in which the Bush administration's pre-emptive security strategy was constructed and deployed along democratic lines.

The final influence which Wittgenstein's thought has in moving the language of security beyond the moment of utterance is its ability to explore how agents speak security in securitized environments. A language games perspective provides a more robust methodological framework to examine how agents put the language of securitized speech acts into use. His work gives way to a new understanding of how security is spoken insofar as it acknowledges that the way in which agents speak security at the start of the game is not necessarily the way that they speak it at the end. As the defining moment demonstrates, the Bush administration had to reconstitute their justifications for undertaking a pre-emptive war in Iraq when the material facts could not be found to substantiate their claims that Saddam Hussein possessed WMD and was intending to use them. The way in which they uttered security at the outset was not the final argument they advanced to legitimate their actions. Abu Ghraib is an example of further transformations in the way in which the Bush administration spoke security to defend their security strategy of 'any measures necessary'. At this second defining moment, the language game of security in play shifted the concept of security away from the positive register of pre-emption generally associated with the Bush administration's concept of security.

Exploring how the Bush administration spoke security in the securitized contexts represents an attempt to find a prominent place in the field of security in which what might be termed securitized speech can be studied as an enabling and constraining device. In its initial formulation, the CS claims that speech acts securitize with audience consent. Ontologically, a language game directs the inquiry towards more

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[179] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html

heterogeneous and diffuse practices that cannot be represented through simple binary dichotomies of normality/exception and politics/security. Therefore, rather than thinking of how a securitized speech act enables and how it constrains as belonging to two different orders, a Wittgensteinian analysis demonstrates the inherent overlap.

Beyond Breaking Rules: An Empirical Reflection

According to Wittgenstein, changing a language is equivalent to changing the rules of the game. Language and rules are mutually constituted. By redefining their language of security at the defining moment, the Bush administration thus changed the rules. This is not cheap talk, even if it may appear as such. To support their position that the Iraq war was a defensive necessity, the President and his team exercised an argumentative reasoning that drew heavily on democracy, a transformation thus taking place in their language game of security. The articulation of democracy in the aftermath of the lack of WMD created a new structure of meaning.

However, the rules of democracy did not coincide with the rules of security. This produced a tension. In the old game of security, Saddam Hussein was an evil dictator who posed an existential threat by possessing WMD and having affiliations with Al-Qaeda and other terrorist networks. They belonged to the, "*thousands of dangerous killers, schooled in the methods of murder, often supported by outlaw regimes, are now spread throughout the world like ticking time bombs, set to go off without warning' (Bush, January 29: 2002).*[180]

Diffusing and eliminating Iraq's 'ticking bomb' required using 'any means necessary', including pre-emptive self-defence and enhanced interrogation techniques. In October 2002, for example, the US Congress passed a "Joint Resolution to Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces Against Iraq". This document authorized the President to

> "use the Armed Forces of the United States as he determines to be necessary and appropriate in order to (1) defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq; and (2)

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[180] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html

enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq" (*New York Times,* 11 October 2002).[181]

Factoring democracy into this equation changed the way in which the Bush administration was speaking security, albeit subtley. It also changed the context of action available to them to pursue their security policies. In this new language game Saddam Hussein still remained an evil dictator and, following the Bush line, he still possessed WMD, which he was hiding. Their arguments about existential threats and security thus remained paramount. The difference, however, is that rules of this game are not the same. A promise to liberate Iraq and install a democracy represented a rewriting of an earlier script in which 'any means necessary' would be used to confront this existential threat. The means to security were no longer through enhanced interrogation or brute force alone. Rather, governmental elections and institutional procedures became the name of the game. As President Bush remarked,

> "*I am absolutely confident that we made the right decision. And not only that, I'm absolutely confident that the actions we took in Iraq are influencing reformers and freedom lovers in the greater Middle East. And I believe that you're going to see the rise of democracy in many countries in the broader Middle East, which will lay the foundation for peace*" (Bush, June 29, 2005).[182]

Each game imparted a different type of agency to the Bush administration. Moreover, they created a different structure of action.

Wittgenstein's notion of a language game also allows us to deal with rules rather than assuming that the Bush administration is simply breaking them. As noted, they never admitted that the actions they planned to undertake were anything but lawful. In this vein the Bush administration emphasised that the Iraqi breach of Resolution 1441 was sufficient grounds for undertaking pre-emptive measures against Saddam Hussein. Clarifying the *relationship between the terms of Resolution 1441 and what this law allows for,* Secretary Powell said,

> "*the Resolution will point out that lack of cooperation and point to the fact that the United Nations Security Council is supposed to act in the presence of this lack of cooperation. A lot of arguments about more inspectors, keep the inspections going, but we must not lose sight of the basic issue. The basic issue is Iraqi compliance, and that's not what*

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[181] http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/resolution.htm
[182] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/06/20050629-2.html

we're getting […] right now, an argument can be made, and it's an argument we would make, that 1441, Resolution 1441, provides more than enough authority. This next resolution need not say 'military action' to provide the authority for the use of force if that's what is decided is appropriate. And so we're looking at the language to come up with language that the Security Council will receive in a positive way and recognize that it is time for them to meet their responsibilities to the international community. But this is not a rush to war, as some say. This issue has been lingering for 12 years and it has been months since the inspectors got started and months since 1441 was passed, and Iraq is still not in compliance. And so we'll see what the language of the resolution looks like and the whole world will see it in the not too distant future" (*Powell, February 20: 2003).[183]*

The Bush administration also constructed the lawfulness of the Iraq war by showing that their decision to act pre-emptively had created a civil society in Iraq. Speaking about the Iraqi election in 2005, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice remarked,

"Well, this is just such a strong confirmation of the Iraqi people's determination to have a better future, of their commitment to democracy […]This really is a remarkable fresh start for the Iraqi people who've suffered too long under tyranny, who've suffered too long under conflict. And even though they have a difficult road ahead, this is a very happy day for the Iraqi people, and I think the American people should be proud of our part in helping them get to this moment […]The most important thing, though, is that you saw yesterday that the decision to remove Saddam Hussein was a right decision. It was not only an important decision morally, but strategically, to have an Iraq that is now voting and that is now solving its differences with politics, not with conflict and violence. It's going to make a huge difference to the Middle East" (*Rice, December 15, 2005).[184]*

The running together of a fresh start for the Iraqi people and the decision to remove Saddam Hussein in close succession legitimated the Bush administration's actions, denying that their actions had been misplaced, and affording them only morality and lawfulness.

The distinction that Wittgenstein draws between rules followed and broken on the one hand and act of interpretation on the other reveals a redefinition of the rules in the Bush administration's language game of security. From his perspective, what we are witnessing is an attempt to substitute one set of meanings with another. Although the CS engage with the idea of everyday rules being suspended or even broken, a

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[183] http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2003/17837.htm
[184] http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/58193.htm

language games approach highlights that the Bush administration's security discourse sought to render existing rules inconsequential at a deeper level. Not only did the Bush administration wish to break free from rules that would otherwise bind, they sought to construct an alternative rule system. As mentioned, they attempted to show that the arrow pointing in the direction of pre-emptive self-defence meant that specific, imminent, threats did not need to exist for military action to be taken. Rather, the United States articulated a new concept of preemption designed to preclude emerging threats from endangering the country. The arrow suggested the goal was to prevent more generalised threats from materialising. While this interpretation of existing doctrines conferred the Bush administration with enormous agency, it also created a structure. By redefining the rules, the President and his team mobilised knowledge of what was and was not acceptable behaviour in their war on terror. They were working to enact an array of rules. While remaining vague about what the rules of their language game of security were, an analysis of the language games that constitute the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war reveals the rules that they attempted to create and the possibilities of different outcomes. The shared language of the axis of evil and the National Security Strategy set many of the rules, President Bush distinguished,

> *"America will lead by defending liberty and justice because they are right and true and unchanging for all people everywhere. No nation owns these aspirations, and no nation is exempt from them. We have no intention of imposing our culture. But America will always stand firm for the non-negotiable demands of human dignity: the rule of law; limits on the power of the state; respect for women; private property; free speech; equal justice; and religious tolerance"* (Bush, January 29:2002).[185]

Yet the remaining rules emerge from historical interactions and previous U.S. commitments in intersecting games (Howard, 2002). Indeed a language game approach highlights the Bush administration's act of interpretation relied on an engagement with existing rules. Actors rely on ''background knowledge'' as a basis for interpreting others' moves (Kratochwil, 1978). As a result of prior U.S. entanglement in rules with respect to Iraq, it becomes possible to see how they became entangled in their language game of security. At the start of the war the President alluded to the United States', "sovereign authority to use force in assuring

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[185] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html

its own national security" (Bush, March 17: 2003).[186] A few days later, the legal adviser made a similarly oblique reference to self-defense in remarks to the National Association of Attorneys General. Discussing the legal basis for the attack, he described the authority largely in terms of Security Council Resolutions 678, 687, and 1441. But in closing he added, with-out elaboration, that the President of the United States "*may also, of course, always use force under international law in self-defense*" (Sapiro, 2003:603). [187]

Beyond Singular Definition: An Empirical Reflection

From a language games perspective, the manner in which the Bush administration responded at this defining moment is extremely telling. It reveals the layers of discourse that were in play. Wittgenstein's notion of multiplicity hinges on the idea of crisscrossing structures of meaning and thus conceptual plurality. He also assumes that agents may engage in several and even interfacing language games simultaneously. Applying this pluralistic lens at the defining moment is extremely beneficial. Whereas the CS strict formulation struggles with the presence of two speech acts within the Bush administration's final justifications for the Iraq war, a language game approach almost expects them. Given the span and complexity of the US global war on terror, it is hardly surprising that the Bush administration drew on several languages to inscribe specific things with specific meaning. As Vice President Cheney reinforced,

> "*For the last 22 months, the United States has been fighting this war across the globe [...] This worldwide campaign began after the attacks of September 11th, 2001, a watershed event in the history of our nation [...]September 11th signaled the arrival of an entirely different era [...] For decades, terrorists have waged war against this country. Now, under the leadership of President Bush, America is waging war against them*" (Cheney, July 24, 2003).[188]

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[186] Address to the Nation on Iraq, Mar. 17, 2003, 39 WEEKLY COMP. PRES. DOC. 338, 340 (Mar. 24, 2003).
[187] Remarks of the Honorable William Howard Taft, I V, Legal Adviser, U.S. Department of State, Before the National Association of Attorneys General(Mar. 20,2003), availableat<http://usinfo.state.gov/regional/nea/iraq/text2003/032129taft. htm>.
[188] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/07/20030724-6.html

This account showcases the different layers at the core features of the Bush administration's language game of security. Wittgenstein's notion of a language game facilitates this layering effect, thus providing a theoretical avenue to examine the relationship between words and their points of intersection. As the Bush administration played out a language of security in different contexts, they engaged in multiple language games. The variety and fluidity a language game approach makes available sheds light into how the Bush administration was speaking security as events unfolded. Analytically, this enables us to understand how it was possible for the Bush administration to move from one language game to another at the defining moment when no WMD were found. A language-based constructivist approach does not require that their language game of security be wholly contained or explained within one set of rules. Instead, the latter can be treated as a family of games that resemble each other, sharing certain similar characteristics with each other, but nonetheless individually distinguishable and unique (Wittgenstein, 1958, Howard 2003). Moreover, a linguistic approach allows for the analysis of strategic interaction in a series of overlapping and interlinked games. It is therefore possible to study how actors, such as the Bush administration, change the games they are playing as well as how they develop different games within a family (Fierke, 1998, 2002).

Downplaying the importance of WMD as the rationale for undertaking the Iraq invasion, Secretary Rumsfeld explained,

> *"Our intelligence argued that they had chemical and biological weapons. They did not have nuclear weapons, to our knowledge. They had programs, a reconstituted program was what our intelligence indicated. It was broadly agreed by the countries that have intelligence capabilities of that type […] The reality is that I believed the intelligence before the war, I believe it today, and well all know more over some period of time. But we're not likely to just go discover things or find them. You're more likely to find somebody who will tell you about them through an interrogation of some kind"* (Rumsfeld, November 20, 2003).[189] This a far cry from earlier claims that explicitly stated, *"there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction"* (Cheney, 2002).

Paying attention to the relationship between words is crucial from a language game perspective. As Wittgenstein indicates, the way words are grouped together affects the

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[189]http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2978

meaning of each word as well as the entire language game they constitute. Changing the relationship between words alters the type of games that are played. Different combinations constitute different spheres of actions and different rules. This becomes apparent in the case at hand. The Bush administration's discursive response to the lack of WMD involved a reconstitution of their justifications for the Iraq war. They were still speaking security, though not in the same way. Where their initial justifications for the war centred on the threat posed by the Iraqi regime, their final justification centred on security and democracy as being two sides of the same coin. President Bush's comments at the American Enterprise Institute outline this discursive shift. Noting that "*the nation of Iraq is fully capable of moving toward democracy and living in freedom*" he went on to suggest that, "*The world has a clear interest in the spread of democratic values, because stable and free nations do not breed the ideologies of murder. They encourage the peaceful pursuit of a better life. And there are hopeful signs of a desire for freedom in the Middle East*" (Bush, February 26: 2003).[190]

The divergence between these two discourses is initially minute. Security remained the overarching rationale for the invasion. However, a closer inspection reveals that the inclusion of democracy promotion as a core rather than peripheral objective altered the range of moves available to the Bush administration as they spoke security to justify the Iraq war. Security was no longer simply about disbarment and regime change, but also about the promotion of democracy as an alternative way of creating security. As Secretary Rice confirmed,

> "*As the President has said, Iraq is the central front in the war on Terror. But it is also a central front in the international effort to realize the vision of a Middle East that is a center of hope and change, rather than despair and hatred. We are aggressively attacking the Baathist remnants and foreign terrorists. And increasingly, Iraqis are fighting alongside our troops to secure their own freedom. […] These achievements do not, of course, come without great sacrifice. Today those sacrifices are being borne by our men and women in uniform, by those of our coalition partners, by international aid workers, and by the Iraqi people. But we must and will stay the course -- because free*

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[190] http://article.nationalreview.com/268082/president-bush-speaks-at-aei/an-nro-primary-document

nations do not sponsor terror, and free nations do not breed hatred"
(Rice, October 31, 2003).[191]

Language games raise the question about the appropriate place for democracy in the Bush administration's language game of security. In short, it provides a platform to examine the securitization of democracy. Resisting the temptation to see security and democracy along a dichotomy of securitization and politicization, a language games perspective draws attention to the way in which they crisscross and overlap. This sheds light on why the cord between the old game of security and new game could not be cut completely. The discrepancies between the two had to be justified. To preserve the language game of security, to use pre-emptive and preventative actions against Iraq, the Bush administration had to retain a level of consistency. This shows that the agent, the Bush administration, was structured as they could not abandon the language game of security if they wanted their securitizing move to succeed. Yet they were also constrained in so far as they could not have launched the Iraq war in the name of democracy in the first place. Security needed to remain the core rationale, but in light of the inspectors' findings, the Bush administration had to rebuild their language game of security to mean more than Saddam Hussein possessing WMD. What may appear to be a trivial switch in their language had enormous consequences. In fact, I argue that when this new definition of security was put into practice, it limited the way in which the Bush administration could react to the Abu Ghraib scandal that erupted in 2004. Here the discursive linkages constructed between security and democracy limited how they could respond to the abuses in a meaningful way because the Bush administration came to be judged by the rules of the democracy game rather than those of security.

The idea that the Bush administration's security discourse was a cluster rather than a singular speech act, adds an extra, internal, dimension to the CS definition of security by broadening the potential meanings ascribed to and by this term. The CS shows us that the discourse of security can be used by different actors in different contexts. However, in their definition the meaning of security is largely fixed. What language games contribute is that the word security can change. In the empirical case, we can

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[191] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/10/20031031-5.html

trace how the Bush administration's language of security changed in the course of play.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented Ludwig Wittgenstein's notion of language game theory as a point of departure for conceptualising language as both a constitutive and constraining device. This insight was then taken as a means to revise how the language of security is spoken in IR and beyond.

An essential part of Wittgenstein's later work was to convey language as constitutive of the 'reality' within which we find ourselves. This concern shifted the perspective of language away from being merely descriptive of subjects, objects and concepts. Where positivist and rationalist approaches see the world as fixed, Wittgenstein's later work held language to be constitutive of the set of practices through which social realities come into being. This stance makes it impossible to get behind our language and compare it with that which it describes. As Wittgenstein remarked, it is on the basis of this naming that we know how to proceed.

His concepts of meaning in use and multiplicity capture and accentuate the constitutive aspects of language. The baseline of both concepts is that meanings are constructed in the course of social interactions. As such, it is necessary to 'look and see' how words are being used in order to determine the possibility of meanings they generate. According to Wittgenstein, objects may come to be recognised as something else, depending on the way in which agents act in specific contexts. Such changes illustrate the varying outcomes which can accompany the same move – the use of the same term – made within different language games.

Wittgenstein's notion of multiplicity operates on several levels. To begin with, agents can always choose how to move within a given game. They may be embedded in several spheres of action simultaneously. Wittgenstein makes a second point on the issue of multiplicity. Acknowledging the presence of multiple meanings, he argues multiple meanings may be drawn upon in the process of play, and may even be joined

together. For Wittgenstein, the way in which terms crisscross and intersect affects the agency available to participants of a given language game. Essentially they will create the boundaries of what is possible and how these moves will be understood. The multiple arrangements constituted in the course of play also draw attention the relationship between words in a nuanced way. Wittgenstein argues that each game resembles the other, allowing for linkages and comparisons. Yet, each game retains certain unique qualities that separate it from the others.

While a Wittgensteinian platform emphasises the diversity of language, he is explicit that language games are not relative or private. On the contrary, they are always inherently rule based and public. Even the most basic agreements are sets of rules. In this sense, Wittgenstein reinforces the intersubjective nature of language. He shifts away from the problem of individual understanding or intention, to the shared rules that enable agents to know how to 'go on'. It is these intersubjective rules that govern language and thus our social world. Building on this claim, Wittgenstein argues that the rules of a language game are like habits, in so far as we often forget, through repeatedly following them, that they rest on rules (Wittgenstein 1979: §206, 219). A language game approach also provides a somewhat different point of departure to theorise how rules become redefined through what Wittgenstein terms an act of interpretation. However, he lets us look at this concept from a different angle than post-structuralism. For Wittgenstein, an act of interpretation refers specifically to the substitution of one expression of the rule for another. A rule thus differs from an interpretation. While new games can grow out of an interpretation, this kind of transformation remains informed by existing rules. Any new move requires a shared framework to make the action understandable to all participants. It is only within this framework that action then appears ''rational'' or not.

The overview of Wittgenstein's approach suggests an alternative understanding of the language of security than the CS. In fact, I have argued that his notion of a language game differs from securitization in three respects. First it makes it possible to analyse the language of security beyond the moment of utterance. Secondly, any securitized speech act is revealed as an inherently rule based activity. What Wittgenstein addresses is how agents put rules into use either by following or breaking them. Each act is informed by rules. His arguments about acts of interpretation also add an extra

dimension to the CS vague discussion of rules. It opens up a way to explore how language enables agents to create a new set of rules or redefine existing ones by substituting one set of meanings with another. Lastly, Wittgenstein's notion of multiplicity and meaning in use adds conceptual plurality to CS speech act theory. Assuming that the language of security, or even a single utterance, contains multiple meanings, it becomes necessary to look and see how this term is being put into use. Rather than suggesting that security is spoken to identify an existential threat, it is necessary to determine how security is uttered and even changed in the course of play. This provides an avenue to explore a more engaging communicative exchange between this particular securitizing actor and the audience.

Adopting a Wittgensteinian lens offers a new reading of the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war. Leaving aside the discussion of whether or not this is a case of successful securitization, a language game perspective directs attention to how the language of security was put into practice. This offers a different picture of the Bush administration's security utterance to legitimate a war against Iraq. First, a language games analysis embeds this move in a longer lineage of speech acts. This reinforces the historical link between the language games of the war on terror and, deriving from this, the language game of the Iraq war. In this sense, it presents a more grounded or structural account of security than that espoused by either the CS or President Bush and his team

Second, Wittgenstein's account is better suited to explain how it was possible for the Bush administration to modify their justifications for the invasion from an argument that centred on WMD initially to ending up with democracy promotion. The close relationship he draws between language and a set of practices can be illustrated in relation to the larger context of the Iraq war. Once no WMD were found by the UN inspectors in early 2003, the Bush administration blurred the boundary between security and democracy to pursue their security objective; ousting Saddam Hussein from power. What initially was imagined as unthinkable, legitimating a war on grounds of security and democracy, has with time been reified such that it came to represent a rational action. This duality in the Bush administration's language game become bound up in a range of practices, even while these practices contain the tension between security as war and security as democracy.

From a Wittgensteinian viewpoint, the discursive frames employed by this administration's actions reveal that they were inherently rule based and not rule breaking activities. Stating that their actions were rule based does not presume that the Bush administration followed existing national or international rules. Nor does it suggest that they deliberately broke them. Their action is not determined by the rule, but in acting they follow a rule within a language game. What we are witnessing at this defining moment is an interpretation of the rules of the game. Put simply, the dominant language game of security that the Bush administration constructed to justify the Iraq war was redefined in the language of democracy. Clearly there was a substitution of one language game with another. What is less clear is which set of rules were substituted with one another. The redefinition of the Bush administration's original language game of security was premised on Saddam Hussein posing an existential threat which could be eradicated by removing the WMD to a new language game of security premised on Saddam Hussein posing an existential threat which could be eradicated through democracy promotion. The objective of the game was the same: to remove Saddam Hussein by military force. However, the justifications were different. One game allowed the Bush administration to use whatever means were necessary. The other meant they had to act in accordance with democratic standards.

As shown below, the unison between security and democracy proved to be problematic for the Bush administration to reconcile, especially when they attempted to play the new game according to the rules of the old game. Thus a language game approach become extremely important in order to examine how the Bush administration put this new language into play thereafter. It allows us to examine how they spoke security after the Iraq war started. This position demonstrates how the Bush administration was enabled and constrained by and within their language game of security as it evolved. Whereas the relationship between security and democracy was complementary at the defining moment, in the next chapter I suggest that this inclusion of democracy in the Bush administration's language game of security altered the type of game that was in operation. Unlike the first defining moment, the Bush administration's employment of this clustered definition of security in response to Abu Ghraib pushed the limits of their language game to the extremes. Making this claim has far reaching implications as it commonly assumed that the US continued on the course that they initially set out on. Wittgenstein's language games not only shows

the appearance of internal inconsistencies within the Bush administration's language of security. It also exposes the acts of interpretation they undertook to redefine existing rules in the name of security.

Chapter 4:

Abu Ghraib: A Site of Contestation:

Building on the proceeding discussion, this chapter will illustrate the advantages of looking at language as a transformative process which both enables and constrains. Adopting this more holistic approach enables us to be more reflexive about how we speak security and how these frames limit our ability to analyse the language of rules and agency in IR. The Bush administration's discursive response to the Abu Ghraib scandal is used here as a final way to examine how much language matters as a source of agency and structure. So far, the construction and adaption of the Bush administration's language game of security has been outlined. This chapter turns to a focus on the breakdown of the discourse. In moving away from the CS notion of a speech act to a Wittgensteinian language game, it becomes apparent that the development of their language of security involves a very different kind of and often more serious undertaking than those speaking security anticipate.

The graphic images of American soldiers torturing imprisoned detainees were extremely problematic for the Bush administration to address. This chapter diverges from mainstream discussions about the allocation of blame for such clandestine procedures. Instead, I explore this context as a site of discursive contestation, emphasising the idea of process of interaction. In doing so, I critically examine how the images of Abu Ghraib were translated into words within the Bush administration's language game of security. I further examine how their declarations that Abu Ghraib constituted a security issue requiring extra-ordinary measures opened up another language game outside of their securitized discourse. In short, I examine how the language of security provided the framework within which the abuses were judged, as well as a framework of further debate. As such, Abu Ghraib can be considered as another defining moment as the Bush administration had to reconstitute the way in which they spoke security.

Section 1 provides background on the Abu Ghraib prison in some detail, since this seems key to understanding what exactly was at a stake in terms of the Bush

administration's language of security. It demonstrates the exceptional mode of operation of their enhanced interrogation techniques in the war on terrorism.

Section 2 engages with the discursive categories used by the Bush administration in response to the publication of these photographs, which provides a way to explicate the particular meanings they tried to impose on the Abu Ghraib images. The administration's written and oral statements about these photographs categorise the brutal behaviour conducted at the prison as legal and correct security practices. A supporting argument was also made that the pictures depicted the work of a few un-American soldiers.

This is not to suggest that they succeeded in determining how these images were understood. On the contrary, what is interesting from the perspective of this thesis is that the Abu Ghraib images could not be glossed over or excused by the Bush administration's words. Instead, the abuses were given a meaning which fell outside, and actually contradicted, their language game of security. Placing Abu Ghraib within their larger security discourse, what we find is a transformation in what was deemed permissible in the name of security. Section 3 outlines the theoretical significance of this observation.

In developing this line of argument, I highlight two interrelated struggles over meanings. Section 4 outlines the first site of contestation. This is the gap that emerged between the Bush administration's definition of the rules of war and those enshrined in international law. The crimes committed and documented in the Abu Ghraib images validated pre-existing concerns about the 'enhanced interrogation techniques' legitimated by the US after September 11, 2001 to deal with detainees and prisoners of war. Their interpretation of the 1948 Geneva Conventions and the 1975 Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment is especially notable. Hence in many respects the Bush administration's response to the Abu Ghraib affair can be seen as a contest over security and its relationship to rules.

On a related yet separate point, Section 5 explicates the internal inconsistencies that Abu Ghraib produced in the Bush administration's language game of security. The

Bush administration's condemnation of the photographed acts drew heavily on a language of security. This discourse gave them some agency to legitimate the use of 'enhanced interrogation techniques', but it also restricted their agency since democracy was part of the narrative. The way in which they reconstituted their justifications for the Iraq war at the defining moment became extremely important in this sense. When invoked by the Bush administration in response to this scenario, the two discursive categories conflicted in an irreconcilable way. Neither language was able to justify the photographed actions in their own right. The Bush administration's attempt to join them together was even less convincing. Apart from narrowing the Bush administration's agency in responding to Abu Ghraib, the presence of internal inconsistencies compounded the erosion of the rules constituted in and by their language game of security. Put differently Abu Ghraib violated the rules underscoring their language game.

Section 6 consolidates the weakness of employing a securitized lens to the case at hand. I argue that Abu Ghraib exposed many hidden dangers of speaking security both in the CS framework and in reality. Overcoming these dangers requires taking securitized speech acts and environments much more seriously than had been done. To do this I reaffirm the benefits of adopting a language games approach. Going beyond the moment of utterance equips us with the tools to examine how the procedures captured in the Abu Ghraib photographs became possible in the name of security. Going beyond the idea that agents suspend rules that would otherwise bind by speaking security reinforces that while the Bush administration violated existing rules, they did not break free of them. Wittgenstein's notion of acts of interpretation helps to highlight the practices legitimised by the Bush administration's language of security, such as those evidenced in Abu Ghraib. It also demonstrates how the people within the administration sought to argue away the rules against torture by working within the parameters of international law in an attempt to redefine them. Finally, going beyond a singular definition of security provides insights into how alternative narratives were constructed in the wake of Abu Ghraib. The analysis demonstrates how the Bush administration was enabled and constrained by their language of security in unforeseen ways during this episode.

I end the chapter by questioning what is legitimated by the language of security. This gives rise to larger questions about the kind of order and rules that we want to create and safeguard. The events at Abu Ghraib makes such reflections imperative.

Section 1: The Context

Before the 2003 Iraq war, the Abu Ghraib prison, twenty miles west of Baghdad, invoked unpleasant images of the draconian measures practiced during Saddam Hussein's rule. While the full extent of what occurred in the compound during his reign in power remains shrouded in secrecy, organisations such as Amnesty International (AI) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have documented serious human rights violations therein.[192] Seymour Hersh (2004) also reported that torture, weekly executions, and vile living conditions were common practice during Saddam Hussein's rule with, "as many as fifty thousand men and women—no accurate count is possible—were jammed into Abu Ghraib at one time, in twelve-by-twelve-foot cells that were little more than human holding pits".

Unfortunately the harrowing reputation of Abu Ghraib remains today. However, the agents of torture now associated with it have altered. Since the public release of graphic photographs on 28 April 2004, Abu Ghraib came to be identified with the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by American soldiers. The mistreatment of US detainees was kept hidden by the U.S. military until photographs were aired on *60 Minutes II*[193]*,* to stunned audiences. Some of the pictures published depict US soldiers, both men and women in military uniforms, laughing and giving thumbs-up signs while posing with naked Iraqi prisoners made to stand, stacked in a pyramid or positioned to perform sex acts. These revelations sparked a series of investigations, including the Taguba

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[192] For instance, in 2001 AI Bulletin Vol. 4, No. 17 reported that, "victims of torture in Iraq are subjected to a wide range of forms of torture, including the gouging out of eyes, severe beatings and electric shock. Some victims have died as a result and many have been left with permanent physical and psychological damage". Human Rights Watch, the Center for Constitutional Rights and the United Nations also echoed these critical voices. Local tales are equally explicit about the un-pleasantries that happened within the prisons walls. A former inmate, Radi Ismael Mekhed, reports his own experience which confirms this bleak scenario. Explicitly he recounts that, "I was severely tortured during my imprisonment because I was considered a traitor to my country. I never believed a person could be subjected to such treatment by another human being […] Life was already painful under Saddam, and if you came to the prison, you were always in fear for your life" (Whitelaw, 2003).

[193] *60II* Minutes is a weekly primetime television programme broadcast in the US by CBS

Report (2004) commissioned by Secretary Rumsfeld, the Fay/Jones Report (2004), commissioned by the Pentagon, and the Schlesinger Report, an independent panel to review the Department of Defence (DoD) Detention Operations.[194] Through these disclosures it became apparent that American policies in Abu Ghraib prison were governed by entirely different principles than those espoused in the Geneva Conventions. As President Bush conceded, "*under the dictator, prisons like Abu Ghraib were symbols of death and torture. That same prison became a symbol of disgraceful conduct by a few American troops who dishonored our country and disregarded our values*" (Bush, May 24, 2004).[195]

The President's acknowledgment that American action resembled those of the previous custodians of Abu Ghraib contradicts everything this administration had invited others to believe about the virtue of American intentions, and flowing from that virtue, their right to undertake pre-emptive action in Iraq. Any admission that the Bush administration was prepared to use the same kinds of tactics as the most repressive heinous regimes also challenged the core of their identity as the leaders in a war against evil. As the American historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. (2004), recently suggested "the abuse of captives brutalizes their captors". The possibility of such comparisons deserves further attention. An investigation of how their language of security transformed to such an extent exposes its limits and eventual collapse. I trace how their words began to lose their original meanings as they were put into practice. Those changes had serious implications for the kind of agency and structure that flowed from the Bush administration's language game of security.

Section 2: Responding to Abu Ghraib: A Two Level Game of Security

After the brief contextualisation above, this section turns to analyse the reproduction of a language game of security. Abu Ghraib has given rise to a large and still growing literature (Greenburg, 2005; Danner 2004; Lang and Beattie 2009; Eisenman (2007); Barrett (2004); Cohen (2005); Rajiva (2003); Sontag (2004)). For our purposes, what is of utmost importance is that the language of security played a fundamental part in

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[194] All these reports are fully available online and in Mark Danner's (2004) book
[195] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2004/05/20040524-10.html

the Bush administration's response to the correctness of what happened. Put differently, it enabled them to construct a particular telling of the story. The Bush administration's response to these images within a language game of security gives significance to Abu Ghraib as a site of contestation. It also reveals that a two level language game of security was still in play. On the one hand, security was used to validate the use of 'enhanced interrogation techniques' which were equated to torture, although the Bush administration refused to classify them as such. On the other hand, the administration employed the language of security to condemn the practices captured in the Abu Ghraib photos. Their attempt to speak security in these contradictory ways produced a tension at the heart of their response to and explanation for what occurred in Abu Ghraib.

Discourse 1: Security as a Justification of Torture

It is crucial to note that the Bush administration's condemnation of the treatment of the photographed prisoners was intimately linked with a strong set of counter arguments. Their initial failure to apologise for what occurred in the prison itself makes this noticeable. Even when the President was finally compelled to use the 'sorry' word, the focus of his regret appears to be on the damage done to America's identity. Standing alongside King Abdullah II of Jordan, President Bush stated he was;

> "*sorry for the humiliation suffered by the Iraqi prisoners and the humiliation suffered by their families......equally sorry that people seeing these pictures didn't understand the true nature and heart of America*" (Bush, May 6, 2004).[196]

The lingering implication is that the fault lay in the images, not in what they depicted. Indeed a large subtext of the Bush administration's reply to Abu Ghraib was an avid defence of their so-called 'enhanced interrogation techniques'. To make this claim they employed the language of security. Drawing on this discourse was a throwback to their central claim that they were fighting a different kind of war after September 11, 2001, which would be conducted by a different set of rules. As outlined in Chapter

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[196] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2004/05/20040506-9.html

1, the Bush administration coupled the freedom to act in new ways with their desire to pre-empt potential security threats. As Secretary Rumsfeld iterated, *business as usual won't do it" (Rumsfeld, September 10: 2003).* Holding fast to this line, the Bush administration maintained that the problem in Abu Ghraib was not that their security policies or practices were unlawful. Conversely, the problem was that in this instance they were carried out inaccurately. As Senator Mark Dayton told the Armed Services Committee,

> "*We've now had fifteen of the highest-level officials involved in this entire operation, from the secretary of defense to the generals in command, and nobody knew that anything was amiss, no one approved anything amiss, nobody did anything amiss. We have a general acceptance of responsibility, but there's no one to blame, except for the people at the very bottom of one prison" (Dayton, May 19: 2004).*[197]

Playing the security card, the Bush administration emphasised that although great progress had been made, terrorist suspects were still at large. The existence of this 'grave and gathering' threat, they argued, justified the employment of 'any means necessary' to gain better intelligence to take terrorists out of action and, in turn, to save lives. Safeguarding America's right to execute harsh interrogations after the Abu Ghraib scandal broke Vice President Cheney remarked,

> "*Well, there's no question, there was a desire -- there always is -- when you've got ongoing military operations, attacks being launched against our troops and soldiers, as well as innocent civilians over there, to learn as much as you can from people that have been detained in order to prevent further attacks and/or to be able to go prosecute guilty parties. But there's a right way to do it and a wrong way to do it. And these forces in Iraq, people captured in Iraq, are subject to the Geneva Convention. And so, as I say, there are legitimate ways to handle that. And I don't think in this case, you would want to call these methods legitimate" (Cheney, May 11, 2004).*[198]

The distinction that the Bush administration drew between a right and a wrong way of conducting 'enhanced interrogation techniques' sought to reaffirm their security procedures were lawful. More vaguely, the question of legality also suggested that rules existed for conducting such procedures. As Rice explained,

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[197] Senator Mark Dayton (D-Minn.), Armed Services Committee, May 19, 2004

[198] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2004/05/20040511-10.html

> *"the United States is quite clear and quite determined to carry out the President's policy, which he articulated clearly, that the United States does not engage in torture, doesn't condone it, doesn't expect its employees to engage in it. Will there be abuses of policy? That is entirely possible. Because just because you are a democracy, it doesn't mean that you're perfect. We saw in Iraq at Abu Ghraib under the traditional framework of the Geneva Convention that we had actions that were outside of U.S. policy and those actions were investigated, investigated thoroughly, and people have been punished. That is the only promise that we can make to people, which is that if we find abuses we will investigate them thoroughly and we will punish them (Rice, December 8, 2005).[199]*

In both of the abovementioned speeches there is an explicit attachment of the US security policies to key concepts of legality and correctness.

The Bush administration's defence of their security practices in light of the Abu Ghraib abuses aroused controversy by the manner in which it drew flat assertions that they did not constitute as torture. In fact, a complete avoidance of the word torture is noticeable in the Bush administration's response. Despite the evidence contained in the Abu Ghraib photographs, as well as other US detention facilities such as Guantanamo Bay, Washington consistently denied any use of torture by US officials. The most that was initially admitted was that the prisoners had possibly been the objects of 'abuse', eventually of 'humiliation'. Fending off allegations of torture Secretary Rumsfeld stressed,

> *"I think that - - I'm not a lawyer. My impression is that what has been charged thus far is abuse, which I believe is technically different than torture […] I don't know if – it is correct to say what you just said, that torture has taken place, or that there's been a conviction for torture. And therefore I'm not going to address the torture word" (Rumsfeld, May 4: 2004).[200]*

Affirming torture was not part of the administration's official vocabulary Condoleezza Rice stressed,

> *"The United States does not permit, tolerate, or condone torture under any circumstances […] Torture, and conspiracy to commit torture, are*

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[199] http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/57805.htm

[200] http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2973

crimes under U.S. law, wherever they may occur in the world" (Rice, December 5, 2005).[201]

Denying similar charges, Secretary Powell remarked,

"It's also absolutely clear that the President never, in any way, condoned the use of torture" (Powell, June 27:2004).[202]

The grammatical and terminological distinctions that the Bush administration made over how Abu Ghraib should be labeled goes to the core of the power of language. Their response explicitly demonstrates that it mattered what words were used to give meaning to the interrogation practices depicted in these images. The torture word was taboo for the Bush administration in order for them to preserve the legalistic claims they had made about their security practices. In the course of building this argument, they promised to treat US detainees in accordance with the Geneva Conventions. In fact, the Bush administration's stated position was that these Conventions would be "fully applicable" in Iraq (Jehl and Lewis 2004). The actual measure taken by the Bush administration to uphold the principles of the Conventions cut to the heart of the controversy over Abu Ghraib.

Although the Bush administration's recourse to the discourse of security gave them some leverage in responding to Abu Ghraib, it also opened up their security practices to greater scrutiny. These extended far beyond the wall of the Iraqi prison. Abu Ghraib catalysed an extensive re-assessment of the less well known aspects of the Bush administration's security policies and the finer details of the 'any measures' they deemed were necessary to conduct their wars. The extraordinary secrecy surrounding the post-September 11, 2001 programmes had made it difficult to discern what procedures were being implemented. From the outset, senior officials who addressed the treatment of detainees offset discussion about the vagueness of their coercive intelligence techniques through a language of security. In times of heightened security and self-defense, they argued, such practices were essential tools in fighting the war on terror. Vice President Cheney forewarned what was to be expected,

"We'll have to work sort of in the dark side, if you will. We've got to spend time in the shadows in the intelligence world. A lot of what needs

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[201] http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/57643.htm
[202] http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/33941.htm

to be done here will have to be done quietly, without any discussion, using sources and methods that are available to our intelligence agencies – if we are going to be successful. That's the world these folks operate in. And, uh, so it's going to be vital for us to use any means at our disposal basically to achieve our objectives" [...] "we need to make certain that we have not tied the hands of our intelligence communities" (Cheney, September 16, 2001).[203]

Such security protocols provide a context in which torture was possible. Language was a key aspect in making torture become not only possible as an outgrowth of the US war on terror, but also a necessity for winning that war. Lawyers advising how far interrogators could go in putting pressure on detainees and suspects well understood that was the issue. The way in which they worded their counsel had serious repercussions. Far from being cheap talk, this discourse was often a matter of life and death, the dividing line between security and insecurity.

Under the broad definition of security asserted by the Bush administration, inflicting physical pain does not count as torture unless the interrogator specifically intends the pain to reach the level associated with organ failure or death.[204] "Physical pain amounting to torture," Assistant Attorney General Jay S. Bybee advised the Counsel to the President, Alberto Gonzales, "must be equivalent in intensity to the pain accompanying serious physical injury such as organ failure, impairment of bodily function or even death." (Greenburg, 2005, xiii)

The narrow guidelines set by President Bush and some of members of his cabinet rendered the Geneva Conventions and other human rights conventions, to which the United States is a signatory, outdated and quaint.[205] The primary rule concerning torture is the 1984 UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Acts. This specifically states that torture can never be employed. As Section 2 of Article 2 states,

> "*No exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked as a justification of torture.*"

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[203] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20010916.html

[204] See David Luban (2007) and Anthony Lewis (2004).

[205] Secretary Powell is a notable exception. His lack of support for declaring the Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters ineligible for prisoner of war status caused him to be increasingly excluded from the decision making process. See Barton Gellman and Jo Becker (2007) for further discussion.

On one level this language is particularly powerful, as it forecloses the possibility that any circumstances, no matter how securitized, could ever justify this practice.[206] As Anthony Lang (2009:8) points out, however, despite this strong condemnation, the definition of the same Convention is open ended on what exactly constitutes torture and what does not. Broadly it equates torture as,

> *"any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions"*.[207]

The essential contestability over the meaning of torture leaves space for potential abuse. What Abu Ghraib revealed is how much these terms had been exploited by the Bush administration. Laying out the arguments for and against complying with the Geneva Conventions in a memorandum to President Bush in 2002, Alberto R. Gonzales, the White House counsel, urged the President to declare the Taliban forces in Afghanistan as well as al-Qaeda outside the coverage of the Geneva Conventions. In much the same way as the Bush administration, he emphasized the war against terrorism is a new kind of war. To be specific,

> *"The nature of the new war places a high premium on other factors, such as the ability to quickly obtain information from captured terrorists and their sponsors in order to avoid further atrocities against American civilians"*. In this context, Gonzales concluded in stark terms; *"In my judgment, this new paradigm renders obsolete Geneva's strict limitations on questioning of enemy prisoners and renders quaint some of its provisions"* (Gonzales, January 25: 2002).[208]

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[206] See Sanford Levinson (2004).

[207] See http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/treaties/torture.asp

[208] Memorandum from Alberto R. Gonzales to the President, January 25, 2002. The Gonzales memorandum drew a strong objection from Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, who argued that declaring the conventions inapplicable would "reverse over a century of U.S. policy and practice in supporting the Geneva Conventions and undermine the protections of the law of war for our troops, both in this specific conflict and in general. See Memorandum from Colin L. Powell to Counsel to the President, January 26, 2002.

Part and parcel with declaring that Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters did not have Geneva Convention protection was that it substantially reduced the threat of domestic criminal prosecution (Barry, Hirsh and Isikoff: 2004). As probes over this story filled out, an extensive paper trail surfaced about the techniques sanctioned by Secretary Rumsfeld which helped foster the abusive climate displayed in the Abu Ghraib photos. Five weeks after the Abu Ghraib revelations transfixed the country, newspapers broke the story of a secret 'torture memo', written by Office of Legal Council (OLC) lawyers such as John Yoo in August 2002.[209] What the memo verified was that the Bush administration authorised the creation of a parallel legal framework in which intelligence agencies such as the CIA were given the green light to operate by their own set of secret rules. Indeed, a series of legal memoranda written in late 2001 and early 2002 by the Justice Department helped build the framework for circumventing international law restraints on prisoner interrogation by providing interrogations with the authority to act with maximum impunity from war crimes. For instance, in November 2001, President Bush issued an order for trial by military tribunal of non-Americans charged with terrorist crimes.[210] The order forbade the accused from going to any court, American or foreign. The Military Commissions Act of 2006, passed by Congress on January 3, 2006 and signed into law by President Bush on October 17, 2006, further stated:

> *"Military commissions shall not have jurisdiction over lawful enemy combatant. Courts-martial shall have jurisdiction to try a lawful enemy combatant for any offense made punishable under this chapter. A finding that a person is an unlawful enemy combatant is dispositive for purposes of jurisdiction for trial by military commission under this chapter. No alien unlawful enemy combatant subject to trial by military commission under this chapter may invoke the Geneva Conventions as a source of rights".[211]*

The 'torture memo' dealt with another large question in addition to the limits on interrogation techniques. That was the status of the hundreds of prisoners brought to the U.S. base at Guantanamo, Cuba, after the war in Afghanistan. Again, language

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[209] The OCL is a small, elite law office within the US Justice Department

[210] Military Order, Detention, Treatment, and Trial of Certain Non-Citizens in the War Against Terrorism (November 13, 2001), 66 Fed. Reg. Page 57831 [November 16, 2001]. See Daryl A. Mundis, (2002): "The Use of Military Commissions to Prosecute Individuals Accused of Terrorist Acts": The American Journal of International Law, Vol. 96, No.2, pp 320-338.

[211] http://usiraq.procon.org/sourcefiles/2006MCA.pdf. For further discussion on this topic see Jeffrey R Smith (2004)

mattered here. In the months after September 11, 2001 these memos were written to state that al-Qaeda members were not entitled to the formal protections of the Geneva Conventions. In a January 9, 2002 memo to William J. Haynes II, General Counsel of the Department of Defense, John Yoo, JD, Former Deputy Assistant US Attorney General, wrote:

> *"We conclude that these treaties (Geneva Conventions) do not protect members of al Qaeda organization, which as a non-State actor cannot be a party to the international agreements governing war. We further conclude that these treaties do not apply to the Taliban militia. The nature of the conflict precludes application of common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions. Al Qaeda is not covered by common Article 3, because the current conflict is not covered by the Geneva Conventions"* (Yoo Jan. 9, 2002).

Ignoring the deeply rooted U.S. military practice of applying the Geneva Conventions broadly, U.S. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld labeled the first detainees to arrive at Guantnamo on January 11, 2002 as 'unlawful combatants', automatically denying them possible status as prisoners of war (POWs). This categorical label is incredibly important because, as Secretary Rumsfeld remarked,

> *"They will be handled not as prisoners of wars, because they're not, but as unlawful combatants. The -- as I understand it, technically unlawful combatants do not have any rights under the Geneva Convention"* (Rumsfeld, January 11:2002).[212]

Within the same speech, Secretary Rumsfeld signaled a casual approach to U.S. compliance with international law by saying that the US government would still handle them in the right way. As he put it,

> *"we have indicated that we do plan to, for the most part, treat them in a manner that is reasonably consistent with the Geneva Conventions, to the extent they are appropriate, and that is exactly what we have been doing"* (Rumsfeld, January 11:2002).[213]

Building on this language, Secretary Rumsfeld questioned the relevance of the Geneva Conventions to current U.S. military operations. As he noted,

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[212] http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2031
[213] For further discussion on this statement, see Seeyle (2002)

"the reality is the set of facts that exist today with the al-Qaeda and the Taliban were not necessarily the set of facts that were considered when the Geneva Convention was fashioned" (Rumsfeld, September 7: 2002).[214]

A few days later, he stressed this line of argument,

"The President has...now determined that the Geneva Convention does apply to the conflict with the Taliban in Afghanistan. It does not apply to the conflict with al Qaeda, whether in Afghanistan or elsewhere. He also determined that under the Geneva Convention, Taliban detainees do not meet the criteria for prisoner of war status. When the Geneva Convention was signed in the mid-20th century, it was crafted by sovereign states to deal with conflicts between sovereign states. Today the war on terrorism, in which our country was attacked by and is defending itself against terrorist networks that operate in dozens of countries, was not contemplated by the framers of the convention"(Rumsfeld, February 8: 2002).[215]

Despite these dismissive remarks about the rights of US detainees, the Bush administration still promised that their prisoners would be treated humanely. In the "Memorandum for Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff," it is noted that,

"[t]he Combatant Commanders shall, in detaining al-Qaeda and Taliban individuals under the control of the Department of Defense, treat them humanely and, to the extent appropriate and consistent with military necessity, in a manner consistent with the principles of the Geneva Conventions of 1949".[216]

Likewise, President Bush reassured that, even though al-Qaeda detainees do not qualify as prisoners of war under the Geneva Conventions,

"as a matter of policy, the United States Armed Forces shall continue to treat detainees humanely and to the extent appropriate and consistent with military necessity, in a manner consistent with the principles of Geneva" (Bush, February 7:2002).[217]

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[214] Jim Garamone, DefenseLink News (US Military), American Forces Press Service, February 7, 2002.
[215] http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2624
[216] Full document available at http://www.defense.gov/news/Jun2004/d20040622doc1.pdf
[217] Full memo available at http://www.pegc.us/archive/White_House/bush_memo_20020207_ed.pdf

Secretary Powell was much more outspoken in concluding that the Third Geneva Convention did apply to both al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Commenting on this issue with the then UK Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, he stated,

> *"we talked about other issues, to include the detainees at Guantanamo, which I briefed the Foreign Secretary on the status of them and to make sure that there was no question in anyone's mind that they are receiving the best care that they can receive, as one would expect from the United States"* (Powell, January 31: 2002).[218]

This promise signified the goodness of the US, lending weight to their construction of Saddam Hussein as an evil villain. Affirming this identity, Secretary Rumsfeld said,

> *"International law draws a clear distinction between civilians and combatants. The principle that civilians must be protected lies at the heart of international law of armed conflict. It is the distinction between combatants and innocent civilians that terrorism, and practices like the use of human shields, so directly assaults. Saddam Hussein makes no such distinction. During Operation Desert Shield, he held hundreds of non-Iraqi civilians at government and military facilities throughout Iraq and described them as human shields. He deliberately constructs mosques near military facilities, uses schools, hospitals, orphanages and cultural treasures to shield military forces, thereby exposing helpless men, women and children to danger. These are not tactics of war, they are crimes of war. Deploying human shields is not a military strategy, it's murder, a violation of the laws of armed conflict, and a crime against humanity, and it will be treated as such. Those who follow his orders to use human shields will pay a severe price for their actions. (Rumsfeld, February 19: 2003).[219]*

The White House position on the above issues is in some ways consistent with its long-standing efforts to expand executive power and resist attempts by Congress to rein in the President's authority. In the February 7, 2002 directive already cited above, President Bush wrote,

> *"I have the authority under the Constitution to suspend Geneva as between the United States and Afghanistan, but I decline to exercise that authority at this time"* (Bush, February 7: 2002).[220]

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[218] http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2002/7733.htm
[219] http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=1933
[220] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/02/20020207-15.html

The language of security employed by the Bush administration in response to the scandal made the kind of rules that were operating in the game of security visible. Overall, the essence of the Bush administration's arguments was that the law applies to them, but it doesn't apply to us.[221] According to Colin Powell's chief of staff, Lawrence Wilkerson, sometime after the Bush memo was issued, Vice President Cheney and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld decided to ignore the portions promising humane treatment for prisoners. Wilkerson later recalls,

> "*in going back and looking at the deliberations it was clear to me that what the President had decided was one thing and what was implemented was quite another thing*" (Bernstein and Dubose, 2006:190-91).

The Abu Ghraib photos made these securitized provisions increasingly redundant. Once released, the photos became intersubjective property, beyond the Bush administration's direct control. The photographs provided the space for an alternative language game to gain more prominence than the one espoused by the Bush administration. Outside of their security discourse, the enhanced interrogation techniques came to be categorised as torture. The emergence of this alternative narrative contradicted the Bush administration's claims that their enhanced interrogation techniques were consistent with the Geneva Conventions or their promise to treat US detainees humanely. While separate from the Bush administration's assertions, such discrepancies threatened their entire language game of security as they brought inherent weaknesses in the constitution of this game out into the open.

Exposing the major disjuncture between the provisions of the Geneva and Torture Coventions and the Bush administration's practice, for instance, many civil liberties and human rights advocate's claimed that this government purposefully bent, if not broke, international laws. They drew on the same rules, but reached a different understanding of how the rules surrounding the treatment of detainees and prisoners of war should be implemented. Outlining the finding of the Human Rights Watch Report, 'The Road to Abu Ghraib' (2004), their attorney, Reed Brody concluded,

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[221] For further discussion see Newsweek, May 21 2009 http://www.newsweek.com/id/38176

> *"basically the mindset was anything goes. The gloves come off. They felt we're not going to fight this war with one hand tied behind our backs so we're going to do what we have to. Then they set about looking for every legal loophole they could, then they undermined 50 years of international law [...] but even when they're not prisoners of war, they're entitled to some protection".[222]*

The existence of a Red Cross report from February 2004 was another key reference point in substantiating charges that the Bush administration policies violated the Geneva Conventions.[223] The publication of this report predated the release of the photographs, seriously discrediting the Bush administration's claim that they were unaware of the implementation of these enhanced interrogation techniques. Conversely, they suggested that they had been made aware of such systemic abuses and had failed to take action. Months before the Abu Ghraib photographs were released, the Red Cross reported,

> *"according to the allegations collected by the ICRC, ill-treatment during interrogation was not systematic, except with regard to persons arrested in connected with suspected security offences or deemed to have an "intelligence" value. In these cases, persons deprived of their liberty under supervision of Military Intelligence were at high risk of being subjected to a variety of harsh treatments ranging from insults, threats and humiliations to both physical and psychological coercion, which in some cases was tantamount to torture, in order to force cooperation with their interrogators.[224]*

Among the methods of ill-treatment the ICRC reported were hooding, handcuffing, beating with hard objects (including pistols and rifles), slapping, punching, kicking with knees or feet on various parts of the body. The findings of the Red Cross corresponded with practices documented in the official US governmental investigations into the Abu Ghraib abuses. While expressing that the practices

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[222]Broady's (2004) full comments: http://edition.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/06/09/prisoner.abuse/index.html. Human Rights Watch cite three ways in which Bush administration policies created conditions for abuse in Abu Ghraib prison. First, the report said, the administration adopted the position that the war on terror allowed circumvention of international law, meaning laws prohibiting torture were no longer binding. Second, the U.S. military used 'coercive methods' to cause pain and humiliation for detainees to prepare them for interrogation. Third, before the publication of photographs of the abuses, the Bush administration ignored reports of mistreatment of detainees in both Afghanistan and Iraq: For Full Report on, "The Road to Abu Ghraib see http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2004/06/08/road-abu-ghraib

[223] Overall there were four Red Cross reports in relation to the Abu Ghraib prison. At first these were given to the government confidentially, in line with ICRC protocol. However, the leaking of the February report meant that all four had to be made public

[224] For full report see http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/pdf/icrc_iraq.pdf

contained within the photographs were not a matter of policy, the investigative teams of he Taguba, Schlesinger and Fay Reports all verified systematic abuses in Abu Ghraib. According to the findings of General Taguba,

"the intentional abuse of detainees by military police personnel included the following acts:

a. (S) Punching, slapping, and kicking detainees; jumping on their naked feet;
b. (S) Videotaping and photographing naked male and female detainees;
c. (S) Forcibly arranging detainees in various sexually explicit positions for
photographing;
d. (S) Forcing detainees to remove their clothing and keeping them naked for several days at a time;
e. (S) Forcing naked male detainees to wear women's underwear;
f. (S) Forcing groups of male detainees to masturbate themselves while being photographed and videotaped;
g. (S) Arranging naked male detainees in a pile and then jumping on them;
h. (S) Positioning a naked detainee on a MRE Box, with a sandbag on his head, and
attaching wires to his fingers, toes, and penis to simulate electric torture;
i. (S) Writing "I am a Rapest" (sic) on the leg of a detainee alleged to have forcibly raped a 15-year old fellow detainee, and then photographing him naked;
j. (S) Placing a dog chain or strap around a naked detainee's neck and having a female Soldier pose for a picture;
k. (S) A male MP guard having sex with a female detainee;
l. (S) Using military working dogs (without muzzles) to intimidate and frighten detainees, and in at least one case biting and severely injuring a detainee;
m.(S) Taking photographs of dead Iraqi detainees" (Taguba, 2004:16-17). [225]

The Schlesinger Report also recounts,

"There were five cases of detainee deaths as a result of abuse by U.S. personnel during interrogation....there were 23 cases of detainee deaths still under investigation". [226]

Such findings obviously undercut the Bush administration's claims that their 'enhanced interrogation techniques' did not equate to torture.[227] *It also limited* how

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[225] Full report available http://www.fas.org/irp/agency/dod/taguba.pdf
[226] For full report see: http://fl1.findlaw.com/news.findlaw.com/wp/docs/dod/abughraibrpt.pdf

the Bush administration could respond to Abu Ghraib as a security issue in a meaningful way. The existence of an alternative language game which explicitly identified the US security practice as being 'tantamount to torture', played an important role in the framing they way in which the Abu Ghraib abuses issue was presented to the public. When compared to the standards set in the Geneva and Torture Conventions it became increasingly apparent that the Bush administration was not conducting a lawful war.

Discursive category 2: Security as a Denial of Torture

The Bush administration faced another serious problem in their attempt to reply to the Abu Ghraib photographs and abuses through the language of security. This concerned how their definition of security was co-constituted by democracy, especially since the defining moment. The presence of this discourse within the overall language game of security limited the validity of their claims that the 'enhanced interrogation techniques' implemented in Abu Ghraib were acceptable in the name of security. As Karin Greenberg notes, "The word *torture*, long an outcast from the discourse of democracy, is now in frequent usage" (2005:xvii, italics in original).

Images of prisoners stacked naked on top of each other and forced to perform humiliating sexual acts tarnished the Bush administration's self-proclaimed promise to establish democracy in Iraq. The pictures showed neither the freedom nor the liberation that they promised to bring to Iraq. Contrary to the claims the Bush administration had made to justify the military invasion in 2003, "*Iraq was not free from rape rooms and torture chambers*" (Bush, October 8:2003). Moreover, they have, to paraphrase Henry Kissinger, the considerable advantage of being true (Danner, October 7: 2007).[228] Touching on this shortfall UN General Secretary Kofi Annan remarked,

> "*I hope they will take a strong and firm stand to ensure that those kinds of activities are not repeated, because it does do damage, as you can see from reactions in the region. And, of course, the US is in Iraq, as it has indicated, to also try and establish democracy and law and order,*

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[227] These findings are amply supported by written confessions provided by several of the suspects, written statements provided by detainees, and witness statements.
[228] http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2004/oct/07/abu-ghraib-the-hidden-story/?page=2

and rule of law. And so it is important that it should be seen as dealing very firmly with this" (Annan, May 2: 2004).[229]

Nevertheless, the Bush administration did not abandon the democratic component of their language game of security as they responded to the Abu Ghraib abuses. On the contrary, they strongly reinforced it.

First and foremost, the Bush administration conveyed democracy as an enabling factor in investigating such 'abhorrent' practices and brining those responsible to justice. As Secretary Colin Powell proclaimed,

> "*what we are going to show to the world is what democracy does, what the strongest democracy in the world does when faced with a situation like this. We don't turn away. We don't hide from it. We investigate it. We find out what happened. We have a free press that examines it and lets the whole world know what happened and what we're doing about it. We have a Congress that supervises all of this and we have a court system as well. And I hope it will be an example to the world of how you deal with these kinds of tragedies when they come along"* (Powell, May 28: 2004).[230]

At a later point Secretary Rice reaffirmed,

> "*just because you are a democracy, it doesn't mean that you're perfect. We saw in Iraq at Abu Ghraib under the traditional framework of the Geneva Convention that we had actions that were outside of U.S. policy and those actions were investigated, investigated thoroughly, and people have been punished. That is the only promise that we can make to people, which is that if we find abuses we will investigate them thoroughly and we will punish them"* (Rice, December 8: 2005).[231]

President Bush was also quick to clarify that,

> "*One basic difference between democracies and dictatorships is that free countries confront such abuses openly and directly*" (Bush, May 10: 2004).

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[229] Full speech available at New York - Secretary-General's encounter following lecture at 35th National Conference of Trinity Institute (unofficial transcript) Washington, DC - Secretary-General's press encounter

[230] http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/32931.htm
[231] http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/57805.htm

The language of democracy also served to valorise the Bush administration's democratising efforts in Iraq. Emphasising, "t*he goodness and the character of the United States Armed Forces*" the President said,

> "*no military in the history of the world has fought so hard and so often for the freedom of others. Today, our soldiers and sailors and airmen and Marines are keeping terrorists across the world on the run. They're helping the people of Afghanistan and Iraq build democratic societies. They're defending America with unselfish courage. And these achievements have brought pride and credit to this nation*" (Bush, May 10: 2004).[232]

Discussing the revelations at Abu Ghraib, Donald Rumsfeld remarked,

> "*Our enemies will exploit this episode to prove their negative views of our country, but then they were doing that before this episode. We see repeated instances where untruths about our country and about our conduct are put out on the regional media. But friends of freedom will understand that it is a virtue of our system that the president and the most senior officials take responsibility for and are involved in seeing that the punishment for such violations of human rights occur. That stands in stark contrast to the many parts of the world where governments use torture or collude in it and do not express shock or dismay, nor do they apologize when it's uncovered. So at the end of the day, there is, even here, reason for pride in democracy, and certainly there is reason for pride in the standards by which the military forces of our country are governed*" (Rumsfeld, May 11: 2004).[233]

Rumsfield's remarks reaffirm the Manichean us versus them identities the Bush administration drew between those who were on the side of good and those who were on the side of evil. Only evil people would believe that these actions were anything other than the work of a few un-American soldiers.

The concept of democracy was also rooted in the administration's avid denial that their security policies condoned the use of torture. From the start they insisted that what occurred in Abu Ghraib represented the work of a few bad apples or rogue soldiers. The photographed soldiers and their actions were instantaneously categorised as "un-American". Making this plain, President Bush contended that these actions in

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[232] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2004/05/20040510-3.html
[233] http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=126

did not, *"reflect the nature of the American people. That's not the way we do things in America (Bush, April 30: 2004).[234]*

Secretary Rumsfeld was equally astute in articulating that,

> *"the images that we have seen that include U.S. forces are deeply disturbing -- both because of the fundamental unacceptability of what they depicted, and because the actions of U.S. military personnel in those photos do not in any way represent the values of our country or the armed forces" (Rumsfeld, May 4: 2004).[235]*

That the Bush administration categorised the perpetrators and the heinous acts captured in the Abu Ghraib photographs as un-American is not surprising. Earmarking agentive culpability at the individual rather than systemic level enabled them to claim that this represented exceptional rather than accepted behaviour. Arguing that such practices were not a matter of policy Secretary Rumsfeld summarised,

> *"Has it been harmful to our country? Yes. Is it something that has to be corrected? Yes. Is it something that shouldn't have happened in the first place? Yes. Was it done as a matter of policy? No. I think that -- I think that the Department of Defense has addressed it in a serious way that reflects the responsibility the department has to treat people properly who are in the custody of the Department of Defense. And in this case that did not happen. It was wrong. We should have treated those properly and they were not treated properly" (Rumsfeld, September 10: 2004).[236]*

General Peter Pace, Vice Chairman, Joint Chief of Staff, expressed the same conviction,

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[234]The President makes two further proclamations about the un-American nature of the events within a very short time span. On May 5, 2004, he said that, "We've discovered these abuses; they're abhorrent abuses. They do not reflect -- the actions of these few people do not reflect the hearts of the American people […] The American people are just as appalled at what they have seen on TV as the Iraqi citizens have. The Iraqi citizens must understand that […] And it's -- it is unpleasant for Americans to see that some citizens, some soldiers have acted this way, because it does -- again, I keep repeating, but it's true -- it doesn't reflect how we think. This is not America. America is a country of justice and law and freedom and treating people with respect" (May 5: 2004). On May 6, 2004, he also declared, "that the actions of those folks in Iraq do not represent the values of the United States of America […] I also made it clear to His Majesty [of Jordan] that the troops we have in Iraq, who are there for security and peace and freedom, are the finest of the fine, fantastic United States citizens, who represent the very best qualities of America: courage, love of freedom, compassion, and decency" (Bush, May 6: 2004).
[235] http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2973
[236] http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2381

"Those soldiers were not following orders. That is not what we expect of ourselves. It is not what the American people expect of us. We are expected to perform our duties honorably. And the vast majority of the hundreds of thousands of young men and women, active, Reserve and Guard who have served in Iraq have done so honorably. These incidents are not acceptable. They are being thoroughly investigated. They were reported from within the chain of command. And there are five or six separate investigations ongoing as I speak that are, in fact, looking into every detail of every facet of this that we can find" (Pace, May 5:2004).[237]

The Bush administration's use of the term democracy as a way to convey the 'un-American' nature of the Abu Ghraib abuses complements their assertions that this was an aberration in their security policies. Reference to this discourse also reinforces their identity as a beacon of democracy which was leading a fight against evil to establish national and international security.

The Bush administration's recourse to the democratic aspect of their security narrative to convey that what happened in Abu Ghraib did not count as torture proved contradictory. The goal of their strategy was to quiet critics in this context by reaffirming the necessity of undertaking such exceptional measures on the one hand and the legality of such procedures on the other. Making this argument, however, produced a weak spot at the centre of their response to Abu Ghraib. Using the language of democracy unintentionally drew attention to what exactly was at stake in the name of security. Rather than reaffirming the morality of the Bush administration's war in Iraq, the Abu Ghraib pictures illustrated how immoral their security policies actually were.

As Sheik Mohammed Bashir remarked in Um Al-Oura, Baghdad, during Friday prayers,

"It was discovered that freedom in this land is not ours. It is the freedom of the occupying soldiers in doing what they like...abusing women, children, men, and the old men and women whom they arrested randomly and without any guilt. No one can ask them what they are doing, because they are protected by their freedom.... No one can punish them, whether in our country or their country. They expressed the freedom of rape, the freedom of nudity and the freedom of humiliation" (June 11, 2004).

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[237] http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2977

The intersection of the two competing structures of meaning within the Bush administration's language game of security contradicted each other. On the one hand the Bush administration sought to justify the use of any means necessary in the name of security, whereas on the other they wished to claim their security policies still remained morally (Priest and Gellam, 2002). Remarks made by President Bush in response to James Harding from the Financial Times are worth quoting at length to illustrate this.

> *James Harding: "Mr. President, I want to return to the question of torture. What we've learned from these memos this week is that the Department of Justice lawyers and the Pentagon lawyers have essentially worked out a way that US officials can torture detainees without running afoul of the law. So when you say you want the US to adhere to international and US laws, that's not very comforting. This is a moral question: Is torture ever justified?"*
>
> *President Bush: "Look, I'm going to say it one more time. ...Maybe I can be more clear. The instructions went out to our people to adhere to law. That ought to comfort you. We're a nation of law. We adhere to laws. We have laws on the books. You might look at these laws, and that might provide comfort for you. And those were the instructions...from me to the government" (Bush,, June 10: 2004).*[238]

The tension produced by the Bush administration's choice to respond to the Abu Ghraib abuses with the language of democracy is not to say that the photographed practices were only problematic due to the presence of this term. On the contrary, and as noted above, even within the context of their securitized speech acts, these actions could not be justified. The noteworthy point is that the presence of this alternative meaning within the Bush administration limited the vocabulary available to them to respond to the abuses in a meaningful way. Here their linguistic constellation acts as a structure. The legitimacy of the Bush administration's language game of security, as well as the identity and rules constituted by it, are embedded in their two level language game of security. When these structures of meaning were blurred, if not reversed, as in the case of Abu Ghraib, the game began to change. As Manfred Nowak, the UN special rapporteur on torture, stressed,

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[238] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2004/06/20040610-36.html

> "*ever since former US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld authorized the use of so-called 'enhanced interrogation' techniques in Abu Ghraib, 'the United States has lost its moral leadership and authority [...] Today, when the Bush administration criticizes other countries for their human rights abuses, no one takes them seriously anymore*" (Ertel and Kraske 2007).[239]

The long term implications of these policies could not be simply swept aside since, "*once again, images from Abu Ghraib will burn themselves into the world's collective memory, the shocking legacy of a superpower gone astray -- icons of America's shame. They will become the images future generations most associated with the war in Iraq*" (Spiegel 2007).[240]

Section 3: Theoretical significance:

The revelation of the practices being implemented in Abu Ghraib sparks questions about how language constitutes and constrains agency. What would have happened had the photographs not been leaked? Rationalists could argue that the Bush administration's response was more of the same, cheap talk. Moreover, they could point to the lack of resignations among the very few top members of the Bush administration over the procedures that occurred in the Iraqi prison as evidence of the most powerful simply pursuing and protecting their own self-interests.[241]

Materialist accounts could also add weight to the above-mentioned claims. For them the presence of the physical photographs is what sparked the controversy, not the fact that the Bush administration's language contained glaring gaps. Disturbing questions and concerns about the men and women incarcerated by the Bush administration as part of their war on terror had existed before. The material evidence was what provoked the outcry in Abu Ghraib. As Javal Davis, a Military Policeman (MP) court-martialed for his activity in the prison, aptly remarked, "If there were no photographs,

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[239] Full article available from: http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,514104,00.html
[240] Full article available from: http://www.spiegel.de/international/spiegel/0,1518,401899,00.html
[241] The decision not to accept Secretary Rumsfeld's resignation was particularly telling in this respect. See The Economist-North American Edition (2004):"Resign, Rumsfeld": Issue Cover for 8 May 2004; "Rumsfeld Must Go (2008)." The Boston Globe. 7 May 2004. 4 July 2008; Susan Sontag (2004): "The New Iraq Crisis; Donald Rumsfeld Should Go": The New York Times. 7 May 2004.

therewould be no Abu Ghraib. There would have been no investigation" (Ghosts, 2007).[242]

The temptation to place the Bush administration's reply in a framework of more of the same, that is, cheap talk, is misguided. It is impossible to deny the actual images coming out of Abu Ghraib did not speak loudly or played a subsidiary role in sparking debates about the Bush administration's security policies. As Susan Sontag (2007) argues, photographs have an insuperable power to determine what we recall of events and it now seems probable that the defining association of people everywhere with the war that the United States launched preemptively in Iraq in 2003 will be photographs of the torture of Iraqi prisoners by Americans in Abu Ghraib. This outcome challenges rationalist assumptions that language is cheap and can be used strategically. Yet the most powerful cannot always determine the outcome. To have the American effort in Iraq summed up by these images must seem, to those who saw some justification in a war that did overthrow one of the monster tyrants of modern times, unacceptable. What is further amiss in the materialist account is that these images were not fashioned in a vacuum. As such they had to be given meaning. A more satisfactory way of addressing the manner in which these pictures came to be described as torture rather than so-called 'enhanced interrogation techniques' is to scrutinise the linguistic milieu in which these images assumed their meaning. A language game offers a way to show how the processes through which the Abu Ghraib 'reality' was constructed, that is, how the 'material' was given meaning as a 'reality'. It is important to stress that the securitized discourse which the Bush administration used to make their case did not cause the Abu Ghraib abuses. However, within the remit of their language game, the humiliating and abusive actions documented in the photographs and the investigation reports of the Red Cross among others came to be conceived as rational and even normal ways to fight the evil enemy.

Employing Wittgenstein's language game approach illuminates a different reading of the Bush administration's reply to Abu Ghraib on another level. It exposes how they were constrained by their language of security to frame the abuses as exceptional and

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[242] Ghosts of Abu Ghraib. Dir. Rory Kennedy. DVD. HBO Video.

un-American conduct, and how they were entangled by their previous utterances. From a language game perspective, Abu Ghraib can be conceptualised as a dual site of contestation. On the one hand, Wittgenstein's notion of acts of interpretation highlights the rupture between the Bush administration's definition of the rules of war and those encoded in international laws. On the other, his language game approach highlights the appearance of an irreconcilable internal inconsistency in the Bush administration's language of security. Excavating both of these dynamics provide a sharper lens for analysing how it is possible for words to change their meaning, and by extension, of the Bush administration's language game of security to be disrupted. Placed in the context of a larger ongoing game, we find that the Bush administration was forced to make important concessions. These require explanation.

Section 4: Acts of Interpretation in Abu Ghraib

Based on the evidence outlined above, I contend that the Abu Ghraib incident exposes an act of interpretation by the Bush administration. To recall, Wittgenstein classifies an act of interpretation as the substitution of one set of rules/meanings with another (1958, §201:81). As the Abu Ghraib scandal unfolded, the discursive moves the Bush administration had made to redefine the rules became more and more apparent. In the interest of pursing the Iraq war pre-emptively, the Bush administration pioneered an alternative outlook on the Geneva Conventions. Indeed, the acts of interpretation undertaken by some members of the Bush administration and US military sought to change the arrow navigating the type of rights entitled to individuals by classifying them as enemy combatants, who were not entitled to prisoner of war status under the Geneva Convention III. This much has been established. What is significant is that the Bush administration did not simply ignore international law to make such claims. Rather, the Abu Ghraib incident confirmed that they had closely read and engaged with existing laws to justify their actions. Aware that the international lawyers would never sanction tossing the Geneva Conventions aside in the war against terrorists, the Bush administration insisted that, "for the most part" they would treat detainees, *"...in a manner that is reasonably consistent with the Geneva Conventions, to the extent they are appropriate"* (Rumsfeld, January 11: 2002). Although technically

redefining international law, they repeatedly claimed they were acting in accordance with the law.

Drawing parallels with Wittgenstein's conceptualisation of acts of interpretation changes the dynamics of the Bush administration's attempt to redefine these rules. Firstly, it provides specialised tools to unearth the kind of act of interpretation that they were attempting to put into practice. The focus on substituting one set of rules with another, as opposed to breaking or suspending rules, suggests that an alternative set of rules were being put into use. Cutting in at this level makes the kind of rules that were operating in the Bush administration's language game of security visible. In fact, Wittgenstein's argument, which rests on a distinction between interpretation and rule, highlights how these agents made legitimacy claims for their enhanced interrogation techniques. This was mainly achieved by arguing that they were fighting a different kind of post September 11, 2001. In sum, "*the nature of the new placed high premium on other factors that renders obsolete Geneva's strict limitations on questioning of enemy prisoners and renders quaint some of its provisions*" (Gonzales, January 25: 2002).[243]

Wittgenstein's notion of an act of interpretation also helps to explain why the Bush administration's language of security failed to capture either the audience or credibility when they put their interpretation of the rules into use in response to what occurred in the Abu Ghraib prison. The first hint a language game approach provides is that it makes the intersubjective context in which the Bush administration were acting obvious. In reality, Abu Ghraib reinforces Wittgenstein's argument that there is such no such thing as a private language game. Although the practices evidenced in these images occurred in highly private and securitized contexts, the dominant meanings these images were inscribed with were beyond the Bush administration's control. Rather, Washington's assertions that their security policies abided with international law were dependent on the others accepting them as such. This restricted how they could respond. Unpacking the Bush administration's discursive response to

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[243] Memorandum from Alberto R. Gonzales to the President, January 25, 2002. The Gonzales memorandum drew a strong objection from Secretary of State Colin L. Powell who argued that declaring the conventions inapplicable would "reverse over a century of U.S. policy and practice in supporting the Geneva Conventions and undermine the protections of the law of war for our troops, both in this specific conflict and in general. See Memorandum from Colin L. Powell to Counsel to the President, January 26, 2002.

what happened in Abu Ghraib makes it apparent that they cared how they were perceived by a larger intersubjective community at home and abroad. The great length they go to classify the practices as 'un-American' exemplifies this. Their denial of torture serves a similar function. The employment of these narratives throughout the controversy enabled the Bush administration to affirm the legitimacy of their justifications for the war in Iraq and their heroic role in fighting the terrorism.

However, the revelation that they had undertaken measures to redefine the rules compounded the dilemmas that they faced in preserving this identity. The Abu Ghraib photos by themselves, while reflecting the binaries inherent in the Bush administration's clustered definition of security, also severely destabilised them. The gap that appeared between the Bush administration's interpretation of the rules and others' interpretation of the same rule weakened the ability of the US to claim that they were acting in a law abiding manner. As the New York Times reported,

> *"In the case of Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, a high-level detainee who is believed to have helped plan the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, CIA interrogators used graduated levels of force, including a technique known as "water-boarding," in which a prisoner is strapped down, forcibly pushed under water and made to believe he might drown"* (Risen, Risen, Johnson and Lewis, May 13, 2004).

A Wittgenstinian notion of language games points to a further contrast between the Bush administration's interpretation and the rule. As established in Chapter 3, undertaking an act of interpretation is no easy feat. As the agent moves to substitute one set of meanings with another, there is no guarantee they will succeed in installing this interpretation as the rule. For this to occur, they must convince others to put these new meanings into use. Abu Ghraib demonstrated that this administration's attempt to reinterpret legitimate rules of war, such as the Geneva Conventions, was accepted by some. The inhumane treatment of prisoners captured in the photographs signals that US solders had considered in acceptable to treat detainees in this manner. However, other players, outside the 'few' 'un-American' soldiers who allegedly disobeyed orders, refused to follow these rules. After Abu Ghraib, the interrogation techniques legitimated by the Bush administration language of security were deemed increasingly unacceptable. Others rejected that the arrow pointing towards the Geneva and Torture

Conventions justified the use of the enhanced interrogation techniques employed in the Abu Ghraib prison.

This highlights that the legitimacy of even the most securitized speech act, spoken by the most powerful agents, are limited. Had the Bush administration been acting unilaterally, their attempt to change these laws would be almost guaranteed since they represented the most powerful player, and, as such, they could judge what was and was not permissible. Abu Ghraib illustrates a different scenario. Despite their earlier attempt to redefine existing rules, such as the Geneva Conventions, they were unable to justify these changes as being legitimate. That Abu Ghraib came to be represented as 'tantamount to torture' demonstrates the legitimacy of existing intersubjective laws which overrode the Bush administration's interpretation of them. Despite constructing new terminology to decrease the constraints under which they could legally conduct their wars, they were unable to break free of binding rules. Nor did their interpretation succeed in convincing everyone to play according to the rules of the Bush administration's securitized game.

Wittgenstein's notion of an act of interpretation also reveals another constraint on the Bush administration with regards to Abu Ghraib: they had to justify their interpretation of the Geneva and Torture Conventions. Even if the Bush administration had no intention of holding true to their promises of treating detainees 'humanely', the very fact that they had used these words meant some grounds of judgements existed for their actions. Their unwillingness to admit that their interpretation of the Geneva and Torture Conventions was inappropriate was nullified with the photographic documentation of violently-inflicted abuse. These images obliterated any notion that what occurred was anything short of torture. Rather, and importantly, existing intersubjective understandings of these rules were used as a way to judge the Bush administration's response as well as their overall security policies. The legitimate rules were both what was being contested as well as the grounds for that judgement. When placed outside the Bush administration's discourse, the acts took on a different meaning. For instance, in May 2006, the U.N. body monitoring the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, Degrading Treatment or Punishment called for several changes in U.S. policy - among them, a call for an end, at any site under the United States' "*de facto* effective control", of water boarding and

any other interrogation techniques constituting torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" (Amann, June 8: 2006). It also stated that it "regrets" the U.S. contention that the law of armed conflict precludes application of the Convention, and the Committee arued for the contrary view "that the Convention applies at all times" to every State party "whether in peace, war or armed conflict, in any territory under its jurisdiction".[244]

In light of the acts of interpretation that they had previous undertaken, the Bush administration was also forced to retract their earlier claims that the Geneva Conventions were 'quaint' and 'obsolete' after the Abu Ghraib scandal. Once top officials acknowledged that some of the techniques being reviewed counted as violations of the Geneva Conventions, the Pentagon announced that the U.S. military would not use certain prisoner interrogation procedures including sleep and sensory deprivation. In 2006 President Bush issued a Presidential Executive, making it clear that the CIA would comply with the Geneva Conventions prohibitions. Confirming and defending the Central Intelligence Agency's program of secret detentions, President Bush emphasised that "this program has been subject to multiple legal reviews by the Department of Justice and CIA lawyers; they've determined it complied with our laws" (Bush September, 6: 2006).[245]

The official position of the U.S. as expressed in the report that they submitted to the Committee Against Torture on June 29, 2005, pursuant to Article 19 of the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, contains the following relevant statements:

> "*In fighting terrorism, the U.S. remains committed to respecting the rule of law, including the U.S. Constitution, federal statutes, and international treaty obligations, including the Torture Convention*" (*Article 19, 2005:4*).[246]

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[244] CAT Recommendations, *supra* note 2, 14, at 3-4. *See* Convention Against Torture, *supra* note 1, art. 2(2) ("No exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked as a justification of torture.").
[245] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/09/20060906-3.html
[246] Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or
Punishment art. 19, Dec. 10, 1984, 1465 U.N.T.S. 85 [hereinafter CAT]; U.N. Comm.
Against Torture, Consideration of Reports Submitted by State Parties Under Article 19 of the
Convention, Second Periodic Reports of States Parties Due in 1999, U.N. Doc.
CAT/C/48/Add.3 (June 29, 2005), available at http://hei.unige.ch/-clapham/hrdoc/docs/US
CATreport2005.pdf [hereinafter Article 19 Reports].

Outlining U.S. obligations under the Torture conventions, President Bush stated,

> "*the United States reaffirms its commitment to the worldwide elimination of torture. The non-negotiable demands of human dignity must be protected without reference to race, gender, creed, or nationality. Freedom from torture is an inalienable human right, and we are committed to building a world where human rights are respected and protected by the rule of law […] The United States also remains steadfastly committed to upholding the Geneva Conventions, which have been the bedrock of protection in armed conflict for more than 50 years. These Conventions provide important protections designed to reduce human suffering in armed conflict. We expect other nations to treat our service members and civilians in accordance with the Geneva Conventions. Our Armed Forces are committed to complying with them and to holding accountable those in our military who do not*" (Bush, June 26:2004).[247]

These changes demonstrate that the Bush administration was placed in a position where they were forced to revise the way in which they spoke security and clarify what this language legitimated. Understanding how it was possible for the Bush administration's language of security to transform from a position that stated America had the right to redefine existing rules in the name of security, to one where such redefinition was illegitimate requires a closer look at language as an interactive process. This draws attention to the relationship between words, discussed next.

Section 5: Internal Inconsistencies in the Language Game of Security

Apart from revealing an act of interpretation, I argue that Abu Ghraib problematised the Bush administration's language game of security in another way. As shown, both security and democracy were embedded in their response. Yet the duality at work created an internal inconsistency in their language game of security. The potential for a tension between security and democracy had been present from the first defining moment when the Bush administration united these concepts to justify the Iraq war. In the case of Abu Ghraib, their use of both discursive categories created a space for them to conflict in an irreconcilable way. Neither category by itself legitimated the practices undertaken in Abu Ghraib. When combined, the functioning contradictions

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[247] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2004/06/20040626-19.html

served to show that neither security nor democracy was being created by the Bush administration's war. Such internal inconsistencies, and the tensions they created, ruptured the Bush administration's overall justifications for the Iraq war, and, by extension their war on terrorism. To paraphrase Wittgenstein, the different parts no longer consisted of or functioned as a whole.

The theoretical significance of observing these internal inconsistencies is that it depicts the Bush administration's discursive response to Abu Ghraib as both a site of agency and structure. That is, it both constitutes and constrains their actions as they attempt to explain how the photographed abuses were possible. The definition of security that they introduced at the defining moment made certain discursive manoeuvres available to the Bush administration as they answered harsh criticisms levelled at their door due to the Abu Ghraib scenario. For instance, it gave them agency to declare that this was not how Americans acted or a matter of official policy. Their resort to the construction of the US as a liberator who would deliver democracy to Iraq as part of their justifications of the Iraq war served to show that what occurred in Abu Ghraib was deviant behaviour. The discrepancies were noticeable.

At a deeper level, the definition of security that the Bush administration constituted at the defining moment starts to unravel in light of evidence that torture was part of the rules of this game. Democracy was part of the background against which Abu Ghraib was understood and given meaning. Their earlier re-definition became particularly problematic in this context. Acting as a backdrop to this scandal, it provided a vivid contrast to the principles and policies that the Bush administration had promised to deliver on undertaking the invasion. As such it was impossible for the Bush administration to omit this word from their discursive response to Abu Ghraib.

The internal inconsistencies evidenced within the Bush administration's response to Abu Ghraib reflects a shift in the relationship between words. As illustrated thus far, a double level language game of security was still in play, in which security and democracy dominated. However, these two discursive categories are constantly jostling and competing as the Bush administration puts their language of security into use. They are not fixed. Nor do they carry equal weight. As seen in Abu Ghraib, the discursive categories transform from being complementary to conflicting. This

represents a very consequential shift in the relationship between the two structures of meaning. While both discursive categories were part of the grammar of the Bush administration's language game of security, they legitimated different kinds actions and thus invoked different expectations. Speaking democracy is not the same as speaking.

Reflecting on the dialectical relationship between the term security and democracy highlights how President Bush and his administration became constrained by the very discursive categories they constituted to justify the Iraq war. The presence of both structures of meaning enabled the Bush administration to be criticised on more than one level. The internal inconsistencies in the Bush administration's discursive response to Abu Ghraib enabled them to be criticised for not upholding their self-proclaimed promise to establish security in Iraq or create security.

The noteworthy point is not that the Abu Ghraib incident was unimportant in the language game of security; rather, it is to emphasise that democracy was part of their definition of security. As such, it was one of the key issues that the Bush administration had to deal with in their response. This was problematic. The evidence that Americans had tortured Iraqi civilians undermined the Bush administration's repetitive claims that the US was promoting democracy in this country.

However, it was not simply the existence of the democratic discursive category which proved problematic. Even in a securitized frame the practices uncovered and undertaken in Abu Ghraib were unacceptable. Consequently, the Bush administration's attempt to respond to these issues through a securitized speech act left them vulnerable to criticism. In the case of Abu Ghraib, the Bush administration finds itself confined to work within the clustered definition of security they constituted at the defining moment to legitimate the Iraq war. To preserve their language game of security after Abu Ghraib, it was necessary for the Bush administration to retain some consistency. In short, they could not leave their previous discourse behind to retain the legitimacy of their justifications for the Iraq war. The collapse of either security or democracy as a justifiable reason for the 2003 invasion threatened to destroy the entire language game, as they were interdependent. The fact that these aspects of their discourse of security were so closely interwoven gives the

Bush administration's response to Abu Ghraib a distinct flavour. Implementing the two level game of security meant that their response repeatedly ended up in a series of opposing positions without finding a way to decide between them. As the Bush administration works so as to make their discursive categories of security and democracy seem compatible to explain what happened in Abu Ghraib, this vocabulary cannot on its own discursive terms consistently hold to its character. Rather the Bush administration resorted to a confused account that constantly shifted between two opposing positions: that security justifies the use of torture but also creates democracy. The retreat to this two level game of security in the case of Abu Ghraib made it apparent that their justifications for going to Iraq were not legitimate, either in the name of security or democracy.

The dependence of the Bush administration's definition of security on certain contestable and contradictory assumptions bears a critical potential, as it opens up the possibility for alternative descriptions. The appearance of the language of torture is a key reference point. Paradoxically, the Bush administration's reply strengthens the dissenting voices. Their critiques flow from the enormous gaps that appear between the Bust administration's interpretation of existing rules and the principles encoded therein. In short, different actors drawing on the same shared rules reached a different conclusion about their meaning.

These inconsistencies seem unresolvable based on their arguments' own premise. Linking the discursive categories of security and democracy together in this particular way forces the structures of meaning to constantly enter into opposition. There was a particular inability for the Bush administration to uphold those differences consistently over the long-term. It was possible at the defining moment but not beyond Abu Ghraib. At the defining moment an explicit move was undertaken to construct direct discursive linkages between security and democracy. As shown in previous chapters, the latter was outlined as the best means to ensure the former. The relationship between the discursive categories of security and democracy is increasingly complicated in the Abu Ghraib context. Here the same discursive linkages turn out to be opposing. Despite the Bush administration's best efforts to retain the unison, the structures of meaning do not match. These juxtaposing oppositions are what the disputes are all about.

That the Bush administration was unable to uphold the differences signals a transformation in their meaning as well as the legitimacy of their definition. They could not decide on a preference between alternative arguments because they are not alternative at all. They rely on the correctness of each other. The Bush administration's identity and the legitimacy of their language depended on the correctness of their position vis-à-vis a threatening other. Their attempt to maintain the whole necessarily entailed privileging some of those themes and downplaying the importance of others.

Abu Ghraib demonstrates that competing narratives contained within one language game can affect the overall meaning of a language game, even one as powerful as security. This occurs when their meanings become contradictory rather than conciliatory. As shown, the mismatch between the structures of meaning constituting the Bush administration's meta-definition of security and how they are put into practice does not just affect the legitimacy of the agent, or the securitising actors, it also affects the legitimacy of words themselves. This is shown by the increased questioning of the Bush administration's security practices. This had occurred before. What was new was that they had no legitimate language with which to respond. Neither security nor democracy made the photographed practices acceptable. Put succinctly, their words had become meaningless.

Section 6: The Hidden Dangers of Speaking Security

Abu Ghraib encapsulates several hidden dangers of speaking security. On 19 March 2002, reporter Bob Woodword encountered an ebullient Secretary Rumsfeld bragging about, "the war you don't see" (Prados 2004:10). Picking up on this zone of invisibility, this section investigates several of the less obvious implications of speaking security. These reflections reaffirm the concerns raised in earlier chapters about the need to go beyond securitization and what the language of security has the power to legitimate.

Abu Ghraib illustrates that a securitized speech act has consequences that reach well beyond the simple utterance of this word. Practices legitimated by the initial securitizing speech act may not be visible at that moment. To put this into context, Abu Ghraib was legitimated as part of the securitized language game that the Bush administration constructed after September 11, 2001. The enhanced interrogation techniques which were legitimated to fight the '*curse* of terrorism that is upon the face of the earth' (Ashcroft, 15 September, 2001) were later transferred and implemented to conduct US operations in the Iraq war. This particular language of security is actually a precursor to the disciplinary idea that America was fighting a different kind of war and would act pre-emptively if necessary to defend itself. While it was apparent from the outset that the Bush administration considered their enemies as evil and employed a de-humanizing language to categorise the kind of 'parasites' they were fighting, the actual steps that they would take to pursue their security policies was not evident at the outset. There was no way to predict the outcome of this ongoing game. As events unfolded, alternative narratives become conceivable.

Another hidden danger Abu Ghraib brings to the fore is that an entire language game can collapse, even when agent still speaks security. As the Bush administration put the language game of security that they created after September 11, 2001, and modified at the defining moment to justify the Iraq war, into actual use, it propagated different meanings which elicited different responses. This pattern of flux stands at odds with the CS assumption that security is spoken according to a particular format and, by extension, that the meaning of security will remain fixed. Such observations highlight that the relationship between language and action is one of constant negotiation.

Abu Ghraib encapsulates something equally unique, the disruption of a securitized game. It was not that the Bush administration abandoned the language of security. Security was still being spoken. Instead, this language becomes meaningless, at least in terms of how the Bush administration was putting the language of security into use. Put differently, their language game of security was disputed to the point where it was no longer accepted as legitimate. Proof of this is that an alternative narrative, of torture, then emerged to directly challenge the arguments espoused by the Bush administration. Further evidence is the fact that the Bush administration had to put a

different set of meanings into practice, ones which said that the Geneva Conventions would be applied consistently rather than labeling then as simply being 'quaint'.

Again this signifies a transformation in the power with which their language of security was invested. Originally, the Bush adminsitration's security speech acts had enabled them to legitimate the use of any means necessary in the name of security. However, when the administration spoke security as a way to respond to Abu Ghraib, this language was no longer able to fulfil this function. Stepping into the discursive processes we find a site of heated contestation over the very meanings framing their language game of security. It was not simply this specific speech act that was challenged in their response to Abu Ghraib. The amalgamation of the Bush administration's previous securitizing moves and utterances came under direct scrutiny. By drawing on the larger language game of in responding to in Abu Ghraib, the Bush administration drew auxiliary discourses into the realm of critique. The doctrine of pre-emptive self-defences they constructed post September 11, 2001 and then tailored as a pretext for invading Iraq are two examples. Rather than strengthening the Bush administration's defence against what occurred in Abu Ghraib, others drew on their language of security to support suggestions that it had fuelled a context where clandestine procedures and torture were deemed acceptable. While their use of the language of security to justify the use of enhanced interrogation technquies and their reinterpretation of the Geneva and Torture Conventions may not have been surprising, the outcome it generated was unexpected: the erosion of their entire justifications for speaking security to undertake exceptional measures.[248] Such hidden dangers for participants in the language game of security are worthy of deeper consideration than they are presently granted in the CS framework.

The hidden nature of the Abu Ghraib abuses also raises nuanced questions about the role of the audience in the process of securitization. The creation of an alternative discourse to challenge the Bush administration's classification of what occurred at the prison as merely abuses was met with public outcry. The appearance of the photographs thus created a space where outside audiences gained a more powerful voice, allowing a different kind of judgment to become possible. However, the

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[248] The Bush administration are already embedded in a linguistic context

audience still had a reactionary role in ascribing meaning to the Abu Ghraib scandal. They certainly were not consulted by the Bush administration when discussion about how to redefine the Geneva Conventions were being held. This raises new problems for the CS to address. They argue that audiences need not exist when agents speak security, as the latter can be created. Yet Abu Ghraib speaks to the dilemma of when securitizing actors do not consult an audience, or withhold information that would influence whether or not the audience would accept their securitizing move. Had the Bush administration openly declared their security policies in full detail, it is less likely that the same would have received as much support. The audience would have appraised the security stakes in a different light. Such revelations demand an examination of how ethical and democratic considerations play out in a securitized framework.

Abu Ghraib raises the issue of audiences and securitized environment in another respect. A problematic admission is that the detainees held at the Iraq prison did not have a voice. Even when the picture were released it was not their interpretation that was heard. Those abused did not get to recognise or pass judgement on horrors that had been inflicted upon them. Rather the discourse that informed debates about what took place inside the prison came from outside. The victims thus constituted an external audience. When the Bush administration was uttering security to justify the war, they were not talking to them, at least not directly. Their refusal to allow military tribunals weakened any channels of appeal. Such hidden audiences and marginalised voices need to be spoken about in discussions of how the CS conceptualise the audience.[249] Detainees were practically forgotten by the outside world.

The Abu Ghraib abuses and the Bush administration's discursive response points to the instalment of a specific kind of exceptional politics: torture. Perhaps the kind of exceptionality here differs from the kind of exceptionality the CS address. Nonetheless, the treatment of detainees in this prison raises critical considerations about what sort of rules exist in securitized realms and how such standards should be defined. Whose definition should prevail? What happens when two competing definitions conflict?

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[249] Again Lene Hansen's (2006) work is an exception

In much the same way, another hidden danger that requires closer monitoring is how the meanings and rules surrounding what does and does not constitute legitimate and lawful behaviour have become questionable. As noted, the Bush administration were not breaking rules, but actively substituting them with an alterative set in the name of security. Suggested therein is that a graver danger than merely breaking the rules lies in the ability of agents to redefine them through acts of interpretation. The implications of these re-interpretations are less immediate. In many cases, such subtle modifications to the shared and established rules are almost invisible. However, while they are harder to distinguish, their effect is often profound. This is because the terms denoting standards of acceptability in the conduct of international affairs are in lieu of being altered. Intersubjective rules that were once taken for granted are no longer followed blindly, but subject to questioning. Again the Bush administration's interpretation of the Geneva Conventions, and even pre-emption, spring to mind. Reprimanding the Bush administration on its illegal policies is one thing. Preventing these policies from being put into practice is another. Taking stock of securitized environments, such as Abu Ghraib, should give us pause to reassess what the language of security can theoretically legitimate in principle and in practice. It reminds us to question what is acceptable.

Here we need to follow Wittgenstein's advice to vigilantly look and see how legitimate meanings are constantly being put in practice. This goes beyond the passivity of simply accepting or rejecting the securitized speech acts of the powerful. Greater onus must be placed on agents of all kinds to be more active in monitoring how agents are speaking security and to what ends. The accountability for wrong behaviours did not stop with those who were physically present. The working environment surrounding those enlisted soldiers was largely constituted by the language of security. In this light, the failure goes beyond the human rights violations in the prison itself. Audiences must listen more carefully to the way in which security is being spoken. The problem today is that the laws regulating the practices of war are only meaningful when they are put into practice. If they are ignored or redefined, their original meaning and legitimacy becomes more vulnerable to exploitation. Such an upheaval is particularly vivid in Abu Ghraib, where the usual balance between legal and illegal has been stood on its head.

A more optimistic dimension Wittgenstein's language games approach brings to bear on the Bush administration's interpretation of international law is that changing and replacing existing rules must be an intersubjective process. Presenting the language of security as a game rather than a speech act assumes that audiences can constantly hold the speaker to account. Because an act of interpretation is just one move in a much more complex language game, agents must constantly justify their actions in order for them to be accepted as meaningful. Moreover, their interpretation must also draw on existing rules to ensure a level of consistency between the old and the new. Within this type of setup, agents are not absolved from the ethical considerations connected to the decisions to be made. The absence of either dimension threatens the identity of the players along with the rules that constitute the entire language game. As witnessed in the case of Abu Ghraib, people can reject the arguments presented by even the most powerful actors and under the most securitized circumstances. In fact, when the Bush administration spoke security in response to Abu Ghraib, it did not elicit the meaning they ascribed to the photographed acts. Not only did the legitimacy of this agent suffer as people rejected the argumentative strategies forwarded in response to Abu Ghraib; ultimately, so too did the legitimacy of the discursive categories and rules they employed in the process.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

By way of conclusion it is helpful to return to the opening chapters which structured this work. Much has been made of the point that language matters. Indeed, this thesis has been a considered reply to the claims that talk is cheap, which suggest studies of language are irrelevant within the discipline of IR. I have sought to demonstrate just how important and costly language can be.

Before outlining the power of language, developed throughout this thesis, there is one particular argument that needs to be (re)established. My argument is not that language is all that there is. Nor have I argued that language cannot be instrumentally manipulated to serve the interests of agents. Rather, the goal has been to demonstrate that the categories and justifications which are given by rational actors are constitutive of a social realm where particular identity, norms and rules are invested with meaning. The categories used by the actors themselves within particular contexts are therefore fundamental to understanding the structures within which they act. In sum, the material state of affairs is expressed and given meaning in the construction of a language and its counterparts.

In this concluding chapter, I will draw out the broad cross-cutting themes that have emerged in the course of this research. Throughout this theoretical endeavour I have essentially proposed a different way of thinking about language, and by extension, a different way of speaking security. The first section will revisit how much language matters, not just why. From what has been demonstrated throughout this project, the latter can be concluded, the former must be constantly reflected upon. Sections 2 and 3 will focus on the results of reconfiguring the CS speech act theory with a language game approach. Summarising the main points developed could provide a valuable contribution for ongoing theoretical debates, particularly those concerned with language, security and the progression of securitization theory in IR.

Another key feature of this thesis was the analysis of the Bush administration's justifications for the 2003 Iraq war in the name of security. This case study acted as a suitable background to operationalise some of the core theoretical concepts and ideas unpacked in each chapter. However, my analysis of the Bush administration's language of security hopefully did more than this. Mapping the contours of their security strategy also shed new light on understanding how their controversial policies of pre-emptive self-defence and 'enhanced interrogation techniques' were made possible. Section 4 of this chapter will focus on what I would argue are the most relevant conclusions to be taken from the analysis of this case-study; that is, is how actors come to define the parameters of a shared game.

The chapter will close not by ending the discussion, but rather with conversation starters for the future. This shall be done in Section 5. Resisting the temptation to close the debate too soon and too quickly, I highlight questions and topics raised in my work that may provide the basis of new lines of research. I also reflect back on whether or not there might be a different way to speak security in Section 6.

Section 1: Examining How Much Language Matters, Not Just Why:

Chapter 1 established that concerns about language and intersubjectivity are generally deemed irrelevant in positivist and rational approaches found in mainstream IR. These theories remain firmly wedded to the elusive quest for verifiable truths and scientific understandings to explain the patterns of the world.

In recent years a wide range of crucial voices have sought to challenge these pervasive attitudes, and their work has made an impression on the topography of the field. To contribute to the literature that challenges the boundaries of mainstream IR, and question its practices, was a major objective of this thesis. Drawing on the so-called constructivist turn emphasizes a more reflexive line of inquiry. Such an approach undermines positivist and rationalist accounts, which assume that the actors' interests are predetermined, and that we can consequently calculate the outcome. Constructivism proposes a way of thinking about social action which challenges what

can be fully known, observed or measured. The research agenda, in this case, is not to predict stability, but to explain change. Hence, constructivists ask *how possible* questions rather than *why* questions, resulting not in a quest for certainty, but rather a quest for better kinds of knowledge.

My turn to constructivism was also prompted by the methodological desire to conceptualise language as a constitutive and constraining device. As noted, constructivism can be seen through different prisms. The theoretical fissures between conventional constructivism, critical constructivism and post-structuralism were discussed at length in Chapter 1 in order to illuminate how epistemological tensions divide these theoretical fields. To study both the constitutive and constraining dimensions of language, I sought to broaden the opposing viewpoints symptomatic of conventional constructivism and post-structuralism. Each only takes us so far in capturing the potentiality of language to be both a site of agency and structure simultaneously.

On this matter the thesis adds to the old issue of the agent/structure debate. The question of how language enables and constrains cuts to the heart of how agency and structure are conceptualised in more reflexive IR debates. Conventional constructivism is particularly ill equipped to capture the power of language. Wendt and others articulate a stance whereby the material world comprises material objects that exist independent of ideas and beliefs about them. Epistemological inattention to issue of language follows from there. While conventional constructivism follows traditional lines of argument which overlook language in the construction of social reality, the post-structural emphasis on deconstruction focuses exclusively on critique to the exclusion of other forms of meaning in use. The thesis makes an attempt to strike a balance between the two by employing a critical constructivist or Wittgensteinian approach. This middle ground bypasses the tendency to treat language as either scientific or interpretative.

While the critical constructivist or Wittgensteinian analysis adopted throughout the thesis is squarely post-positivist, it can be distinguished from the standpoint of post-structuralism. Meanings are far less unstable and slippery in a critical constructivist perspective. Without denying the performativity of language, they highlight that we

are only capable of communicating in words and actions because we are socialised into and share a range of intersubjective understandings. In contrast to the post-structuralist project, the intention is not to deconstruct categories, but rather to analyse meaning in use and how the construction of identity shapes the practices and strategies of participants in a given context. This conceptualisation of language raises the possibility for moving away from the assumption that language is a structure that simply oppresses the weak towards an alternative game of mutual constitution. With this line of argument they suggest language is not simply about signification or representation. Instead, for critical constructivists, it constitutes a way of life that facilitates multiple sets of practices within a wider context. It is this broader definition of language as a constitutive and constraining device that preoccupies us throughout the project.

Section 2: Security Through a Securitized Lens

Security has been a major theme cutting across several chapters of this project, at both a theoretical and empirical level. Having established that language matters in the social construction of meanings and realities, I sought to consolidate this argument by turning to the issue of security. The CS securitization framework was in that context chosen as a key to unlocking the power of discourse. It was argued that the CS representation of security as a speech act is useful for thinking about language as an enabling and constraining device.

While acknowledging that securitization outlines a much more substantive portrayal of the power of language in IR, this thesis has suggested three major revisions of the CS framework. As argued in Chapter 2, the goal is not to abolish the securitization approach advocated by these authors or underestimate its success in bringing discourse onto the security agenda to an unprecedented extent. Rather, the purpose of engaging with their theory was to move securitization beyond the moment of utterance to focus on ongoing practices, beyond the idea of speech acts breaking rules to one in which the agents use and even attempt to redefine rules, and beyond a singular definition of security to a clustered linguistic constellation. Taking this step provides a way to overcome and even prevent some hidden dangers of speaking

security that are unforeseen in the securitization process. This may provide the CS with some positive tools for engaging with the growing number of criticisms leveled at their door.

Beyond the Moment of Utterance

Moving beyond the moment of utterance revealed three important and interrelated elements. Firstly, it highlighted that although the speech act is an action, it is more often than not only one action in a larger sequence of discursive utterances. Building on this insight, the securitizing move can also be re-conceptualised as a series of moves that take place during the securitizing process itself. Suggesting that speaking security is more than one singular action draws greater attention to how this language functions in the securitized environments brought into being by the utterance. As shown, securitization can occur for different lengths of time. In the CS framework it is predominately presented as a short-term project. Securitization occurs at a particular moment. Without denying this never occurs, it is necessary to acknowledge that there can also be situations in which securitization lasts decades. To study these long-term processes, our analytical tools must extend beyond the moment of utterance.

Talking about different moves in a securitization process also highlights that although security may be uttered in one particular context, it may not be the first time that it has been spoken. Instead, I have argued that securitizing actors may be building on an argument that was already in place. The residue of previous speech acts will enable and constrain those speaking security to different extents. On the one hand, historical circumstances can provide the securitizing actor with a lot of agency by granting them a cultural context to frame their securitizing move. On the other hand, historical circumstances may constrain agents in a process of securitization by preventing them from being able to move beyond the legacy and realities left behind by previous security issues. Whether it is a help or a hindrance, the residue of previous speech acts are an important component in security will be spoken at the moment of utterance. Moreover, they provide a way of uncovering why some securitized moves succeed and some fail. Again, this reinforces why contextualising securitization matters.

Connecting contexts and securitising moves can alter our interpretation of the security 'ness' of the situation and its implications.

Adding historicity and longevity into the process of securitization brings a second issue to light, which is that the meaning of security, and how it is spoken at different stages of the securitizing process can be transformed. An argument has been made in Chapters 2, and parts of Chapter 3, that the CS speech act theory does not cope well with this type of transformation. This can be attributed to their fixation on the moment of utterance. Aside from their focus on a narrow timeframe, the CS assumes the word security follows settled grammatical rules. Within their security rationale, the speech act which designates an existential threat and constructs a possible way to extinguish it are the lines of demarcation. This presentation conceals more than it reveals about the full constitutive potential of a security speech act. With a securitized lens, what we gain is a rather static picture wherein the meaning of security itself is not really questioned. Their framework does not function when the definition of security itself becomes questionable. In fact, contestation over the definition of security would undercut the process of securitization.

This shortcoming is problematic. There is little if any room for argumentation. Indeed I have argued that the role of the audience is reactionary. Within their framework, events come to attention of the audience after the speaker of security has ascribed meaning to it. Ultimately, the securitizing actor speaks security which the audience then accepts or rejects. The audience therefore has very little influence in setting the security agenda or altering the terms of discussion. Audiences also play a reactionary role in the CS framework insofar as it excludes the possibility of the audience speaking first, prompting a securitizing actor to speak security in the first place.

Conceptualising the exchange between a speaker and an audience in this linear manner is problematic on a third level. It suggests control. However, assuming any speech act is a creative process reinforces that this discourse can be pieced together in a way that neither party intended. In this sense, the meaning of security lies beyond the way in which the speaker utters security and even how the audience interpret their speech act. While both sides have a role to play in constituting a language of security, their speech acts may take on a meaning that neither side considered thinkable at the

outset. Moreover, if we move beyond the moment of utterance, it becomes possible to think about instances wherein both parties may become embedded or fastened to a securitization narrative that they wish to leave behind but are unable to. The value of strengthening the dialectical relationship between the speaker and their audience with the CS framework is how it reinforces that a securitization process is never complete.

The third way in which I advanced a move beyond securitization was to reflect on how securitized speech acts were put into practice. Assuming that a successful securitized speech act creates an intersubjective context, greater attention needs to be granted into how agents speak security in securitized environments. Moving beyond the moment of utterance, it becomes a lot clearer that the way in which agents speak security at the start of the game is not necessarily the way they speak it at the end. On the contrary, the word security may lose the meaning it initially had.[250] Paying attention to these modifications is significant as different language games legitimate different kinds of actions and possibilities for securitization.

Tracing the evolution of security utterances acts as a point of departure for saying something about how the speaker and the audience are enabled and constrained in different ways, depending on the way in which security is being spoken and at what stage of the securitizing process. A theory of transformation is embedded in the CS theory but is not fully drawn out. Their framework provides essential tools for understanding the transition from politicization to securitization, but not the other way around. However, there must be ways to explain failure, of a breakdown of the discourse. So far, the idea of a failed speech act remained concentrated on the securitizing move, that is, providing a more robust way for capturing when an audience rejects the securitizing move. However, there is a need to go beyond the moment of utterance to examine when securitization can start to unravel as the speech act is put into use. The collapse of this discourse can surface before de-securitization occurs. Moving beyond the moment of utterance serves to balance the overly agentive

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[250] I am not trying to advocate having a static definition of security to be uttered universally across all contexts. Arguing that security is a socially constructed discourse negates such a possibility. What I am trying to highlight nevertheless is that there is a need to ensure that agents practice what they utter. If there claim to securitize an issue is to be legitimate it is necessary that they do what they say they will. Otherwise there is a real danger of agents speaking security without any intention of fulfilling the conditions of justification that they gave for pursuing such powerful actions.

account of language espoused by CS and reinforces the ability of language to constrain as well as constitute agency.

Beyond Breaking Rules

I have raised three original questions about the CS's claim that security utterances or securitized speech acts enable agents to break free of rules that would otherwise bind. First, the CS overlooks the ability of language itself to be a structural constraint on agents speaking security. I argue the CS account overestimates the ease of creating change and encourages complacency in the knowledge that something is being done. However, fundamental change within a discursive formation is rare. As argued, we are socialised into a language, including a political language such as security. Recognising that securitized speech acts are spoken in a context which already has meaning, highlights that while speaking security often empowers agents to break free of existing rules, it also constrains what the agent can say in a meaningful way.

Second, I argued that the CS provides very little insight into instances when agents do not wish to break free of rules at all, but rather draw on existing rules to legitimize their securitizing move. Acknowledging that agents use rules to legitimate the implementation of exceptional measures blurs the sharp boundary that the CS draws between politicization and securitization. Instead of one disappearing with the appearance of the other, they may simply coexist. Going beyond the moment of utterance, we may also find situations in which securitizing actors and even audiences may move to redefine the rules of securitization while still speaking security. The CS has little to say about cases where agents attempt to redefine existing rules rather than suspend them. However, the idea that agents engage with rules to alter them challenges the assumption that those speaking security are simply attempting to break free of rules that would otherwise bind.

My third critique of the link the CS provides between rules and securitized speech acts is that it overlooks the types of rules that exist in times of exceptionality. Such an oversight is part and parcel of their neglect of how securitized environments actually function. Realms of exceptionality are places where the laws and rules are not clear.

As the CS stipulate, agents are acting in a way that does not conform with normal sets of rules. "Extraordinary" in their account is a reference to a deviation from what is considered normal and thus acceptable. The supposition that existing rules are suspended in times of security is problematic, as mentioned earlier. It also fails to address the rules of speech. By speaking security, agents are undertaking an inherently rule based activity. Extra steps are needed to examine what exactly is legitimate in the name of security when the intentions of individuals are rarely decisive and where the rules of international law are often under duress. If the CS is to play a helpful role in any of the complex shifts that could lead to political change, such as de-securitization, a deeper level of engagement with rules is a prerequisite.

Beyond a Singular Definition

The final critique levelled against the CS is that the meaning of security is narrowly defined in their framework. Part of this stems from their decisionist, or a Schimittian view of politics, where security becomes an all or nothing issue of emergency and extreme measures. Their blueprint is premised on the designation of threat, which excludes other types of referent objects that can be considered worthy of securitization. The CS is arguably more worried about the form of act constructing security, that is, the talk of security, than conceptualising the potential for an alternative understanding and articulations of security that avoids the prioritization of security threats and enemies (Doty 1998/9).

From this angle I made a second claim, that the CS disregards the relationship between words. Within their account, the possibility that the securitized speech act can contain multiple meanings is not addressed. Although one speech act may prevail, I have argued that it may consist of a web of interrelated and even competing discursive categories. These internal dynamics influence the construction of security and the agency available to the speaker. An inattention to multiplicity is evident in the CS's work in another way. They overlook the extent to which the securitized speech act may have to coexist with other discourses within the process of securitization and beyond. The relationship between these discursive groups and how they are arranged together is important for understanding the meaning ascribed to a

given speech act. Much will depend on the particular way security is spoken, the composition of the speech act rather than the actual utterance. Acknowledging the relationship between words also offers insights into how alternative narratives emerge, either to complement or challenge the securitized speech acts. The availability of competing discourses has consequences for the kind of securitization that occurs at the moment of utterance and beyond.

Section 3: Exchanging a Speech Act with a Language Game of Security

In Chapter 3, Wittgenstein's language game approach was presented as a framework for starting to speaking about security beyond securitization. Juxtaposing the concept of a speech act and a language game raises provocative potential to provide a richer way of envisioning language as a constitutive and constraining device.

In many ways, a Wittgensteinian view on security as a language game exercise complements the CS narrow focus by pointing out more concrete conceptualizations of the meaning of security present in their securitization framework. Firstly, a language game approach shifts the analytical focus away from the speech act to a much longer and richer series of events. By emphasising meaning in use, a language game perspective helps us to examine how agents speak security over time and even incrementally. In the course of play, there is not one speech act that occurs as a once-off. Unlike the CS speech act framework, Wittgenstein highlights a constant sphere of interaction. This carves out a more central role for the audience. Because there is no such thing as a private language game, agents must explain and justify their actions. Where Wittgenstein parts company with the CS is in his claim that both sides must constantly partake in the language game in order for it to continue to exist. In order to remain meaningful, the securitizing actor and the audience must draw on this discourse as they interact.

The role of an audience is implicit in Wittgenstein's work. Instead of focusing on one specific kind of relationship, such as that between a speaker and an audience, he deals with intersubjectivity. His outlook is less divided into speaker and audience as two

distinct entities. Rather, he is more interested in the whole, the language game. Action and interaction cannot exist without each other. In a language game approach, it is the process that needs to be understood.

His emphasis on meaning in use offers new lines of inquiry into the dynamics of an evolving and unfolding language game. Put differently, it provides a more encompassing framework for examining the unfolding of a securitization process. Wittgenstein's work reinforces that all languages are vulnerable to being questioned, even the most bewitching ones like security. Emphasising multiplicity as an inherent feature of any language game, he claims that there are different ways to represent argument. This relaxes the CS assertion that security must be spoken in a particular way. In a language game, security does not need to be spoken in one way or another. Instead it can be spoken in several ways, by several agents and in several contexts. This understanding provides important methodological tools for examining how it is possible for agents to transfer from one kind of game, such as politicization, to another, such as securitization. Moreover, Wittgenstein's work highlights that these changes may occur incrementally, along with the policies derived from them.

A second major advantage that a language games approach brings to bear on a securitization process is that it addresses rules at a far deeper level. According to Wittgenstein, all language is inherently rule based. The two are mutually constitutive. Neither can exist without the other since rules are a necessary part of learning a language. By extension, agents cannot break free of rules as they cannot leave language behind. It is always there. Talking about things is part and parcel of doing things. Each is related to how agents know how to go on in acting one way as opposed to another. As shown in Chapter 3, even when agents break the rules they are still informed by them. They understand the rules and the consequences that will follow by going against them. On a theoretical level, this strengthens the power of language to both enable and constrain agency. While the CS addresses agents breaking free of rules, they do not fully outline the consequences this has for the securitizing actor or their audiences. Nor do they fully demonstrate that securitization can also create rules. Indeed, rather than fading away, rules can appear to be an inherent feature of functioning securitized environments.

The second way in which a language games approach reconfigures the CS treatment of rules is that it addresses how agents attempt to redefine existing intersubjective rules. In Chapter 3 Wittgenstein's notion of an 'act of interpretation' was advocated as a way to probe into how agents attempt to substitute one set of rules for another. This seemed to be an interesting parallel to the CS claim that securitization suspends the rules of the everyday (politicization) with the special and exceptional politics (securitization). Incorporating a Wittgensteinian approach adds depth to this part of the securitizing move. An act of interpretation is an attempt to bring a completely new set of rules into existence, rather than suspend them temporally. Also, undertaking an act of interpretation is not an easy feat. As discussed in Chapter 3, interpretation does not preclude the possibility that an interpretation will become rule if enough people change their patterns of life. However, the possibility of becoming a different kind of rule is structural. Any new language would have to be developed on the basis of the one already possessed. In order to remember these associations in the future, there would be a need to develop a rule for translating one word into another. In this respect the analysis is not just about language; it is about the construction of intersubjective realms. Such long-term processes reassert the need to go beyond the moment of utterance, to look and see how security is being spoken during the securitizing move and in securitized environments. Wittgenstein also deals with the rules underpinning speech in a more robust way. According to his point of view, a change in language signifies a change in the rules of a given language game. Such modification will in turn transform the field securitization has to play on.

Wittgenstein's work offers an important intellectual tool for unpacking a broader definition of the language of security and what it constructs. Within a language game, agents may have multiple identities as they may partake in multiple games simultaneously. This highlights the possibility of agents within and outside the securitizing process changing course. It also becomes possible to think about how actions or utterances in one sphere can spill over into others. Analysing these points of intersection is more nuanced in terms of showing how a language of security enables and constrains agents participating in this intersubjective sphere. A language game also maps out the contextual web in which security discourses are embedded. Paying attention to the relationship between words, where they crisscross and overlap, demonstrates how different structures of meaning, or speech acts, can be mobilized by

different agents. We can see how these ambiguous associations often intrude on one another, such that the concept evokes a significance greater than that which is claimed for it. A definition of a language game is a set of interrelated practices located within a larger textual web of societal discourses upon which they draw and depend. This again reinforces how it is possible for process in which dominant discourses and practices are either modified or replaced by other dominant discourse become possible.

Section 4: Linking Language, Security, the Bush administration and Iraq

It was never the intention of this research project to provide a systemic account of the 2003 Iraq war or what caused the Bush administration to pursue this foreign policy. To address these issues would demand a much more intensive study beyond the purpose of this thesis. Making the empirical case have a supporting role meant that they served as an illustrative backdrop to the different theoretical aspects and features addressed in each chapter. My main point of departure was to analyse the evolution and transformation of a language game of security.

Notwithstanding the brevity of my discussions of the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war, the case studies put into each chapter combined with the use of new theoretical prisms allowed this thesis to provide a number of conclusions that can be considered original contributions. I would highlight four of them in particular. Firstly, a Wittgensteinian constructivist approach illustrates why language matters in understanding how this invasion became possible. Secondly, it shows how the Bush administration spoke security to justify the highly controversial move. Thirdly, the idea of an ongoing language game provides a nuanced angle to explore how the Bush administration were enabled and constrained by the language of security as they put it into use at the moment of utterance and thereafter. Finally, Wittgenstein's work sheds important insights into how this discourse broke down and when it was invoked to justify the Abu Ghraib scandal.

Why Language Matters:

My discussions of the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war capture why language matters. Indeed,the enormous controversy over this invasion increases rather than diminishes the role of discourse in constructing a legitimate rationale for war. It created an intersubjective realm of action, within which certain identities and norms were made meaningful and actions justifiable. The power of these binaries are evidenced in the language used by the Bush administration, in which you were either with America or against it. This language was far from cheap. Instead it provided the Bush administration with the tools necessary to justify and gain consent for their foreign policy ventures to fight their war on terror. In the case of Iraq, the lines of identification constructed in and by their discourse constituted Saddam Hussein and his regime as an evil, existential, threat. The worst-case scenario of a direct link between Iraq and WMD firmly established itself in the Bush administration's rhetoric and became the foundation for war against Iraq from 2002 onwards. This narrative did not just classify Saddam as an outsider. It involved a much more complex construction of another subject, the Bush administration. Their identity as those who fought evil and promoted freedom strengthened their case for undertaking military actions in Iraq. The power of language to ascribe self and other identities is further apparent in the Abu Ghraib case. Relying heavily on a language of security, the Bush administration stressed that the prisoners in Abu Ghraib would not be classified as prisoners of war, but as unlawful combatants. These classifications had serious ramifications for the way in which US detainees were treated and the rights to which they were legally entitled.

How The Iraq War Became Possible

After establishing that language mattered in the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war, this thesis grappled with the question of how this war became possible. An easy answer is that America acted unilaterally to invade the country to pursue their self-interests. Materialist accounts stress that, as the only superpower in the world, the Bush administration had the military and financial resources to pursue their preferred course of action. Those with the most power set the agenda. Rationalist explanations make the case that the Iraq invasion was a way to maximise their power.

As a cost-benefit exercise, the odds of a superpower defeating a significantly weaker state were stacked in favour of America. Positivist accounts would reinforce both of the aforementioned claims. Due to their heavy emphasis on scientific methods, their line of enquiry would search for the causes behind this particular foreign policy venture.

Accepting this logic of inevitability is tempting, especially given America's military prowess and their policy of pre-emptive self-defence. I have made a different and more powerful argument. In essence I have sought to highlight the importance of language in constituting the space in which the Iraq war became not just thinkable but also possible. Taking this angle demonstrates that alternative options were certainly available. As shown, there was nothing inevitable about the invasion. On the contrary, the materiality of the war had to be inscribed with this particular meaning. Even after the Bush administration decided to go to war, there was no template ready to hand. The war, and putting countless American lives at risk, had to be justified. As shown throughout, the Bush administration constructed a language game of security to make such justifications appear legitimate.

However, this meaning of the Iraq war did not come out of the blue. Each chapter in this work has illustrated that the language of security which the Bush administration used to justify the Iraq war was already invested with a set of meaning. In terms of the genealogy of the move to invade, many of the elements underpinning the Bush administration's decision to undertake military action against Saddam Hussein had been spoken about before.[251] Nonetheless, September 11, 2001 marks the origins of the Bush administration's language game of security, founded on the principle of pre-emptive self-defence. The latter asserted that America had the right to act on the possibility rather than certainty of imminent threats. This language provided an essential component for understanding how the Iraq war came to be understood not only as a war of choice, but as a war of necessity.

Without understanding what occurred on September 11, 2001, its meaning and its impact, it is not possible to fully comprehend the language of security that was used to

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[251] As noted, there was talk about invading Iraq during the Gulf war in 1991.

legitimate the Iraq war. Pre-existing narratives allowed their justifications for the Iraq war to have meaning over others; it allowed one set of ideas to have discursive power over others. Arguing that the Bush administration's words are already meaningful within a specific context highlights the power of this discourse to enable but also to constrain them. On the one hand, the language of security constructed by the Bush administration after September 11, 2001, gave them agency to argue that undertaking pre-emptive action was legitimate and that America could use any means necessary to defend itself. On another level this same language acted as a structure. As their language of security came to acquire greater meaning, it limited the options available to the Bush administration. In short, it created the boundaries of what was permissible within this realm of action.

Defining Moments

Adopting a language game perspective enabled me to map out and trace complex cycles of interaction and sites of contestation. I have termed these defining moments. As the term suggests, these moments signify important incidences when the Bush administration had to rebuild their language game of security during the Iraq war. At each juncture the problem turns on the justifiability of assumptions. In this sense, I have analysed situations in which, although challenged, a language game adapts and prevails. This acted as a point of departure from many other critical security studies which focus on how the Iraq war was justified. Contributing to these works, I placed greater emphasis on how the Bush administration's justifications were put into use. Drawing attention to the incident when the US superpower justifications were questioned and remained questionable throughout the Iraq war, bringing the constitutive dimensions of language into sharp relief. Unlike positivist and rationalist accounts of the US invasion, a language game approach offers substantive insights into the unexpected twists and turns that this foreign policy venture has taken. Transformation can thus be distinguished as a recurring theme in the Bush administration's language of security**.**

The first defining moment to explore was when the Bush administration had to rebuild their arguments for war when no WMD were found in Iraq. Having premised the invasion on the grounds that Saddam Hussein possessed such nuclear capabilities, they now confronted a situation where he did not. The legitimacy of their justifications for the Iraq war was severely jeopardized when the UN inspectors failure to find any WMD inside Iraq. Persisting questions still linger over the legality of the invasion in light of this evidence. In the aftermath of this discovery we should have seen the collapse of a justification for war. Instead we see a survival and continuation. I have suggested the Bush administration were able to preserve their language game of security by drawing on a two level language game of security.

Overall, the Bush administration sidestepped the lack of material evidence in Iraq by denying that this was the sole reason for pursuing a forceful regime change in Iraq, if necessary. This was done on two levels. They immediately redirected the issue away from Saddam Hussein's acquisition of WMD to his failure to fully comply with the UN on this occasion and in the past. Besides diverting blame to the Iraq regime for hiding WMD, I have suggested the Bush administration were able to preserve their language game of security by drawing on a two level language game of security. Apart from accusing Iraq of failing to 'fully' comply with UN Resolution 1441, the Bush administration supplemented their justifications for the war on the grounds that they were going to democratize Iraq. As shown extensively in Chapters 1 and 2, security was still being spoken but in a different way. Bringing a democratic discourse into play gave the Bush administration some agency at this defining moment. It enabled their dominant discourse of security to remain a legitimate reason for taking pre-emptive action against Iraq. Security was not to be abandoned as the rationale for war, but democracy would increase the level of security that could be achieved.

In addition to showing how language enabled the Bush administration to justify a pre-emptive war without the existence of a serious threat, I illustrated how they were also constrained by their justifications for the Iraq invasion. This strengthens the significance of what occurred at the defining moment even further. The fact that the Bush administration had to rebuild their arguments for war shows that they were structured by their language. The way in which they justified the war limited how the administration could respond if the grounds of their arguments were seriously

challenged once it transpired that the evidence the US had used to legitimate the war was inaccurate. In order to ensure that their arguments regarding the Iraq war retained legitimacy, it was necessary to make discursive linkages. This meant that the Bush administration could not veer too far from their original justifications. Their initial argument for war was what was being disputed in this context. If Saddam Hussein's possession of WMD had not been the core justification for a pre-emptive war, it follows that the lack of material weapons would have been less contentious.

The Bush administration's shift to democracy as the epicentre of it foreign policy introduces a different kind of game. This also limited their actions since the Bush administration had to act in way that was consistent with established democratic principles. Marrying security and democracy turned out to be easier said than done. As the Bush administration put this linguistic cluster into practice, they became more and more limited. The complementary relationship between the two discursive categories of security and democracy that existed at the defining moment incrementally began to transpire into a working contradiction within their language game of security.

Chapter 4 examined a second defining moment, the Abu Ghraib abuses which came to light in April 2004, to show another stage of transformation. More specifically, I highlighted the demise if not the collapse of their language game of security. The two level language of security that the Bush administration employed constituted but predominantly constrained the way in which they could respond to revelations that US soldiers had tortured detainees in their custody. At first glance, the abuse scandal appears to depict a completely separate type of crisis than the one they confronted at the defining moment when no WMD were found in Iraq. If understood as part of the overall grammar of the Bush administration's language of security, however, the similarities and structural constraints of discourse become clearer. As shown in Chapter 4, the Bush administration did not abandon either the language or security. Rather, both functioned as crucial components in their attempt to speak security to categories that occurred as un-American and thus un-democratic on the one hand, yet to justify the use of enhanced interrogation techniques and reading of the Geneva and Torture Conventions techniques on the other. Analysing the tensions and inconsistencies created by the Bush administration's reply to the Abu Ghraib incident

with a language of security highlights how this language enabled and constrained them. Indeed, disputes about the coercive practices they classified as legitimate in the name of security erupted in the wake of this scandal. Pre-emptive self-defence became even more contested.

The language cracked at the defining moment in 2003, but it could be salvaged. In Abu Ghraib it cracked beyond repair. It was no longer possible for the Bush administration to speak security in a way that justified the use of pre-emptive self-defence and any other means necessary to fight terrorism. Instead it was surpassed by an alternative narrative, one which challenged the Bush administration's entire language game of security. Outside of their securitized game, the abusive treatment of terrorist suspects and detainees in Abu Ghraib came to be referred to what the ICRC classified as 'tantamount to torture'.

The Limitations of the CS

In exploring the unfolding of the Bush administration security frames, I raised broader theoretical questions about the way in which agents speak security and what this discourse has the power to legitimate. The empirical is as much about the justifications of the 2003 Iraq war itself as it is about the possibility of speaking security. As shown in Chapter 2, securitization can show us that this government was operating under an exceptional framework, which aggressively designated existential threats. The sense of urgency and prioritisation anticipated by the CS during a securitizing move were also recurring themes underpinning the Bush administration's discursive justifications of the Iraq war. Their absolute conviction that inaction was not an option elevated survival of us against them as the foundation for action.

However, the tensions which I have argued are at the core of the securitization concept are replicated in the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war. First, this was not the first time that they had uttered security to legitimate the use of pre-emptive measures. Instead their speech act at both defining moments emerges out of a particular context, September 11, 2001, which took place before the moment of utterance. Second, focusing on the moment that the President and his administration

spoke security to legitimate their securitizing moves in at the outset of the Iraq invasion, and later in Abu Ghraib, illustrates that it was not a single utterance. Rather the Bush administration constantly engaged in a number of securitized conversations as it justified their war.

The lack of attention given to the broader linguistic context gives the audience a reactionary if not peripheral role in a securitization process. It is commonly assumed that the Bush administration's war on terror and security discourse was produced by elites. In a strictly narrow sense, this must be right. Yet this does not get to the heart of the creation and more particularly the development of their language. Ideas are generated in a variety of places and by a variety of actors. Whereas the CS can provide certain insights into how the Bush administration spoke security at the outset, they do not take into consideration a situation where the meaning of security is contested to the point that it must be rebuilt. As argued in Chapter 2, securitization under-specifies how securitizing actors reconstitute their arguments either during a securitizing move or in securitized environments thereafter. Ignoring these aspects was insufficient for explaining how it was possible for the Bush administration to legitimise the Iraq war even when the security-ness of the situation was so highly contested.

Exploring the Bush administration's language of security as a site of contestation forces us to rethink the way in which the CS treat rules. As argued throughout, President Bush and his staff never claimed that they were acting in any way that was inconsistent with existing rules. Although they were speaking security, they were not attempting to break free of rules that would otherwise bind. My argument has not simply been that the Bush administration could have broken the rules if they wished, but that they chose not to. Nor have I suggested that they acted in accordance with intersubjective and institutionalised rules. Making a much more substantive claim, I advocated that the Bush administration engaged with existing rules and attempted to redefine them. The idea of redefinition rather than suspension places greater emphasis on the creation of rules. So far, little if no attention has been given to the intersubjective rules that are brought into being through the securitization process, either in the CS's work or that of their critics.

Working from the assumption that the Bush administration reconstituted and thus redefined their justifications for the Iraq war in early 2003, I have mentioned earlier that the Bush administration brought a two level process of securitization into being. Their discursive cluster was composed of two core categories, security and democracy. The relationship between these words complicates the boundary that the CS draws between normal and exceptional politics. In the case of the Bush administration, we find these two speech acts crisscross and overlap to the point that they are co-constitutive. The argument at the heart of securitization is that agents' securitizing moves either succeed or they fail. Both of the defining moments I have investigated are an excellent example of the limitations of this either/or dichotomy to understand the construction of security. We need sharper tools for analyzing a case of partial securitization, where some aspects are accepted while others are not. Understanding the way in which the Bush administration spoke security at the defining moment, and how this language enabled and constrained them to justify the Iraq war requires taking such additional factors into consideration.

A major benefit of adopting Wittgenstein's conceptualisation of a language game is that it provides a more nuanced prism for viewing the way in which the Bush administration spoke security to legitimise their actions. Examining this particular foreign policy as a language game of security rather than a security utterance paints a better understanding of how the Bush administration modified their justifications for the Iraq war through processes of interaction and contestation. Wittgenstein's notion of meaning in use is well suited to deal with the evolution and transformation in the Bush administration's language of security as a short-term as well as a long-term process. From this view, their justifications for the Iraq war do not constitute a single securitizing move, or a single utterance. On the contrary, a language games approach explicates how the Bush administration justified the Iraq war through a series of linguistic moves.

Exploring the contours of a the Bush administration's language game of security in this more complex way throws new light on how it was possible for the Bush administration to modify their justifications for the invasion from an argument that centred on WMD initially to ending up with democracy promotion. As he points out, the limits of our language are the limits of our world. Wittgenstein's language game

approach also illustrates the consequence of the Bush administration's redefinition of their justifications at the first defining moment. By analyzing meaning in use, the introduction of a different kind of game becomes discernable. What initially was imagined as unthinkable, legitimating a war on grounds of security and democracy, has with time been reified such that it came to represent a rational action.

Whereas rationalist and positivist approaches would treat the Bush administration's talk as cheap, Wittgenstein's work draws attention to the importance of this discursive shift. As revealed in Chapter 3, by changing their language, the Bush administration also changed the rules of their language game of security. A language game perspective reinforces the rules at play in the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war on another level. Here it is not about the US simply breaking rules, but also constantly justifying them as they act in an intersubjective sphere. Wittgenstein's arguments about acts of interpretation represent a point of departure to examine the rules at play in the Bush administration's language game of security. Underlying the whole thesis has been the argument that they attempted to substitute one set of rules with another in order to redefine them. In that sense, and if my argument stands, there is a whole new world to explore securitized environments and how rules function in times of exceptionality.[252] The Bush administration's interpretations of existing rules surrounding the use pre-emption and enhanced interrogation techniques reaffirms why it is necessary to be more reflexive about the existing way of thinking about security issues. Wittgenstein's language game approach helps to update the CS securitization framework in coming to grips with this particular topic.

From a language games perspective, the manner in which the Bush administration responded at both defining moments reveals the layers of discourse that were in play. Wittgenstein's notion of multiplicity hinges on the idea of crisscrossing structures of meaning and thus conceptual plurality. Incorporating Wittgenstein's analyses of language games to the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war, we can trace the various meanings, certain continuities and interruptions of use in the Bush administration's language of security, and also help us to understand the range of conceptual affiliates the term has picked up along the way. Their language takes many

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[252] I will return to this point in Section 5

forms, as it is not simply the criteria, but also the very meaning of security that is contested. In much the same way, Wittgenstein's notion of multiplicity allowed further explanation on the ability of the language of security to enable and constrain the Bush administration. Addressing these issues is paramount to analysing how their language of security changed at each of the defining moments investigated and the consequences of those changes. Whereas the relationship between security and democracy was complementary at the first defining moment, I outlined how that this inclusion of democracy in the Bush administration's response to Abu Ghraib pushed the limits of their language game to the extremes.

In this sense, the Wittgensteinian constructivist approach developed throughout the thesis provides methodological framework for pinpointing and explaining how the Bush administration's language game eventually collapsed when they employed this discourse to respond to Abu Ghraib. Beyond securitization, their language of security evolved and ultimately transformed into a contradiction in terms. There was a constant reproduction of their claims that America would act by 'any means' necessary in the name of security that ends up being influenced by others words such as torture. The appearance of this label threatens the entire language game that the Bush administration had constructed to legitimate the Iraq war, as well as their war on terror. The torture label also creates a tension derived from their acts of interpretation to redefine the rules as well as the discursive layers structuring their language game of security.

Regarding the latter, it is extremely relevant to understand that the Bush administration did not fade away, it became illegitimate. Moreover, it destabilised the identities and rules that were held to be real within the intersubjective realms constituted by their securitized discourse. As shown in Chapter 4, their language of security left the Bush administration with no agency to respond to these photos in a meaningful way. They could no longer go on. Abu Ghraib in itself is a symptom of a different attitude toward the securitized issue, one which already implies change. The Bush administration's 'enhanced interrogation techniques' are only legitimate within their language game of security, not outside it.

The breakdown of the Bush administration language game at the second defining moment demonstrates that the most powerful, even a superpower, cannot determine the terms of a debate. All of the empirical snippets I studied and presented lead to the conclusion that the Bush administration did not want their language of security or securitized speech acts to fail. What is fascinating in this particular case is that they were forced to act in a way they did not anticipate at both defining moments. While the language of security enabled them to make a very powerful set of claims to justify their principles of pre-emptive self-defense and enhanced interrogation techniques, events did not unfold in the way they expected. On the contrary, their employment of the same language placed them in situations where they were forced to think about how to respond. The language game approach integrated into this thesis offers an innovative and compelling argument for explaining this dramatic transformation. In sum, it allows for the possibility that rules and language may exist and function and thus seem to retain their legitimacy even when they are collapsing. This can be seen when their constitutive nature begins to weaken, as occurred in Abu Ghraib.

Section 5: Future research:

A number of potential research agendas branch out from this thesis. I will limit myself to four before reflecting on a potentially different way of speaking security.

Comparative Case Studies:

The main focus of this thesis has been on explicating the foreign policy discourse that the Bush administration used to justify the Iraq war. The terrorist attacks of September 11 2001 and America's subsequent war on terror provide the most obvious contextual backdrops to the creation and expansion of the Bush administration and their core security principle of pre-emptive self-defence.

Yet these dynamics have been played out in many times and in many places. Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan is an obvious case. The discursive linkages and disparities between the Bush administration's military undertakings in

these two theatres of war should be studied more closely. Each war is a social construction. Nevertheless, the rules of each game are not identical. There are important variations in meanings, such as the legal status of prisoners of war in Afghan and Iraq. Many of the basic facts uncovered in the aftermath of the Abu Ghraib abuses revealed that the Bush administration argued that Taliban prisoners forfeited their legal status as prisoners of war as they were in rouge states. This distinction was later extended to deal with detainees in Iraq. However, transferring the rules applicable in the Afghanistan war over to context of Iraq was problematic because as the latter were recognized as a state, with sovereign rights, whereas the former were not. Even though the Bush administration employed the same language of security, they were enabled and constrained in different ways as they carried out their securitized policies.

Going outside the Bush administration's use of the war on terror terminology is also extremely revealing in terms of undertaking comparative analysis on the processes through which their language game of security was played. The employment of this discourse during other international crises raises the credibility of America's claims that this truly was a global war. It also demonstrates the power of this particular discourse in normalising security as a common sense assumption outside the US. Nevertheless, the proliferation of the Bush administration's 'war on terror' discourse has also threatened their specific agendas. At several stages during the 2006 Israel-Lebanon war as well as the 2008 Russia-Georgia war, this same language was used to legitimise aggressive behaviour. Comparative analyses on the way in which the Bush administration, Israel and Russia conducted and legitimated their wars on terror should be undertaken. The points of convergence and divergence between them are of significance in showing how language both enables and constrains agents as they act. Further studies could also be conducted on how these interfacing wars impacted upon the meaning of each other. Did, for instance, Israel's use of this discursive frame affect how the Bush administration spoke about their war on terror? Moreover, how much room for manoeuvre did adopting the war on terror stance give each agent and their opponents?

Both of the suggested research agendas reaffirms that that which we call security can change according to context, place and time. It also demonstrates how different agents

are enabled and constrained once they chose to participate in a securitized language game.

The Nexus between Security and Rules

Another major issue that branches out from my work is the relationship between security and rules. Regarding this nexus, I would advance four main areas that deserve further attention. First, underlying this whole thesis is the idea that language is both a constitutive but also a constraining device. Acknowledging this duality requires conceptualising language as an inherently rule based activity, a structure of inter-subjective meanings that sets the parameters in which certain actions are considered legitimate while others are deemed largely unthinkable. Conceptualising language in this fashion enriches studies of discourse in IR by showing that words are far from cheap yet more robust that subjective representations.

The second way in which rules can be advanced in securitization is by starting to consider the rules of exceptionality. Even though it was a theme that ran across the vast majority of this thesis, the complexity of this issue leads me to conclude that issues remained to explore within securitized environments. One way to provide a better link between rules and securitization is to integrate international law into the debate. Taking stock of existing rules would encourage us to look and see how existing intersubjective rules are use and even abused by securitizing actors. Moreover it may provide an entry point for constructivist accounts to security issues. For instance, what are the rules of rule making?

The Bush administration's definition of security as pre-emptive self-defence is in many ways indicative of rules being redefined and legitimated in the name of security. This raises interesting yet underexplored questions of whether there are limits to which rules can be broken, and whether speaking security has actually made us safer.

Assuming that the Bush administration's language of security had been used to secretly create securitized environments in which torture was a normal practice, it is necessary to take a step back to examine what exactly is under threat. The manner in

which the Iraq war was executed and the practices this strategy operationalised have set new precedents in defining the way wars are conducted. At a deeper level, these developments exemplify the hidden dangers of speaking security. While the Abu Ghraib photographs spoke loudly about the abusive climate in operations in the Iraq war it also reinforced how vulnerable the prisoners were. As a direct consequence of the Bush administration's security policies, detainees in US custody were not privy to traditional prisoner of war status. So called 'unlawful enemy combats' were also not entitled to the rights or protections granted by the Geneva Conventions, at least not according to the Bush administration. Through the introduction and implementation of their enhanced interrogation measures, a discourse of torture became possible.

As argued, the hidden dangers of a language of security are that it makes things private rather than public. This balance needs to be rectified. A language games approach provides at least a stepping stone towards deconstructing the widely held idea this scenario is normal in times of extreme danger. In short, there should be no such thing as a language game. Building on this paves the way to investigate what rules a securitised speech acts and process of securitisation render unbinding. Are the everyday rules that are able to be set aside personal freedoms, habeas corpus? If so is the language of security really worth the costs that are lost? Whose security is being compromised? Arguably the claim that speaking security empowers agents to break free of rules that otherwise do not bind has serious implications that have not been fully considered, or even really acknowledged. It took the existence of places like Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib to bring theses issues into public discussion, but they existed before they were given negative meaning. This should not occur again.

De-securitization

As suggested throughout this thesis, desecuritizaton is a largely unexplored topic of securitization (Aradau 2004). There are two main ways in which language games present a valid contribution regarding this issue. First, it has been argued that incorporating Wittgenstein's insights sketches out a methodological framework that goes beyond securitization. This move, in turn, opens up the space to make de-securitization a real possibility. Advancing tools to trace the evolution of securitized speech acts breathes new life into how change becomes possible inside and outside

the process of securitization itself. De-securitization goes hand and hand with the transformation of a security discourse, and with it the transformation of securitized issues. They are indeed mutually constitutive. We cannot have de-securitization without a change in the security context or even the political context. There cannot be change unless things are not progressively reframed outside the discourse of security. As we have seen, such changes in argument and practice are long-term processes that in the short-term usually involve the use of exceptional practices and strategies. The Bush administration's broad definitions of who is and is not a terrorist make it difficult to know when it will be possible to return to politicised scenarios.

If this is the case, (i.e. long war and elastic/infinite number of threats) then does the suspension of the everyday remain? Problematic is the securitised logic of appropriateness becoming legitimated to the point where it may become take for granted. These challenge and will often conflict with the intersubjective standards that are available in politicisation. The extraordinary will be legitimated to the point that it challenges the legitimacy of the ordinary.

People, words and meanings will have altered due to the existence of a securitised era in and of itself. It will also have altered due to actions (communicative and physical) that occurred there. The environment, normative and material structures will not be untouched, or remain the same in a de-securitised realm. Those which existed in a securitised realm will carry over, even if it is just that the agents use different logics of appropriateness. These will at least have to be acknowledged. Securitisation doesn't simply cease to exist and all the meanings neatly tied away, just as a de-securitised realm does not cease to exist when securitisation is created. Wittgenstein and the notion of language games shows us the new requires the old, nothing occurs in a vacuum. CS undermine the presence of lingering logic and overestimate the ability of agents to render these unimportant when they utter security. Securitised speech acts draw on the rules for their legitimacy and to make them meaningful to others, particularly if we take language as a rule .

The key to understanding how the transition from one kind of game, in this case securitization, to another, such as de-securitization, relies on understanding language as a process of interaction.

Lack of attention to securitized environments links to the issue of de-securitization Securitization is key to the CS framework. The counter balance, de-securitization, is simply missing, and as such, this privileges one half of the spectrum. This is a relational enterprise. Can CS move outside of securitization? Is de-securitization the only substitute or supplement? Security and de-securitization are not symmetrical. They are different processes. Securitization process can have de-securitizing effect. But these need to be clarified and distinguished clearly from each other. A language games approach provides an alternative choice mode.

Sustainable Security.[253]

There are numerous pathways that can be taken to develop the concept of the sustainable development of security. My conception starts from the idea that a language game of security represents a constant state of play. As such it is necessary to adopt a more holistic outlook that examines how agents make their securitized utterances sustainable either as in the short-term or long-term. According to Wittgenstein, language is only sustainable through constant spheres of interaction and communicative exchanges, suggesting a community building exercise. This places particular attention on how actors contribute to, rather than reduce, insecurity. Sustainable security thus encourages the audience to gain a more participatory rather than passive role in how security is spoken and how this discourse is sustained. Assuming that securitization can only remain meaningful through constant processes of interaction strengthens issues of accountability and then responsibility in securitization. Agents must be able to constantly justify their actions in order to convince others to continue to follow the rules of that game.

The issue of sustainable security also provides an entry point to consider the relevance of securitization in grasping critical security problems, and the sources of the problems, facing modern societies. Important steps have been taken to integrate the issue of catastrophe, climate change, HIV/Aids and immigration into securitization debates. The conception of sustainable security adds a more direct link between

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[253] I have developed this concept along with my PhD colleague Gladys Mokhawa. The sustainable security framework is being promoted by Oxford Research Group as well as President Obama. However, these are two different projects. Our point of departure is to infiltrate the concept of sustainable security into IR discussions and securitization theory.

securitization and sustainable development literature. This intersection provides analytical, ontological and epistemological grounds for studying securitized environments and the kind of values, ethics and rights that function therein in a more substantive way. The Bush administration's interpretation of the Geneva Conventions illustrates how it is possible for alternative logics of appropriateness to become thinkable and even normalized in the name of security.

A central premise of sustainable security is that we cannot successfully control all the consequences of insecurity, but must work to resolve the causes. This represents an opportunity to intervene constructively in building a safer and more peaceful world.

The Relationship between Words and Images

The visibility of torture in the case of Abu Ghraib raises interesting questions about the relationship between images and how these are translated into words. The representation of actions captured in these photographs vary. What remains unclear is whether the images themselves or what they came to mean in the debates surrounding the pictures spoke the loudest. Resisting the temptation of an either/ or explanation, I would argue that it was the relationship between these Abu Ghraib pictures and the larger linguistic and material context in which they were situated that proved significant in determining them as acts of torture. Unpacking these complexities could perhaps act as a contribution to those who claim that securitization does not address non-linguistic referent objects, or routines that do not translate easily into discourse (Williams, 2003). As show in Abu Ghraib, silence can be the loudest utterance.

Section 6: A New way of Speaking Security?

The Wittgensteinian approach advanced in this thesis is not the only way to speak security. His model is not without faults. However, what he does provide is a way to try to be more self-reflexive when addressing the nexus between language and security in order to see more clearly how both constitutes human action and meaning. An important theme Wittgenstein addresses is the tendency to become blinded or bewitched by our own language use. To some extent we have reached this fork in the

road when it comes to speaking security in IR. Security matters are a signifier of our time, and any discourse in its proximity gets pulled in and complicates our ability to think about security. Through a language games approach, we gain a critical angle to look and see what language game are we in. How is security being spoken and what are the repercussions that follow on from this in securitized environments?

Moving towards an alternative way of theorizing the language of security, beyond securitization, also strengthens the ability for genuine conversation. Currently the CS securitization framework is based on a stance of talking and not listening. This is a real obstacle to encouraging genuine deliberation between those speaking security and the audiences they are trying to engage with. It also contributed to the silencing or marginalized voices. A posture of listening as well as speaking appears more possible in the broader framework of a language game. For it constantly reaffirms a welcome association of the language of security as an ongoing process of argumentation If there is to be real innovation in speaking security beyond securitization, it should involve negotiation and thus a constant possibility for change. This may well mean accepting the legitimacy of actors previously categorised as evil, and by extension, dehumanized. It will also involve listening and taking seriously voices and opinions that many securitizing actors and their audiences find troubling or at best difficult to understand. Nevertheless, including these extra dimensions reaffirms the importance of not becoming bewitched by the way we speak security.

Agents speaking security must accept the limitations of their own power. There is not one finish line. Each discourse of security, each speech act, will find its own path. Accommodating alternative viewpoints that arise in the course of play, or as securitization processes unfold, will ensure that the entire process of securitization will not engender skepticism and hostility. Otherwise, issues and actors will never leave the discourse on security within which securitization is embedded. The way in which we speak security will reflect the kind of orders we are building, whether they be politicized, securitized or de-securitized. To paraphrase Wittgenstein, the limits of our language are the limits of our world.

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