

OKSANA BELOVA-DALTON

The challenge of reset: A discourse
analysis of Barack Obama's and
Dmitry Medvedev's references
to Russia and the U.S. from 2008–2012



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I started my doctoral studies in 2010, and I had discovered the works of Ernesto Laclau by 2014. I had a feeling that, with each work, he came closer and closer to spotting the essence of social processes, which, for him, were inseparable from linguistic processes and followed similar patterns. For me, this understanding resonated with the deeper sense that, in the beginning, there was the Word. Laclau's works were illuminating and groundbreaking for me as a philologist. I wish great success to all the developers of his ideas, and, through this thesis, I hope to contribute to the research based on Laclau's scholarly heritage.

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INTRODUCTION

“Gone are the times when the transparency of social actors, of processes of representation, even of the presumed underlying logics of the social fabric, could be accepted unproblematically. On the contrary, each political institution, each category of political analysis, shows itself today as the locus of undecidable language games.”

Ernesto Laclau, *The Rhetorical Foundations of Society*

Language of/in politics has been conceptualized as (political) rhetoric, (political) eloquence, (political) discourse, political communication, political narrative, political argumentation, etc. Although those concepts may have diverging ontological and epistemological premises, they all emphasize the importance of language in politics. This realization is not new, needless to say. Already Cicero wrote that, in the disasters of the most important states, “it is by no means the most insignificant portion of their distresses which has originated from the conduct of the most eloquent men”; whereas in other situations, “many cities have been established, many wars extinguished, many most enduring alliances and most holy friendships have been cemented by deliberate wisdom much assisted and facilitated by eloquence” (*De Inventione*, I: I). Today, language is vital in the politics of democratic communities because the uneasy compact between the governor and the governed is achieved primarily through words, which are used to construct arguments. Political rhetoric is also important in authoritarian regimes: as “rhetoric is a very real communicative power”, it is understood that leaders of all regimes exercise it to various degrees (Uhr 2014: 254).

The roots of today’s understanding of political rhetoric and discourse lie in the classical tradition, which already articulated some of the tensions that we see in contemporary politics. Hence, although the present thesis works with contemporary political discourse, it leans on insights from the classical rhetorical tradition to understand the foundations of persuasive strategies still employed in today’s discourse. For instance, Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) view political discourse primarily as a form of practical argumentation, based on deliberation in Aristotle’s terms. Discussion of the classical rhetorical tradition allows us to build on the descriptions of politicians’ discourse in terms of their continuity with rhetorical traditions. Many central conceptualizations of persuasion can be traced back to the classical tradition, which is, therefore, tacitly present in today’s political discourse as well. Showing the link between the ancient tradition and today provides thus a more comprehensive overview of political text and talk. Furthermore, some insights into the classical rhetorical tradition are necessary to understand current developments in the research of political text and talk, as well as some of their shortcomings.

Many ancient Greek orators and philosophers saw the link between language and political action (and political power) in persuasion. This performative function underlies the definition of rhetoric in this dissertation. Greek orators and philosophers engaged in active debates about the nature of persuasion and the extent to which orators can lie or use the possibly unlimited power of words to manipulate human emotions and gain the support of their audience. Classical authors also established how the ideal orator should act in order to be persuasive. The ancient rhetorical tradition has been preserved, adapted, and developed, as it accompanied ever changing political action.

It is toward the 19th century that “the ideal of rhetorical deliberation by independent men of good character was replaced by the selling of packages of policies directly to the people – although charismatic leaders were still generally required to achieve this successfully” (Toye 2013: 30–31). This form of rhetoric is associated with programmatic politics, common to democracies nowadays as well, and the context of increasingly sophisticated press. In 1969, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca distinguished between classical and new rhetoric, stating that, in the circumstances of new rhetoric, it is impossible to establish absolute laws of speaking that would apply irrespective of time and culture. The shift in the general nature of rhetoric also translates into a shift in the understanding of orators. Orators are no longer considered autonomous agents making rational calculations of how to convince the audience. They are facing the challenge of the shifting meanings of signs and the situation in which signs also use speakers, not merely vice versa (Toye 2013: 74). This is the view of language that this thesis also adopts.

In this thesis, language is understood as a constitutive force. People inscribe meanings into the world through language and, therefore, close analysis of political messages becomes even more important, since leadership rhetoric, as well as debates on the political arena, serve as a crucial source of meaning inscription and reproduction: “[l]anguage is the one and the only way through which our *forms of life* can happen in the world, through which subjectivities can be created and expressed, social activities developed and pursued, and power-relations tried out and consolidated” (Carver 2002: 51). This (post)structuralist view of language as a constitutive force provided a substantial impulse for creating new approaches to studying political text and talk. According to Pedersen (2009), “although the concept of political discourse has been used for centuries to describe political debate or deliberation in political theory and philosophy, it is only within the last 40 or so years that there has been a theoretical and methodological interest in how to study the relationship between language and political action”.

Specifically, the empirical analysis in this thesis proceeds from the tenets of a poststructuralist discourse theory, and the focus is, therefore, on the tensions between various articulations within the analyzed statements and on the structural dislocation permeating those statements. Hence, it is not a study of political rhetoric, but of political discourse: analysis in the empirical part demonstrates that, as speakers use signs, they simultaneously get used by these

signs. In this interpretation, language is not a neutral medium for expressing the speaker's intentions. In line with Bakhtin (1981: 291), the thesis argues that language is overpopulated with the intentions of others, which seek to force the speaker to submit to them. Words become speakers' *own* only when speakers populate them with their own intentions and their own accents. Before such appropriation, the word exists not in a neutral and impersonal language, but rather "in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions" – it is from there that the speakers need to take the word and make it their own (ibid.). This interpersonal function underlies the definition of discourse in this thesis.

One of the key arenas where political discourse and its constitutive force play a central part is international relations between states. Diplomacy and foreign policy require effective political rhetoric. Political rhetoric also plays an important role in creating the position of a country on an international arena and in shaping the national identity. That is why the present thesis focuses on political rhetoric in the context of international relations. To be more precise, it analyzes the relationship between the two superpowers of the Cold War era: the U.S. and Russia. While the U.S. has retained its hegemonic status on the international arena, Russia has been struggling with its slippage into a second-tier power. This makes the political rhetoric of the leaders pertinent for analysis now that the identities of both countries are, to an extent, in a flux.

Political text and talk has been examined using various methods, including rhetorical criticism, cognitive approaches, discursive psychology, rhetorical political psychology, and discourse analysis (which is an umbrella term for various strands and approaches, including Laclau and Mouffe's poststructuralist theory and critical discourse analysis used in the present thesis). In the U.S., the study of presidential rhetoric has been a distinct academic field since 1979, when the Speech Communication Association of America launched its Task Force on Presidential Communication to research presidential rhetoric as a vehicle through which the president executes the power vested in his office (Windt 1986: 102). U.S. researchers have analyzed rhetoric of different U.S. presidents from various angles (for instance, national identity, immigration, civil rights, etc.) and used various methods. Although it draws on Western scholarship, Russian research on political rhetoric also has its own dynamics.

Although political rhetoric developed centuries ago as a theoretical and methodological whole, in the course of history, rhetoric was limited to style and delivery, so that students of rhetoric learned techniques for presenting what others had said without inventing their own arguments (Perelman 1979: 2). It can be said that the linguistics/philology of today also focuses largely on style, without drawing on the fundamental element of rhetorical production in argumentation and, in the analysis of existing speeches, examination of why certain arguments were chosen as constitutive parts of the political message. As a result, in the analysis of political text and talk, to compensate for invention, some kind of theorizing is necessary to help explain the argumentation itself. In

some ways, the present thesis thus seeks to go back to the ancient rhetorical tradition by discussing both style and argumentation.

The aim of this dissertation is to contribute to the ongoing academic discussion of political rhetoric and political discourse by providing, on a theoretical level, a method of analysis of political text and talk, which makes it possible to spot instabilities and dislocations within arguments and intense discursive struggles vested in the examined excerpts of political text and talk. To achieve that aim, and to provide such a method, this thesis combines the poststructuralist discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe (1985) with analytical tools from critical discourse analysis. On the empirical level, the major aim of this thesis is to apply the method proposed in the theoretical part in order to examine a corpus of selected statements by Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev to demonstrate that the method allows us to gain insights into the instabilities and struggles inherent in foreign policy discourse and the dynamics of state identity construction. The method proposed in this dissertation aims to provide empirical grounding for the poststructuralist discourse theory, which does not make micro-claims as to how textual data should be analyzed otherwise.

Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, originally formulated in the seminal book *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy. Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (1985, 2001), has been developed and discussed by Laclau and Mouffe themselves and other authors. Laclau and Mouffe's theory combines insights from various disciplines and is the result of a deconstruction of works by Marx, Saussure, and Gramsci. It takes the Saussurean idea of the structural organization of the social, but, in contrast to Saussure, views structure as ultimately open, though seeking closure. Laclau and Mouffe borrow significant insights from Derrida in their conceptualization of structure. They derive from Lacan's psychoanalysis the idea that an individual is an incomplete structure struggling for fullness: in Lacan's view, each identity is always already split and, because of that, needs constant acts of identification to deter this lack of fullness, which *haunts* it. The theory retains the Marxist idea of constant social struggles for power, but abandons the economic and class determinism theorized by Marx. The theory adopts Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony, or "manufacture of consent", suggesting that power needs to be articulated rather than simply imposed by force:

[i]f there is no final ground, the terrain upon which we live is inherently undecidable. But to avoid the psychotic state of living in undecidability, decisions (to identify with particular political projects and the discursive formations they articulate) must be made. Hegemony is attained – albeit only temporarily and precariously – when there appears to be no alternative to a certain political project. (Macgilchrist 2011: 5)

Laclau and Mouffe themselves labeled their theory "post-Marxist" and "neo-Gramscian". Torfing (2005: 161) remarks that Laclau and Mouffe's theory "is

neither a substantive theory covering a particular field or subfield, nor an elaborate system of analytical categories and typologies that aims to map the world in an isomorphic way. Instead, it provides a consistent set of concepts and arguments” for analyzing the contingency of social identities. Concepts from Laclau and Mouffe’s theory chosen for the empirical analysis in this thesis are articulation, elements, moments, empty signifier, nodal point, chains of equivalence/difference, constitutive Other, constitutive outside, dislocation, decision, interpellation, structural closure, and hegemony / hegemonic move.

Laclau and Mouffe, however, work on a high level of theoretical abstraction, without providing a practical analytical framework for an empirical study. To bridge this gap, analytical tools from critical discourse analysis (indexicality and assumptions) are used in the empirical analysis to help trigger the aforementioned analytical concepts from Laclau and Mouffe’s theory and, in that manner, provide a way of empirical grounding of poststructuralist discourse theory, since linguistic analysis of specific textual excerpts is one of the ways to validate the abstract theory of the social. Although there have been attempts to operationalize Laclau and Mouffe’s theory at the level of textual analysis in order to gain various insights (e.g., Norval (1996), Müller (2009), Nonhoff (2006), Nabers (2009), Macgilchrist (2011), Angermüller (2013)), Laclau and Mouffe’s theory has not yet been combined with assumptions and indexicality for detecting structural dislocations and discursive struggles within arguments in an empirical study of selected statements. Therefore, this new method of analysis constitutes a major contribution made by this dissertation to the existing literature on research of political text and talk.

Indexicality, or indexical expressions, in Chilton’s terms, refers to “linguistic resources used to perform *deixis*” and make the interpreter “relate the uttered indexical expression to various situational features” (Chilton 2004: 56). In terms of processes of identity formation, detailed analysis of deictic expressions helps detect the dynamics and ambiguity of Self/Other relations. Assumptions in Fairclough’s (2003) reasoning refer to implicit meaning-making, which is not asserted explicitly. Detecting assumptions in political messages is a powerful tool of spotting the dynamics of hegemonic struggle and grasping implicit meanings motivated by the processes of state identity formation.

One of the aims of the chosen research design is, apart from operationalizing Laclau and Mouffe’s theory, to provide a method of textual analysis that can be applied to juxtapose and analyze texts in different languages and sociopolitical contexts. Owing to its abstract nature, Laclau and Mouffe’s theory can definitely serve that purpose. The CDA methods employed in the empirical analysis of this dissertation are widely applicable, too, since assumptions are made in texts in all languages. The same applies to the construction of deictic center and the coordinates of entities on the deictic axes, which is similarly universal.

The empirical section examines a corpus of political messages of Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev from 2008–2012. That period is especially appropriate for analyzing and juxtaposing presidential rhetoric of the U.S. and

Russia because, in both countries, young presidents came to office, both willing to improve the situation in their own countries and on the international arena, including in U.S.–Russian relations. They in particular initiated *a reset* in U.S.–Russian relations. The reset agenda was officially articulated first on 7 February 2009 by Vice President Joe Biden in his remarks at the 45th Munich Conference on Security Policy. Soon after, large-scale cooperation was negotiated between the U.S. and Russia. In their mutual statement, Presidents Obama and Medvedev sought to “move beyond Cold War mentalities and chart a fresh start in relations between [their] countries”¹, and, between 2009 and 2011, their administrations achieved substantial progress in the areas of security and economy, although, in retrospect, the period of reset was relatively short. This makes it even clearer that the success of the process depended on the two presidents at the time, thus making it even more important to study their rhetoric. This attempt to find new paths in that often tension-filled relationship makes the corpus of Obama’s and Medvedev’s political rhetoric on U.S.–Russian relations a very fruitful material for analysis.

Barack Obama was the first Black U.S. president, educated, eloquent, sending a message of unity, hope, and change to his people. Obama started the 2008 presidential race as an outsider, with a Muslim middle name and a Kenyan father (Leith 2011: 2019). Nevertheless, he managed to create a connection with American history in his rhetoric and embedded himself in the American tradition by designing his rhetoric with echoes of Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King (ibid.). Obama’s presidential rhetoric has received considerable attention from researchers (on topics like race and racism (Walters (2007), Teasley (2010), Temple (2010), etc.), U.S. national identity (Sweet and McCue-Enser (2010), Hammer (2010), Coe and Neumann (2011), etc.), Afrocentricity (Stewart (2011)), terrorism (Sarfo and Krampa (2013)), Ellison (2013), etc.), etc. However, there are not many studies that focus specifically on references to Russia in Obama’s first-term presidential messages and on the U.S.–Russian reset. That is one of the gaps this thesis aims to fill.

Dmitry Medvedev, although promoted and backed by Vladimir Putin, without having to undergo a harsh presidential campaign, was a young, educated president, having distinct political views and being oriented toward an innovative development of Russian economy (as opposed to an economy based on export of raw materials), as well as toward the spread of liberal values of democracy and human rights in Russia. Andrew Wilson (2008: 1) saw Medvedev as “a 42-year-old, English-speaking, economically literate lawyer, often described as a *liberal*, the ex-chairman of Gazprom cuts a different figure from Putin and his political mentor’s KGB acolytes”. Hahn (2013) views Medvedev’s presidency as a “thaw” (*ottepel*) in Russian politics, which improved Russia’s relations with the West. Nevertheless, it was Medvedev who, after the Russo–Georgian War in August 2008, explicitly stated that post-Soviet

¹ Joint Statement by President Dmitry Medvedev of the Russian Federation and President Barack Obama of the United States of America on 1 April 2009.

Russia would keep its zones of special interest. Thus far, Medvedev's presidential rhetoric has found relatively little thorough academic analysis (e.g., Ivanova (2011), Mikheyeva (2010), Morozov (2010), Malinova (2011), Klyuyev (2016)), which is another gap that this thesis aims to fill.

The research design of this thesis allows for analyzing the dynamics of identity construction of Russia and the U.S. in the messages of Medvedev and Obama, respectively, since, while dealing with political rhetoric, it is essential to consider the processes of identity formation of a state. Speaking about the U.S., for instance, Medvedev inevitably constructs a particular view of the U.S. and, at the same time, relates that view to a particular view of Russia, which he is constructing and promoting. The same can be said about Obama when he is referring to Russia. Hence, while analyzing political discourse, it is vital to have a theoretical framework for explaining identity construction processes, as well as analytical tools for detecting these processes in particular pieces of text and talk. Tsygankov (2016) argues, for instance, that, in the distinctive character of Russian foreign policy and its, at times, drastic shifts, domestic politics and identities play a major role. Even before Medvedev's presidency, as Browning (2008: 5) believes, Putin's position was more sophisticated and ambiguous than a ruthless pursuit of national interests, and its analysis needs to be informed by an understanding of Russian identity elements. According to Browning, "[t]he core identity strands at play are arguably encapsulated in tensions surrounding Russia's desire to be accepted into international society, its desire to reassert great power status, and its tendency to assert an identity of Europeanness while, at the same time, remaining suspicious of Western intentions" (ibid.). On the other hand, according to Browning, Russia's difference is the challenge allowing the West (of which the U.S. is quintessential part) to construct itself as benevolent and charitable (which teaches wisdom to the needy), and which should, therefore, be cherished.

In Laclau and Mouffe's terms, identity formation is a result of hegemonic struggles. Since differential entities that comprise a community are not united by an essence underlying all of them, it is hegemonic relation that constructs identity and limits of the community (Thomassen 2005: 104). "Identities are social constructions, which come into being through the competition of hegemonic (and counter-hegemonic) discourses for the definition of empty signifiers, such as *democracy* or *the nation*" (Casula 2007: 3). By conceptualizing identity as the contingent result of discursive processes and as part of the hegemonic struggle, Laclau and Mouffe reject, e.g., the Marxist idea that each individual has objective class identity even without realizing that. They also step aside from essentialism, which considers identity as an "inner core to be expressed across contexts" (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 43) or as a stable set of features believed to represent an individual / a group and distinguish them from other individuals/groups.

Existing accounts of Russia's relations with the West, which proceed from constructivist approach to international relations, serve as a valuable contribution to the macrolevel of this thesis, e.g., Tsygankov (2010, 2012, 2017,

2018), Hopf (2012), Snetkov (2012, 2015), Morozov (2008, 2009, 2010, 2015, 2018), Macgilchrist (2011), Casula (2007, 2013b), Müller (2009), etc. Such a solid foundation is necessary prior to proceeding with a linguistic study of the selected corpus. At the microlevel, this thesis compares Medvedev's and Obama's discourses on U.S.–Russian relations, their construction of reset and decisions made to avoid existing or potential dislocations therein, their hegemonic moves, the chains of equivalence/difference that they constructed, the articulations that they sought to suppress, etc. The linguistic analysis examines what assumptions Obama and Medvedev made, how they constructed the deictic center, together with the coordinates of the entities on the deictic axes, and what was achieved by both presidents by using these linguistic tools.

The first chapter of this dissertation provides a brief description of the evolution of political text and talk in the Western tradition. It discusses political rhetoric in the U.S. and Russia, modes of analysis of political rhetoric and discourse more generally, and presidential rhetoric more specifically in the U.S. and Russia. The second chapter is devoted to a description of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory and the analytical tools used in the empirical analysis. The third chapter provides a description of the CDA methods applied in the empirical analysis (indexicality and assumptions), outlines the analytical procedure for the empirical analysis of the selected corpus of texts and comments on the limitations of such an analysis. The fourth chapter provides a description of the overall context of U.S.–Russian relations, proceeding from identity formation processes of both countries, and briefly comments on Russia's relations with the West and NATO. The fifth chapter is devoted to an empirical analysis of Obama's messages concerning Russia during his first term in office. The sixth chapter contains an empirical analysis of Medvedev's messages concerning the U.S. during his presidential term. The thesis ends with an overall conclusion, which comes back to the theoretical concepts after the empirical analysis and demonstrates that the innovative method of analysis proposed in this thesis has worked in actuality and yielded abundant results. The conclusion also emphasizes the importance of the reset discourse, developed by Obama and Medvedev, in both future politics and future research on U.S.–Russian relations.

CHAPTER 1:

Evolution and analysis of political text and talk

“I have always maintained that one could approach the problems of ideology and by extension the problems of politics only on the basis of critical-linguistic analysis, which had to be done on its own terms, in the medium of language /.../”

Paul de Man, cited in Laclau’s *The Rhetorical Foundations of Society*

To frame the analysis of today’s political discourse in the following chapters of the thesis, this chapter first gives a brief history of the evolution of political rhetoric as an inseparable part of politics and education more broadly. Since the empirical part of the thesis concentrates on today, the discussion merely touches on the major cornerstones in the history of rhetoric and important changes in the development of political text and talk in the Western tradition. The literature review then provides various definitions of political rhetoric/discourse and describes major trends in their analysis. To show the research gaps that the thesis seeks to fill, the chapter then gives a brief overview of presidential rhetoric in the U.S. and literature overview of its analysis, focusing on the first-term presidential rhetoric of Barack Obama. The chapter ends with a brief discussion of political rhetoric in Russia, with a special focus on presidential rhetoric of Dmitry Medvedev, and literature overview of approaches to research of political linguistics by Russian scholars.

1.1. Evolution of (political) rhetoric

What is known as classical rhetoric is a complex of social and political practices, as well as corpora of texts that describe and illustrate them (Kennedy 1999: 1). Principles of Western political rhetoric derive from ancient Greece (loc. cit. 6). Rhetoric especially flourished in democratic Athens during the 5th and 4th centuries BC, where the power of decision was in the hands of a mass audience and public speaking served as a primary political tool. Athenian political thinkers from Aristophanes to Demosthenes contemplated how the audience could be led to realize their best interest through public speech. Isocrates established a school to prepare students for leadership in various Greek cities, with rhetoric as a central subject in this education (Kennedy 1999: 38). Isocrates’s curriculum was the basis for the teaching of rhetoric in the Macedonian Empire and the later Roman Empire. Isocrates’s views of rhetoric deeply influenced European culture up to the 18th century by providing the agenda for teaching rhetoric (Conley 1990: 32). For Isocrates, eloquence was the primary feature of oratory. His tradition is characterized by “emphasizing written rather than spoken discourse, epideictic rather than deliberative or judicial

speech, style rather than argument, amplification rather than forcefulness” (Kennedy 1999: 45). His method of instruction stresses imitating the invention, arrangement, and style of different speeches. Importantly, for Isocrates, rhetoric is a branch of politics, as opposed to, for instance, Plato and Aristotle, who discuss rhetoric at a high level of philosophical abstraction (Murphy 1981: 7).

Aristotle in his *Rhetoric* treats rhetoric as a neutral and useful tool because people need to defend themselves “with speech and reason” even more than “with their limbs” (*Rhetoric* I; 1). He downplays the potential dangers of misusing rhetoric. Aristotle maintains that flattery and emotional appeals in public speaking are necessary because the public largely consists of “persons who cannot take in a complicated argument, or follow a long chain of reasoning”, and who can be easily distracted or influenced by flattery or self-interest (*Rhetoric* I; 2). Aristotle believes that it is not enough for the orator to have the “exactest knowledge” and speak the truth; it is necessary to persuade the audience in the truth of his words. Because the topics discussed in public speeches “draw upon the regular subjects of debate” and “present us with alternative possibilities”, the credibility of the orator and favorable mood of the audience are necessary to banish possible doubts (ibid.). Therefore, for Aristotle, persuasiveness, not knowledge, plays the primary role in public speaking.

In his method, designed for political, forensic, and ceremonial rhetoric alike, Aristotle identifies three modes of persuasion, which need to be achieved rhetorically, or by what one says, and not by what one actually is (ibid.). The first mode of rhetorical persuasion, *ethos*, concerns the orator and is based on his credibility, since a trustworthy person is expected to speak reasonably. In Aristotle’s terms, to sound credible, an orator needs to display “good sense, good moral character, and goodwill” (*Rhetoric* II; 1). The second mode of rhetorical persuasion, *pathos*, aims at creating benevolent feelings in the audience (*Rhetoric* II; 2). The third and the most important mode of rhetorical persuasion in Aristotle’s terms is *logos*, which concerns the argument itself. These three terms continue to be useful to this day in analyzing political text and talk.

Within the Roman context, Cicero’s *De Oratore* takes over Aristotle’s idea of three modes of persuasion and calls them *probemus* (proving the truth of the case), *concliamus* (winning over the audience), and *animos ... vocemus* (evoking relevant emotions in the audience) (Kennedy 1999: 114). Subsequently, Cicero turns three modes of persuasion into the “duties of the orator”, which are *probare* “to prove”, *delectare* “to delight”, and *flectere* “to stir”. Each of the duties is identified with a particular style: plain style for proof, middle style for pleasure, and grand style for emotions. These duties were also discussed in Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria* and later served as an important tenet in Christian rhetoric, elaborated on by St. Augustine in *On Christian Learning* (ibid.).

After Alexander the Great and, later, the Roman Empire, conquered Greece, Greek schools of grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy (in the Isocratic tradition) spread throughout Asia and North Africa. During that period, Greek rhetoric

developed five canons (invention, arrangement, elocution, memory, and delivery), stasis theory (a question-phased approach to facilitate the process of invention of the argument), figures of thought, and figures of speech (including tropes) (Kennedy 1999: 98). Cicero reiterates the five canons in *De Oratore*: “that man, in my opinion, will be an orator, worthy of so great a name, who, whatever subject comes before him, and requires rhetorical elucidation, can speak on it judiciously, in set form, elegantly, and from memory, and with a certain dignity of action”. Greek rhetoric, together with its canons, became the basis of European rhetorical education for centuries to come.

Around the 2nd and 1st centuries BC, Roman thinkers started to write on rhetoric in Latin, relying mostly on Greek sources. Hermagoras of Temnos elaborated on the five canons of rhetoric and stasis theory – Cicero and Quintilian discussed these and other issues in Latin. For Hermagoras, as well as for Cicero and Quintilian, rhetoric was part of politics (*civilis ratio*), and its aim was to persuade the audience (Kennedy 1999: 102). This approach is less philosophical and more practical than Aristotle’s, making effectiveness the primary aim of a good speech (Murphy 1981: 81). Cicero’s influence on Roman rhetoric was so significant that the latter can be called rhetoric in the Ciceronian tradition, with its distinct “pragmatic tone closely associated with Roman law” (Murphy 1981: 42).

Because of its nature as a public and practical art, rhetoric was adapted to the needs of Christian European society between the 5th and the 15th century. Ciceronian rhetoric influenced medieval education, civic administration, private life, and church practice. St. Augustine’s *De Doctrina Christiana* proposed the union of rhetoric and Christianity (Murphy 1981: 43), serving as “a Christian theory of literature” and the basis of medieval preaching (loc. cit. 47). In *De Doctrina Christiana*, St. Augustine advocates learning the principles of classical rhetoric to discover, present, and defend the truth of the gospels, or learning to employ pagan writers without paganizing Christianity (Herrick 2001: 128).

The Christian educational reformer Martianus Capella wrote on the subject in his *Book of Rhetoric*, widely used in medieval schools. The book proceeded from Cicero’s five canons of rhetoric: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. Capella proposed a new curriculum comprising grammar, dialectic, rhetoric (the trivium, concerned with words) and geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and music (the quadrivium, concerned with mathematics). Rhetoric was one of the seven liberal arts, upon which education of medieval European universities was grounded. As a result, graduates from the medieval universities all over Europe were educated in the same Latin-based rhetorical culture and could understand each other without difficulties (Khazagerov 2002).

In the 12th and 13th centuries, sermon and letter-writing constituted the primary genres of rhetoric. In the Late Middle Ages, there were few opportunities for public debate. Rhetoric of this period focuses on matters of arrangement and style rather than matters of argument, the latter being assigned to logic. Nevertheless, rhetoric formed a very significant part of medieval education: some books used for rhetorical education in the Early Middle Ages

continued to be relied upon more than a thousand years later (Herrick 2001: 124).

The revival of classical rhetoric during the European Renaissance (from the 14th to the 17th century) resulted from a renewed need for civic rhetoric (Kennedy 1999: 3). Rhetoric attained a high status as a subject of study during the Renaissance for at least two reasons. Firstly, it was considered a means of moral contemplation and personal refinement. Secondly, rhetoric was regarded as a way of winning political power in cities, like Florence, where the process of discussion, debate, and accommodation shaped political actions (Herrick 2001: 153). Notably, the rediscovered full text of Cicero's *De Oratore* was the first printed book in Italy in 1465 (Kennedy 1999: 115). Aside from Latin, a significant number of rhetorical handbooks were also written, printed, and disseminated in the vernacular (Toye 2013: 22).

However, various historical circumstances contributed to the decrease in the significance of classical rhetoric. For instance, Petrus Ramus, an influential French educational reformer of the 16th century, in his opposition to scholasticism and the authority of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian, limited rhetoric to style and delivery, while invention and arrangement were assigned to dialectic. According to Perelman (1979: 2), Ramus undid the previous rhetorical education and, as a result, students of rhetoric learned techniques for presenting what others had said without inventing their own arguments.

In the 18th century, the spread of newspapers, the growth of representative institutions, and the ideology of Enlightenment reshaped how rhetoric was delivered and received (Toye 2013: 24). Speeches were driven by complexity and rationality. Hence, appeals to pathos were reduced in public discourse, and eloquence was limited to good sense, delivered in proper wording. Consequently, the authority of rhetoric declined: *rhetoric* was used synonymously with *deceit*. For instance, in John Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), rhetoric is called a "powerful instrument of error and deceit" (Essay III, chapter x, part 34). Whatley (1828: xxxi) referred to rhetoric as an "empty declamation, or /.../ dishonest artifice" (cited in Condor et al. 2013: 264). However, Locke, as well as many other Empiricist philosophers, faced, "with some apparent embarrassment", the need to resort to rhetorical methods in order to explain one's ideas to other people (Kennedy 1999: 270).

New forms of government emerged which required more public deliberation (Toye 2013: 27). Toward the end of the 18th century, politicians in Britain, as well as in the U.S., tended to win the trust of the voters mostly based on character. Toward the end the 19th century, however, even though personality retained its importance, the primary appeal in political rhetoric shifted to policy. Therefore, instead of rhetoric praising the candidate, we increasingly see rhetoric seeking support to a concrete world view. Hence, politicians were expected to provide a detailed overview of further action and were judged based on whether their promises corresponded to reality. "The ideal of rhetorical deliberation by independent men of good character was now replaced by the selling of packages of policies directly to the people – although charismatic leaders were still generally

required to achieve this successfully” (Toye 2013: 30–31). This form of rhetoric is associated with programmatic politics, common to democracies nowadays as well.

The features of contemporary democratic rhetoric include informality and self-deprecating humor; e.g., in the case of Ronald Reagan, who was called “the Great Communicator” (Kane and Patapan 2010: 78). Furthermore, as a regime becomes more democratic, *oratorical* or high-flown speeches tend to be reserved for special occasions, like inaugural address, solemn ceremony, or times of crisis. Political rhetoric is also closely connected with the broader media politics, where speeches have become a major factor of accountability for public officials, and their content needs to be carefully weighted (Windt 1990: 11). Today’s political rhetoric reaches a massive audience through continuous cable news, satellite radio, Internet news and gossip websites, abundant citizen-journalist bloggers, etc. (Berry and Gottheimer 2010). Hence, it can be said that the intended audience is not present in the immediate audience, but millions listening to the radio, watching television, reading newspapers, and browsing the Internet nationally and worldwide. A political communicator may thus need to address an audience which he/she does not represent or to which he/she may not be politically accountable (Condor et al. 2013: 265).

The context of a political message is extended not only spatially, but also temporally. On the one hand, political messages are so numerous that Harold Wilson’s famous aphorism “a week is a long time in politics” is very fitting. On the other hand, however, most political messages have an infinite life in the electronic resources, from where they can be retrieved at any time (Condor et al. 2013: 265). The essentially verbal logic of traditional rhetoric is extended in the modern context to include a visual component. While earlier research on political rhetoric focused on oratory, scholars have recently also come to study what Barthes (1977) called the “rhetoric of the image” (Condor et al. 2013: 265). Generally, what contemporary political rhetoric is concerned primarily with is constructing a consistent image, or character, of a politician through rhetorical acts (*The Economist* 2008: 21). Today, political leaders also cannot control or predict how their message will be presented to the public by the media. Because of the importance of the media, political leaders and their teams invent strategies for getting their message across with the least possible reinterpretation or engage in media management (Kane and Patapan 2010: 87). After all, as Tsygankov aptly puts it, “in this new brave digital age, media, more than ever, are a critical tool of global governance and soft power” (Tsygankov 2017: 31).

These developments help to understand the discursive strategies employed in the corpus studied in the present thesis. On the one hand, the texts grow out of the shared Western rhetorical tradition, but, on the other, they are also the result of today’s complex mediatized political environment, in which leaders have to address multiple audiences at the same time.

1.2. Definitions of political rhetoric and discourse

Researching rhetoric as the “theory of discourse” (Kennedy 1999: 291), or the gradual historical formation of the patterns and rules according to which people communicate today, makes it possible to trace the development of the discursive practices of (political) rhetoric, transformations in what is being considered persuasive, so that one’s arguments would be accepted not only as rational and meaningful, but also as the most convincing. According to Uhr (2014: 253), rhetoric is “a persuasive performance using plausible but non-scientific evidence to persuade and convince audiences of the benefits of the proposed action”. It is through persuasion that dominant discourses can be constructed and disseminated: “[p]olitical discourse is intrinsically persuasive and always informs a power relation” (Ferrari 2007; cited in Unvar and Rahimi 2013: 12).

There are numerous definitions of rhetoric. Van Dijk (1997: 34) maintains that rhetoric has been a “broad label” which has included the development and investigation of political discourse. Kennedy (1999: 2) argues that “all communication involves rhetoric”: each speaker/writer has a purpose, and rhetoric provides the means for accomplishing it within a certain culture. For ancient Greeks and Romans, rhetoric was primarily an art of persuasion, mostly oral, and used mostly in civic life; it was an act rather than a text, even though it could be treated as text after the delivery on a specific occasion (*ibid.*). In democratic Athens in the 4th and 5th centuries BC, citizens who frequently spoke before the Assembly to introduce and promote a policy were regularly referred to as *rhētores*, so that *rhētōr* is often translated as ‘politician’ (Yunis 1996: 10). This primarily civic assumption of classical rhetoric gives the term *rhetoric* continuity in the discussion of political text and talk. Additionally, we have the discipline of rhetoric that has been a source of knowledge about, and rules for, speaking and writing ever since the ancient times.

Aristotle was the first scholar to differentiate types of rhetoric based on public speaking by orators in assemblies, courts, forums, etc. of democratic Athens. Before Aristotle, it was difficult to speak of rhetoric as a coherent discipline. Plato used the term *rhētorikē* in the sense of *technē rhētorikē* ‘rhētōr’s art’, but, “after Aristotle, the discipline of rhetoric began to attain its mature form, which was more narrowly, systematically, and academically concerned with the art of verbal persuasion, written as well as spoken” (Yunis 1996: 17).

Aristotle divided rhetoric into deliberative or political (related to choosing among alternative courses of action concerning war and peace, national defense, trade, and legislation), forensic or judicial (related to speaking in law courts on the issues of accusation, justice, and truth concerning past events), and epideictic or ceremonial (related to attributing praise or blame) (Condor et al. 2013: 264). According to Aristotle, the aim of political oratory is to recommend expedient courses of action and denounce harmful ones (*Rhetoric* I; 3). Aristotle’s genre division of rhetoric is not a rigid classification, but an

analytical tool, for political addresses can combine elements of different types of rhetoric (Yunis 1996: 14). In the context of today's permanent election campaigns, for instance, the distinction between political and epideictic rhetoric is blurred because, although deliberation is taking place, the moment of decision-making is fairly distant (Khazagerov 2002).

After the linguistic turn, viewing text and talk as strategic communicative action, rhetorical studies expanded to domains other than politics and law. For example, Booth (2004: xi) argues that "rhetoric is employed at every moment when one human being intends to produce, through the use of signs or symbols, some effect on another" (cited in Condor et al. 2013: 264). It can be said that this resulted in political rhetoric becoming a separate field of study. As Chilton (2004: ix) maintains, "rhetorical practice, in the form of public relations and 'spin', fuelled by the media explosion, is now more center stage than ever". Today, for many researchers, *rhetoric* and *political rhetoric* are largely synonymous because, as Gill and Whedbee (1997: 57) note, many people tend to believe that "the essential activities of rhetoric are located on a political stage" (cited in Condor et al. 2013: 264). The same blurring is evident in the discussion of *discourse* and *political discourse*, as, in some theories, any discourse is a priori political.

Since the 1960s, there has been active scholarly interest in political text and talk in a number of academic disciplines. Condor et al. (2013: 286) argue that work on political text and talk is not limited to any particular academic discipline and that "there is no single essential feature that can be used to distinguish theory and research on political rhetoric from work on political argument, debate, communication, or discourse". Narrative theorists treat political text and talk as *political narrative*, or a speaker's story about politics, her/his way of "thinking about politics" (Freeden 2008). Van Dijk (1985), in contrast, considers classical rhetorical theorists, like Aristotle, Quintilian, and Cicero, as the first discourse analysts (Tracy 2001: 727). Accordingly, it can be seen that there is no scholarly consensus about the precise distinctions between rhetoric and discourse analysis.

In this thesis, political rhetoric retains its Aristotelian definition as the art of verbal persuasion (spoken and written). In contrast, political discourse, discussed in more detail in section 1.4, refers to relatively regular language patterns, or discursive practices, in the domain of politics – it is according to these patterns that people structure their statements (Foucault 1972). In discourse analysis, discursive practices should be studied together with their relation to the social and political context in which they are produced. Such integrated analysis "offers an adequate insight into the complexity of political processes, institutions and systems" (van Dijk 1997: 41). Hence, discourse refers to language structures, but also to language as a structure or system. For Sheigal (2000), "political discourse represents a peculiar sign system in which there occurs modification of the semantics and functions of various types of

language units and standard speech actions”.² Bazylev (2005: 5) advocates a more social interpretation, stating that (political) discourse is one of the two parts of the semiotic process which also contains “the world of nature” (or nonlinguistic practices). He claims, for instance, that “Russian political discourse can only be comprehended within its diverse relations with these two macrosemiotics: the history of our country /.../ and the history of verbal art” (ibid.).

Condor et al. (2013: 262) contend that summarizing the field of political text and talk is difficult because there has been little dialog between researchers in different disciplines, like linguistics, political science, international relations, communication studies, political psychology, etc. In the same vein, it can be argued that intercultural dialog between scholars of political text and talk is even more severely limited, often for political, ideological, financial, geographical, or linguistic reasons. For instance, Gilbert (1999: 15) has noted that, in social sciences, we can talk about “Russian academic isolation from published research in other parts of the world”, resulting in research being based on Western *borrowings*, which may be out of date or of questionable validity. It is not possible to discuss all existing ways of analyzing political text and talk. It is also not always easy to distinguish clearly between all current approaches to political text and talk because many of them become parts of complex approaches and absorb more and more principles. This thesis seeks to give an overview of major methods used to analyze political rhetoric and discourse in Russia and the West. The aim of this overview is, among other things, to show that, although there are numerous methods of analyzing political communication, there is no method that, while using linguistic tools, focuses specifically on spotting intense discursive struggles and instabilities at the level of utterances in political discourse.

1.3. Modes of analysis of political rhetoric and discourse

One widely applied method of analyzing political text and talk is contemporary rhetorical analysis, or rhetorical criticism. Chaïm Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca’s *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* (1969) offered a new way of approaching the categories derived from classical heritage. In both Aristotle and Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, rhetoric is functional and holistic, rather than ornamental (Vickers 1993). Contemporary rhetorical criticism focuses on “the internal dynamics of political speech” and the ways in which it works as rhetorical appeal (Williams et al. 2012: 1744). Rhetorical analysis considers the dynamic relationships between the speaker, the text, the audience, and the situation. Social context becomes a crucial category in *new*

² «/.../ политический дискурс представляет собой своеобразную знаковую систему, в которой происходит модификация семантики и функций разных типов языковых единиц и стандартных речевых действий».

rhetoric because it is impossible to establish absolute laws that would apply irrespective of time and culture.

Kenneth Burke (1969) analyzes the rhetorical situation as an interrelation between five categories: scene, act, agent, agency, and purpose. His method allows one to infer implicit motives in political speech and is known as *dramatic criticism*, for it “invites one to consider the matter of motives in a perspective that, being developed from the analysis of drama, treats language and thought primarily as modes of action” (Burke 1969: xxii). Additionally, Burke stresses that, while, for classical rhetoric, the key term was *persuasion*, for new rhetoric, it is *identification*, or people’s desire of belonging and unity (Toye 2013: 71). For Burke, language is a symbolic means of calling for cooperation between people, who respond to symbols. The choice of symbols triggers a different reaction from the audience: building a factory can be seen as a contribution to economic growth as well as a threat to the environment. People can be triggered to react by the choice of wording in the message. There is a pool of such triggers in the formal rhetoric as well as in the products of mass culture.

Another prominent mode of analyzing political text and talk is the cognitive approach. A cognitive approach to metaphors, for example, focuses on the system of conceptual metaphor that functions as a means of perception and categorization of the world in the human mind, or how it “structures our ordinary conceptual system” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 453). Conceptual metaphors are deeply rooted in the human consciousness, so that they are not perceived to be metaphors. Additionally, they are culture- and language-specific (loc. cit. 465). Conceptual metaphors make it possible for politicians to explain abstract and complicated social, economic, and political events in more concrete, familiar terms (relying on source domains, like sport, disease, journey, time, etc.) and thus sound more persuasive. Conceptual metaphors have become an increasingly popular topic in analyzing political text and talk (e.g., Chilton (1996), Baranov (2004a), Drulák (2006), Charteris-Black (2006), Ahrens et al. (2009), Takumbetova (2012), Spencer (2012), etc.). Many scholars combine the cognitive approach with others.

Discursive psychology “treats written and spoken language as constructions of the world oriented towards social action” (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002: 96). Discursive psychologists view language use as context-dependent and focus on individual cases of social interaction. They seek to understand how attitudes, identities, and social groups are socially constructed in particular interactions and how attitudes change as a consequence of interaction. There are currently three directions in discourse psychology: “a poststructuralist perspective that builds on Foucauldian theory on discourse, power, and the subject; an interactionist perspective that builds on conversation analysis and ethnomethodology; and synthetic perspective that unites the two first perspectives” (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002: 104). Since Foucault’s conception of discourse will be discussed in the next section, it will not be presented in detail here.

Discursive psychology overall focuses on how people’s views of the world and identities are shaped by, and changed in, particular discourses, as well as

what social consequences this entails. Conversation analysis and ethnomethodology, in contrast, examine language use in particular cases of social interaction, how the participants' world is constructed therein, and how organization is produced through speech and interaction. Details of the analysis are not explained in terms of wider sociocultural processes and structures (loc. cit. 105). Condor et al. (2013: 263) argue that conversation analysis has been applied by scholars for "fine-grained analysis of the details of political speeches and arguments". The third approach to discursive psychology lies between the first two: researchers analyze how specific discourses construct subjects and objects and conduct a detailed examination of people's text and talk in particular contexts, looking at how the participants deploy different discursive resources and how their discourse is permeated with social action (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002: 105).

Researchers in political psychology study argument and identity in political rhetoric. Identity is viewed here in terms of *ethos*, or how a politician strives for *consubstantiality* (Burke's term for the situation in which the speaker becomes "of shared substance" with the listener) with diverse audiences. The strategies of consubstantiality include presenting ideas as a consensus, appealing to broadly defined in-groups, using first-person pronouns to identify with various audiences, etc. (Condor et al. 2013: 277). Political psychologists maintain that all verbal behavior can potentially qualify as *argument*. Therefore, a descriptive account "necessarily has offensive (critical) aspects insofar as it explicitly or implicitly seeks to undermine rival versions of events, and defensive (justificatory) aspects insofar as speakers attempt to shore up their accounts from the attack by rivals" (Condor et al. 2013: 267).

In view of that, Billig (1996: 186) argues that the solitary psychological process of thinking is two-sided, just like public argument; so, a person is "shuttling between contrary opinions" in her/his deliberation. Therefore, each generalization can always be contested by particularization (e.g., such disputed notions as *democracy*, *liberty*, *representation*, etc.). Based on case studies, Billig et al. (1988) demonstrated the essential inconsistency of commonplaces that appeal to the common sense of audiences; e.g., *law*, *liberty*, *tyranny*, etc. Since these words are contestable, there is no guarantee that the audience will support the speaker's argument (Billig 1991: 2; cited in Condor 2013: 274).

Finlayson (2007) proposed a rhetorical political analysis which stresses argumentative aspects of policy decision-making, claiming that values and intentions are formulated and agreement is constructed, in the process of argument. A rhetorical political analytical framework considers the rhetorical context of a political debate, the ways in which the topic is argumentatively constructed, and the content of all individual arguments.

This is but a brief list of possible approaches to political discourse. Already this brief discussion shows that there are quite noticeable disciplinary differences, that is, what is being studied in political communication depends on the epistemological premises of the field of study, and this helps to explain the number of angles of analysis. We can also see a similar, if not greater, diversity

of opinions in the case of discourse analysis, an umbrella term for many different approaches.

1.4. Discourse analysis

As one of the consequences of the linguistic turn in the 1960s, researchers in the humanities and social sciences concentrated not on analyzing facts, but rather on *conditions of possibility* of the facts in question (Laclau 1995: 431). This type of analysis is referred to as the discursive approach: “[t]he basic hypothesis of a discursive approach is that the very possibility of perception, thought, and action depends on the structuration of a certain meaningful field which pre-exists any factual immediacy” (ibid.). Thus, facts and physical objects do exist, but they only gain meaning in discourse. Changes in discourse are a means through which the social world can be changed. Although there are currently various conceptualizations of discourse as well as various strands of discourse analysis, the notion of discourse in humanities and social sciences was heavily influenced by Michel Foucault, for whom discourse constituted systems of talk within the limits of particular disciplines or practices:

[w]e shall call discourse a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation; it does not form a rhetorical or formal unity, endlessly repeatable, whose appearance or use in history might be indicated (and, if necessary, explained); it is made up of a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined. Discourse in this sense is not an ideal, timeless form that also possesses a history; the problem is not therefore to ask one-self how and why it was able to emerge and become embodied at this point in time; it is, from beginning to end, historical – a fragment of history, a unity and discontinuity in history itself, posing the problem of its own limits, its divisions, its transformations, the specific modes of its temporality rather than its sudden irruption in the midst of the complicities of time. (Foucault 1972: 131)

Foucault notes that a discourse consists of a limited number of statements (*énoncé*), although an infinite number of utterances are actually possible. For Foucault, statements constitute a set of rules which allow the making of discursively meaningful expressions – based on these rules, utterances, propositions, or speech acts can be produced, which have discursive meaning. In fact, people only say what is *sayable* in different contexts and in different historical periods (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002: 1; Laclau 1995: 433). Hence, Foucault studies what statements were accepted as meaningful and true in different historical periods and contexts. Since people are historical and cultural beings, their knowledge about the world and their perspectives constitutes “products of historically situated interchanges among people” and, thus, could have been different and can change over time (Gerden 1985: 267; cited in Jorgensen and Phillips 2002: 5).

According to Foucault (1972), language use is divided into relatively stable language patterns (or regularities) belonging to different *discursive formations*, or domains of social life (e.g., politics, medicine, education, etc., which are systems of various relations, authority, and exclusion). These patterns are called *discourses*. It is according to discourses that people structure their utterances. Utterances are never arbitrary: “in analyzing discourses themselves, one sees the loosening of the embrace, apparently so tight, of words and things, and the emergence of a group of rules proper to discursive practice” (Foucault 1972: 54). Therefore, discourses refer to “broad historical systems of meaning, including any meaningful political practices (referred to as *discursive practices*), which are relatively stable over considerable periods of time” (Mottier 2002: 59). According to Bartelson (1993: 70), discourse is “a system for the formation of statements”. In Foucault’s (1972: 84) terms, behind this system, a discourse analyst should search for “rich uncertainty of disorder” and consider complex relations between language and thought, empirical knowledge, and categories into which it was divided, material and ideal necessities, as well as “contingency of events and play of formal constraints” that led to the emergence of a particular discursive formation.

Foucault argues that elements of a discursive formation are connected with each other only as a result of a ubiquitous extra-discursive force, conceptualized as power. For Foucault, power is not the outcome of conscious or intentional decision, but rather of a complex and almost indecipherable set of language practices within a culture (Herrick 2001: 249). Hence, power is not imposed from above through social structures and hierarchies; rather, it is fluid and flows from discourse. Power is dispersed in different social practices. It is productive rather than oppressive, it provides conditions of possibility for the social:

[w]hat makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it does not only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (Foucault 1980:119)

Discourses produced by power as conceptualized by Foucault contribute to producing the subjects we are and the objects we can know something about; hence, there are strong ties between power, discourse, identity, and knowledge. Identity is constructed both within the relations of meaning and within institutionalized relations of power (Mottier 2002: 59). People are born into discourses, are shaped by them, and can speak only within the discourses. For this reason, truth is born in discourses: the established rules of a particular discourse produce *effects of truth* by regulating which statements will count as meaningful and which ones as irrational (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002: 14). For Foucault, rules of discourse are always present and, because these rules govern knowledge, they constitute the essence of power. The actual material effects of

power follow from the rules of discourse in place at a particular time. According to McHoul and Grace (cited in Herrick 2001: 249), “events, no matter how specific, cannot happen just anyhow. They must happen according to certain constraints, rules or conditions of possibility.” Therefore, power generates ideas and concepts that are realized materially in a culture.

Foucault’s discourse theory and those influenced by it (e.g., critical discourse analysis) distinguish between discourse (including text, talk, gestures, and other semiotic systems) and other dimensions of social practice (e.g., institutions, disciplining and sanctioning techniques, etc.), arguing that the world is constituted by both discursive and extra-discursive factors (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002: 16). Teun van Dijk (1997), for instance, distinguishes between institutional politics and the language of politics when he tries to delineate the field of political discourse analysis. In his terms, research of political discourse should concentrate on the structural properties of text and talk (discursive structures) in the realm of politics, as well as include a description of the context within which this text or talk was produced and the relations of the context to the discursive structures (van Dijk 1997: 15). To distinguish political discourse from public discourse in general, van Dijk (1997: 14) proposes to focus “on the nature of the activities or practices being accomplished by political text and talk rather than only on the nature of its participants”. These activities, or social practices (“governing, ruling, legislating, protesting, dissenting, or voting” (ibid.)) entail discursive practices, or “forms of text and talk which have political functions and implications”, so that some linguistic utterances turn into discursive practices as they become institutionalized and determine social relations.

The overall context of a political communicative (or discursive) event is important in the definition of political discourse: “politicians talk politically also (or only) if they and their talk are contextualized in communicative events such as cabinet meetings, parliamentary sessions, election campaigns, rallies, interviews with the media, bureaucratic practices, protest demonstrations, and so on” (van Dijk 1997: 14). These social practices are connected with discursive events through the use of genres, or conventionalized text types required in these particular contexts. According to Fairclough (1995: 14), genre is “a socially ratified way of using language in connection with a particular type of social activity”. Hence, text, genre, and context determine each other: discursive and social structures and practices are mutually constitutive. Consequently, we can only understand linguistic regularities in a particular domain by conceiving their elements in extra-discursive terms (Laclau 1995: 436).

Some discourse theories, notably the one proposed by Laclau and Mouffe (1985, 1990), however, abolish the distinction between discursive and non-discursive factors of social life. For them, genre is an element of complex language games that determine our social world: discourse “cannot be reduced to a semantic region or aspect of the social totality, since it weaves together meaning and action in complex language games” (Torfing 1999; cited in Torfing 2002: 54). The notion of discourse for Laclau and Mouffe is closely

related to Saussure's notion of structure. According to Saussure, language is a structure consisting of signs; in turn, a sign consists of the signifier (sound/image) and the signified (concept). The signifier and the signified are indivisible, like two sides of a coin, or the front and the back side of a single sheet of paper (Saussure 1959: 113). The signifier is attached to the signified based on common consent rather than objective relations between words and their referents. Signs make up a closed totality, or structure, in which their meanings are interdependent: the sign gains its meaning by being different from all other signs of the structure. Additionally, within the structure, each sign is defined by the formal rules of combination and substitution with other signs: like in a chess game, pieces do not have value in themselves, but rather gain it from the position they currently occupy on the chess board (Saussure 1959: 88).

Scholars of the Copenhagen glossematic school objected to Saussure's idea of the sign as the basic unit of language and divided the sign into smaller meaningful parts, phonemes and semes. The fact that phonemes and semes of the same sign do not make up the two sides of a coin for them pointed to the fact that the signifier and the signified were connected arbitrarily. While linguistic form does not necessarily need substance, the latter does need form (Hjelmslev 1953: 78; cited in Beaugrande 2013: 131–132). This assumption constituted a step toward formalism: if an abstract system not attached to any particular substance regulated the formal patterns of combination and substitution of its elements, then whatever signifying system in a society, including furniture, fashion, etc., could be described in terms of such a system (Laclau 1995: 433). Moreover, social life in its entirety could be described in terms of the structure which Laclau defines as discourse.

Formalism abolishes substantial distinctions between the linguistic and the nonlinguistic: "action and structure becomes a secondary distinction within the wider category of meaningful totalities" (Laclau 1995: 433). Like in structuralism, all distinctions between identities are conceived as differential, or internal to the structure. The subject, or speaker, could no longer be considered the source of meaning, but just one more particular location within a meaningful totality. What a person says can be determined by how institutions are structured, by what is *sayable* in various contexts (Laclau 1995: 433). However, some other strands of discourse analysis, like critical discourse analysis (CDA), assume that people are "masters and slaves of language" in that they can change the existing social and cultural order by combining elements of different (conflicting) discourses (van Dijk 1995: 18). Practitioners of CDA seek social change by showing the implicit power abuse, manipulation, and reproduction of social inequality by dominant discourses (or ideologies). The concept of ideology is not prominent in Foucault's and Laclau and Mouffe's theorizing, whereas CDA focuses on uncovering the discursive strategies employed by ideologies "to influence the minds (and, indirectly, the actions) of people in the interest of the powerful" (ibid.).

Poststructuralism challenges the idea of a closed totality developed by structuralists and the tenet that, because meanings are relational, the structure needs

to be closed. Poststructuralist scholars argue that the structure can never be closed and focus on factors that threaten to undermine structural unity and stability. In psychoanalysis, the impossibility of a strict correlation between the signifier and the signified (and, thus, structural stability) is shown by Jacques Lacan (Laclau 1995: 434). In Lacan's terms, trying to pin a signified onto a signifier leads to pinning yet another signifier onto the first one, and, in this infinite play of signifiers, one never reaches the real, or final, signified for which one is searching.

In literary theory, Roland Barthes demonstrates how each sentence is simultaneously permeated by multiple meanings and possibilities, all of which are active in the process of reading. In what Barthes (1975: 5) calls *the plural text*, "the networks are many and interact, without any one of them being able to surpass the rest; this text is a galaxy of signifiers, not a structure of signifieds; it has no beginning; it is reversible; we gain access to it by several entrances, none of which can be authoritatively declared to be the main one". Barthes rejects the traditional narrative structure which leads the reader from the text's beginning to its end, and thus to its closure, or its *ultimate structure*. Rather, he believes that the structure of the narrative should be open because "everything signifies ceaselessly and several times" (loc. cit. 12). Additionally, since reading seems to be *established* and *closed* by denotation, which is admittedly *the first meaning*, Barthes claims that denotation merely "pretends to be so; under this illusion, it is ultimately no more than the *last* of the connotations" (Barthes 1975: 9). Hence, a signifier cannot be permanently attached to a particular signified.

Around the same time period, translations of works by Mikhail Bakhtin containing ideas similar to that of Barthes entered the Western intellectual discussion. According to Bakhtin,

[a]t any given moment of its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the con-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between the differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form. These *languages* of heteroglossia intersect each other in a variety of ways, forming new socially typifying *languages*. (Bakhtin 1981: 291)

In this interpretation, language is not a neutral medium for expressing the speaker's intentions – it is overpopulated with the intentions of others, which seek to force the speaker to submit to them. Words become speakers' *own* only when speakers populate them with their own intentions and their own accents. Before such appropriation, the word exists not in a neutral and impersonal language, but rather "in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions" – it is from there that the speakers need to take the word and make it their own (loc. cit. 294).

The main contribution of poststructuralist theories of discourse to the field of politics lies in their conceptualization of political power through the category of

hegemony³. Initially, the theory of cultural hegemony was elaborated by Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci (1971)⁴, according to whom hegemony, or domination, is exercised by the ruling class through the imposition of its worldview by manipulating with cultural beliefs, values, and perceptions of the society and thus establishing it as the accepted and inevitable cultural norm. From the poststructuralist perspective, hegemony in politics is achieved by a successful fixation (which can only be partial) of socially and politically significant signifiers with particular meanings. As the signifier is untied from the signified, society has a proliferation of *floating signifiers*, which rival political forces seek to partially fix in relation to a particular configuration of signifiers: “discursive struggles about the ways of fixing the meaning of a signifier like *democracy*, for instance, are central to explain the political semantics of our contemporary political world” (Laclau 1995: 435).

Jacques Derrida argues that the ways in which the signifier and the signified are put in relation to one another within the system are essentially undecidable: “apparent either/or patterns of texts mask underlying both/and situations to reveal those texts’ fundamental undecidability” (Bertens 2014: 115). Therefore, binary oppositions through which texts attempt to arrest a plurality of senses of each sign and reduce it to one *proper* meaning can always be reversed, and opposition itself can be destabilized by determining undecidable elements that embarrassingly fit both of its sides. As a result, each configuration of signifiers is essentially contingent, and the fact that one configuration exists rather than another is due to the force of partially extra-structural nature, or hegemonic force: “[h]egemonic practices involve political decisions that are taken within an ultimately undecidable terrain in which paradox and aporia are the rule rather than the exception” (Torfing 2002: 54). Thus, for Laclau and Mouffe, discourse is inherently political and permeated by politics, while the aim of discourse analysis is to trace how meanings are shaped by politics.

This thesis adopts Laclau and Mouffe’s theory as the central theoretical framework. However, since Laclau and Mouffe’s theory cannot be used for an in-depth linguistic study, it will be combined with some aspects of the more linguistically oriented CDA, as both theories have more or less comparable ontological and epistemological premises (Jorgensen and Phillips (2002: 147); Sjölander (2011); Rear (2013)).

Critical discourse analysts reveal social inequality implicit in language use, thus demonstrating the link between language, power, and ideology: “CDA focuses on the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or

³ *Hegemony*. from Greek *hēgemonia* ‘leadership, a leading the way, a going first’; additionally, ‘the authority or sovereignty of one city-state over a number of others’, as Athens in Attica, Thebes in Boeotia; from *hēgemon* ‘leader, an authority, commander, sovereign’, from *hēgeisthai* ‘to lead’. (Harper n.d.)

⁴ Gramsci’s *Prison Notebooks* were written in Fascist prisons between 1929 and 1935. They started to be published in Italy in 1947 and soon became a key influence on intellectuals and scholars across the world.

challenge relations of *power* and *dominance* in society” (van Dijk 2001: 353). Fairclough, perhaps the most widely used CDA scholar, focuses on intertextuality and analysis of social effects of a concrete discourse (e.g., racist, national, liberal, conservative discourse, etc.). Fairclough’s (1989; 1995) three-dimensional framework of analysis includes a close examination of linguistic properties of a text, analysis of how the text was produced and consumed (discursive practice), and analysis of the overall sociohistorical context of these processes (social practice). Fairclough has used this model for analyzing different genres of political text and talk. Reisigl and Wodak (2001: 35) proposed a discourse–historical approach that attempts to integrate available knowledge about the historical sources and the background of the social and political fields in which discursive *events* are embedded to show how particular genres of discourse are subject to diachronic change. Van Dijk (2001), in contrast, focuses on the ways mental models and social representations can be implicitly formed and changed through discourse structures.

As can be seen from this brief summary, different methods of (critical) discourse analysis have been developed with the aim of, among other things, analyzing political rhetoric and social practices. These many methods have their strengths and weaknesses. The present thesis has chosen CDA for its linguistic analysis precisely because CDA offers a useful and detailed linguistic toolkit to uncover certain discursive processes that are predicated on social processes (and vice versa). With the linguistic tool that he defined as “assumptions” (used in this thesis) and others, Fairclough (2003: 6) aims at a “transdisciplinary approach” to analyze texts as elements in social processes. Chilton’s (2004) focus is rather on relations between language and human mind, but his CDA method (indexicality) also allows to detect social processes, like identity formation, at a textual level. According to Chilton (2004: 205), “identity unfolds in discourse by positioning others on the axes of space, time and rightness, presuming the centrality and fixity of the self”. The selected CDA methods are universal, or can be applied across languages and cultures.

However, as indicated in the introduction, the field of political text and talk is not just methodologically diverse, but there are also geographically different traditions. As the thesis analyzes American and Russian political rhetoric, a brief summary of both will be provided to show the research gaps that the thesis seeks to fill.

1.5. Political rhetoric in the U.S.

Ramist rhetoric was introduced by Puritans to the Harvard curriculum in the 17th century (Kennedy 1999: 286). However, in the mid-18th century, lectures of John Ward, who focused on the Ciceronian tradition, were taught in several colonial colleges and were useful during the formation of the American Republic. John Witherspoon taught rhetoric as a practical, civic art, connected

with politics and ethics.⁵ In his lectures, Witherspoon stressed the special needs of American students in connection with the American Revolution. Alexis de Tocqueville argued that early American political rhetoric had great significance for Europe because speaking on behalf of a whole nation, as opposed to simply representing an aristocratic class, improved an orator's reasoning and speaking power (Toye 2013: 27).

Deliberative rhetoric has played an important role in fundamental changes in American society; for instance, the civil rights movement is epitomized in Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech (Houck and Dixon 2006). In crises, the rhetoric of the president is crucial. Houck (2001), for instance, demonstrates how the rhetoric of Presidents Herbert Hoover and Franklin D. Roosevelt especially, helped the U.S. people overcome the Great Depression. In his speeches, Roosevelt, for example, created a strong association between the hope for nation's economic recovery and himself, thus establishing a new norm of presidential initiative and informality.

Through rhetoric, presidents can demonstrate their leadership, shape public perceptions about issues, and inform the people about what goes on internationally. According to Windt (1990: 3), authority is inherent in the rhetoric of U.S. presidents, especially in foreign policy. Article II of the Constitution defines the president as *the commander-in-chief* of the U.S. military forces, establishing the leadership of the U.S. president in international affairs. Additionally, the president has access to extensive information about international issues (Edwards 2008: 2).

In domestic affairs, U.S. presidents also establish the terms of discourse and create an arena for further rhetorical and political battle (Windt 1990: 3). The one who sets the terms for such battle has increased chances of ultimately winning it. Such *going public* allows U.S. presidents to circumvent Congress and turn directly to the audience for support of their policies. Windt (1990: 4) identifies two fundamental aspects of the U.S. president's rhetorical power: the power to define issues and the ethos, or prestige, of the presidential office.

The power of definition consists in the fact that presidents can define an issue so as to increase the importance of one over another. In their political language, U.S. presidents can define a situation as critical and turn to Congress and the people for support. Situations defined as crises do not always involve a military attack on the U.S. by external forces, but sometimes may be political events, rhetorically created by presidents to rally the people for their support. A *crisis speech* is often delivered to announce actions already undertaken by the president (Windt 1990: 5). In international crises, people are inclined to support their presidents, since they consider them to be the impersonation of their country (loc. cit. 6). People believe that their president possesses extensive

⁵ John Witherspoon was a teacher of James Madison, Aaron Burr, and other leaders of the revolution and signed the Declaration of Independence on behalf of New Jersey (Kennedy 1999: 287).

information about, and knowledge of, national affairs; hence, they have a predisposition to believe their president.

The power of the president to define U.S. foreign policy consists in the power to define specific situations, to set the agenda for U.S. foreign policy, as well as to articulate overarching principles for foreign affairs (Edwards 2008: 3). In case of successful agenda-setting, the president can further define priorities for the U.S. government and the people and establish “directional clarity” (loc. cit. 4). The issues important to the U.S. in international affairs are presented within the framework of larger American ideals, like individual rights, freedom, and democracy (ibid.).

Different ideas have defined U.S. foreign policy over the past two hundred years and shaped its foreign policy culture. The first theme is defining the U.S.’s place in the world. This has been influenced by the belief in American exceptionalism, the idea that the U.S. has a special role in human history (loc. cit. 5). U.S. presidents have projected two distinct traditions of how the U.S. can fulfill its special role in the world: the narrative of the exemplar and the narrative of intervention (loc. cit. 7). The former means perfecting the domestic situation and becoming an example for other countries. This mission, dominant in the U.S.’s thinking of its role in the world in the 18th and 19th centuries, has continued to appear in today’s debates.

The mission of intervention is based on the idea that, due to its exceptionalism, the U.S. needs to assume the responsibility of leading the world and defending all people who subscribe to the ideals similar to those of the U.S. This position has largely dominated presidential rhetoric since the end of World War II. According to President Truman, the U.S.’s victory in WWII, together with the Allied forces, endowed the U.S. with the responsibility to defend world freedom and protect it from various threats, including communism. This duty to defend freedom gave the U.S. justification for asserting its leadership in the Cold War. In the post-Cold War world, the U.S. has maintained its role as the world leader and promoter of democracy. Presidents, especially after WWII, started to combine the missions of exemplar and intervention to legitimize America’s role as world leader (Edwards 2008: 11).

The second theme in the U.S. foreign policy vocabulary, according to Edwards (2008), is the legitimization of the use of force. To this purpose, U.S. presidents construct images of the enemy (savage) and the U.S. (civilization). There are two images of the enemy as the savage: the modern and the primitive. The former is normally a specific leader or a government which aggressively violates the civilized order by acting against the U.S., one of its allies, or their own people. The key rhetorical move in defining a modern savage is to construct it as irrational. The second image of a savage agent is the primitive savage, meaning a specific people or culture, not a central government or leader. The image of the primitive savage, initially used to describe Native Americans, has been extended to represent America’s external antagonists (Edwards 2008: 13).

Presidents can provide various reasons for intervention: to confront an attack against the U.S., to defend the U.S.’s interests, to prevent a future threat, or to

intervene for humanitarian purposes. All of these define the U.S.'s actions as righteous. Additionally, definition of common danger and explanations of how to counter it intensify feelings of identification. By explaining to the public why the savage needs to be destroyed through military intervention, the U.S. president, to some degree, explains to the people what their values are and reveals their responsibility on the international arena (Edwards 2008: 15).

Finally, the third theme in the U.S. foreign policy vocabulary privileges certain ways and means to achieve the ends defined in the president's foreign policy vision (relying on diplomatic, economic, cultural, or military power of the U.S.). U.S. presidents exercise rhetorical leadership in international relations by explaining to the public what goals the U.S. has in global affairs and by which means it is going to achieve them. Presidents can articulate similar overall foreign policy goals, but privilege different means of achieving them. Even during the Cold War, when the larger strategy was the containment of communism, U.S. presidents used different means within this strategy: Truman privileged economic means; Eisenhower the military; Nixon diplomacy (Edwards 2008: 18).

1.5.1. Research of the U.S. presidential rhetoric and discourse

According to Windt (1986: 102), presidential rhetoric gained its status in the U.S. after the publication of Richard Neustadt's *Presidential Power: The Politics of Leadership* in 1960, in which the author claims that "presidential power is the power to persuade". The 1970s saw the publication of studies by rhetoricians, political scientists, historians, and journalists, who, among other things, explored the function of political consultants (campaign experts, pollsters, direct mailers, and media specialists) and their influence on the U.S. political system (ibid.). Many scholarly works on the presidential rhetoric of the 1970s and 1980s examined single presidential speeches, especially inaugural and *crisis* speeches. Other scholarly works conducted *movement studies* or examined a series of presidential messages devoted to a specific idea or policy. They looked at the political context of the messages and stressed the continuity of presidential efforts. Another category of research focused on comparing messages of different U.S. presidents on similar themes, to similar audiences, etc. Authors in this category drew on their knowledge of the presidential activities of the past to juxtapose them with the contemporary ones (Windt 1986: 104–106).

Current studies of U.S. presidential rhetoric are numerous and varied in their focus and perspective. For instance, Shogan (2007) examines the use of moral and religious rhetoric by American presidents, using qualitative and quantitative methods and showing that U.S. presidents can increase their constitutional authority through the use of religious rhetoric. Religious rhetoric of U.S. presidents has also been analyzed by Kradel (2008), Domke and Coe (2010), etc. Whitford and Yates (2009) use qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the effectiveness of the pronouncements of American presidents on the

war on drugs. Bonn (2010) elaborates on *critical communication*, an integrated theory which explains how political elites and the media benefit from provoking occasional public panics (like *the war on terror*). Based on quantitative research of opinion polls and G. W. Bush's rhetoric before and after 9/11, Bonn (2010) describes the Iraq War in the terms of *moral panic*. U.S. presidents' war rhetoric has also been analyzed in Lordan (2010), Kimble (2001, 2006), Osgood (2006), and others.

Numerous analyses of American presidential rhetoric concern national identity and immigration. Beasley (2004) argues, based on a thorough analysis of the State of the Union Addresses and inaugural addresses of American presidents from 1885 to 2000, that the definition of American identity has remained the same, although the nation has become much more diverse. In a later work, Beasley (2006) demonstrates that presidential rhetoric contributes to a negative construction of immigrants and generally negative understanding of immigration among the American public. The issues of American national identity in presidential rhetoric are also discussed, for example, in Stuckey (2004) and Dorsey (2013). U.S. presidential rhetoric has been often analyzed in terms of civil rights. Aune (2005) examines the failures of civil rights rhetoric from President Hayes to President Clinton. Pauley (2001) studies the construction of race in the rhetoric of Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson. Civil rights-related American presidential rhetoric was also examined by Shull (1999). Peterson (ed. 2004) and Todd (2013) focus on American presidential rhetoric on the environment.

Many scholars study the rhetorical performance of single American presidents. Kraig (2004), for instance, discusses Woodrow Wilson's rhetorical skills and his philosophy of oratory. Hogan (2006) concentrates on the critique of Wilson's rhetoric in support of the League of Nations. Edwards (2008) analyzes the legacy of Bill Clinton's foreign policy rhetoric. According to Edwards, Bill Clinton adapted U.S. foreign policy vocabulary to meet the needs of the post-Cold War world and the era of globalization, e.g., articulating liberal order arguments, linking the U.S. prosperity with the openness of the global economy, etc. Clinton combined the missions of exemplar and intervention within the framework of a larger narrative of the U.S. global leadership. To justify the use of force, Clinton defined chaos as the chief enemy, which replaced the Soviets.

Medhurst (ed. 2006) has provided a critical analysis of George H. W. Bush's *rhetorical presidency*. Lim (2008) criticized George W. Bush's presidential rhetoric as anti-intellectual, which results from, among other things, the need of U.S. presidents to manage public opinion. Denton (2012) examines Bush's rhetoric in domestic policy, foreign policy, wars, and politics in general. Kennedy-Shaffer (2006) examines the wartime rhetoric of the Bush administration and American people's response to it. Holtzman (2006) investigates G. W. Bush's rhetoric as aimed at achieving the support of the public and as an instrument of policymaking.

Crines et al. (2015) conduct a rhetorical analysis of Democratic orators from JFK to Obama, describing their rhetorical and oratorical techniques (including

ethos, pathos, and logos) and analyzing their effectiveness. Crines et al. also analyze Obama's rhetoric on race. The authors argue that Obama's strategy, both during his presidential campaign and his first term in office, was masterly and, for the most part, consistent, designed not to inflame and thus lose White voters, whom he needed to win the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections.

As can be seen from the brief discussion above, there is extensive research tradition on American presidential rhetoric more broadly and foreign policy rhetoric more narrowly within different disciplines. This makes it impossible to make any generalizations. Scholars begin analyzing the rhetoric of presidents when they are still in office, and thus it should not be a surprise that there is already a great number of studies on Obama by today, almost five years after he left office. The overview of Obama's first-term political rhetoric and discourse provided in the next section seeks to include the latest possible literature sources at the current stage of this dissertation.

1.5.2. Presidential rhetoric of Barack Obama (first term, from 2009–2012)

According to Ted Sorensen, one of the chief reasons of Barack Obama's victory in the 2008 election was his campaign oratory, which embodied a fresh approach to politics (cited in Berry and Gottheimer 2010: ix). The themes Obama consistently discussed in his domestic political messages were unity, responsibility, and change. This can be seen, for instance, in his famous motto "[t]here is not a liberal America and a conservative America – there is the United States of America" (Obama's keynote address given at the 2004 Democratic National Convention; cited in Berry and Gottheimer 2010: xx). Obama aimed at restoring morality in politics, abolishing old ideological divisions, and achieving progress instead of merely demonizing his opponents (ibid.).

Obama started the presidential race as an outsider, but skilfully connected himself to American history rhetorically by echoing Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King (ibid.). Obama positioned himself as the heir of their political and oratorical heritage: "Obama casts himself in both traditions. His own color gives Lincoln's abolitionism a Mosaic fillip – Obama as emancipator of his own people" (Leith 2011: 223). During Obama's election night speech, he explicitly associated the divisions in American society with the Civil War, the damage caused by which Lincoln sought to heal. Obama borrowed Lincoln's informality, switching from high style to personal, everyday language. Another feature of Obama's rhetoric was drawing inspiration from the Bible and the rhetoric of the civil rights movement (Leith 2011: 226).

According to Gorski (2011: 201), in his political rhetoric, Obama was able to "speak in all of the diverse and accumulated registers of America's civil theology". During his first presidential campaign, Obama focused on American cultural and religious pluralism, the divide between religious and secular, liberal and conservative America. Following the example of Lincoln, Obama frequently

quoted the preamble to the Declaration of Independence, which establishes equality and liberty as American ideals (*ibid.*). Additionally, Obama cited the Preamble to the Constitution, especially its opening, “We, the people ...”, to affirm national unity and announce it as the “founding covenant that the nation must seek to live up to, and to which it must continually return in the times of crisis” (Gorski 2011: 201). Obama claimed to share a common purpose with the Founding Fathers, whose vision has been distorted by partisan politics. Obama also stressed hope and blamed the cynics for being “the children of darkness” (*loc. cit.* 202).

Obama had a tendency to seek common ground or compromise. Various studies of Obama’s rhetoric have concluded that, “as far as the inherent ideology is concerned, Obama expresses an obvious lack of any ideological standpoint regarding the role of government in the time of global financial troubles”, which allowed him to be flexible in choosing ways of reaching his objectives (Horváth 2009). Overall, Obama represented hope and change. His messages can be characterized as clear and forceful. Although, before running for presidency, Obama was criticized for speaking too eruditely, over time, his style of speaking started to resemble the preaching tradition of black Protestant churches, with its harmony of substance and style. In order to be effective, traditional black preachers begin with a low-key introduction and then rise in tempo, reaching a crescendo. Afterwards they ease down slowly and conclude with an inspiring phrase at the end. In homiletics, this principle is called the black preacher’s dictum: “Start low, go slow, rise high, strike fire, and sit down” (Berry and Gottheimer 2010: xix). However, this style was also later criticized: although some people were inspired by Obama’s stirring speeches, others rejected them as empty rhetoric.

In his foreign policy discourse, Obama promoted the idea that the U.S. should restore its image as a responsible and trustworthy world power and lead the world by example, including in the global recovery from the economic collapse of 2008. Obama also advocated the idea that tensions between countries should be negotiated and compromise should be found. Obama sought to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and made an attempt to withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq and Afghanistan. In 2008, Obama communicated with Russia after almost two years of silence in U.S.–Russian relations as a result of G. W. Bush’s unilateral politics. Obama invited Russia’s new president, Dmitry Medvedev, to forget the history of the U.S.–Russian antagonism and start relations anew. In 2009, Obama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his “extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples”, for creating a new climate in international politics, and for being a world’s leading spokesman for the attitudes and values shared by the majority of the world’s population (Nobel Media AB 2019).

It can be argued that one of Obama’s foreign policy strategies was that of a world free from nuclear weapons. In this case, the major enemies, or irrational savages, included countries that developed nuclear programs illegally (like Iran and North Korea) as well as terrorists who could obtain nuclear weapons and

endanger the world. Obama legitimized the U.S., representing civilization, to lead the world toward nuclear-free development because, among other reasons, the U.S. had been the only country to have used the nuclear weapon and thus became morally responsible for acting on behalf of nonproliferation (Obama 2009). Obama also sought to tackle global threats, like environmental disasters, poverty, cybercrimes, etc. Democracy promotion remained an important objective in Obama's foreign policy as well. In order to achieve his objectives, Obama preferred negotiations and economic means (for instance, economic sanctions); however, he also resolved to military action when the latter was deemed necessary (e.g., in the case of Libya). In consequence, it can be said that Obama combined the mission of exemplar with the mission of intervention during his first term in office.

Previous research of Obama's first-term rhetoric has chiefly focused on issues such as race and racism (Walters (2007), Teasley (2010), Temple (2010), etc.) and Afrocentricity (Stewart (2011)). Of the topics more closely related to foreign policy, there are analyses of the U.S. national identity (Sweet and McCue-Enser (2010), Hammer (2010), Coe and Neumann (2011), etc.) and terrorism (Sarfo and Krampa (2013), Ellison (2013), etc.).

Blank (2010), Mattox (2011), Cimbala (2012), Deyermond (2013), Roberts (2014) analyze Obama's U.S.–Russian reset policy, focusing on specific key issues of this policy: nuclear arms control, the New START, missile defense, and cooperation on Iran and Afghanistan. Mattox (2011), for instance, advocates for the approach of “cooperative engagement” within existing organizations that need to be strengthened – such an approach would reset U.S.–Russian relations and encourage both countries to go beyond the Cold War military thinking toward stable future cooperation. Deyermond (2013) calls the U.S.–Russian reset a successful policy, although disagreements on several important issues remain: the author advocates for a continuation of the pragmatic approach underlying the reset, since it represents the best opportunity for stability in U.S.–Russian relations. Roberts (2014), defining the reset as Obama's and Medvedev's pragmatic approach to U.S.–Russian relations based on mutual benefit, seeks to contribute to searching for a better lens for looking at U.S.–Russian relations than the Cold War prism. Michael McFaul (2018), as a former U.S. ambassador to Russia, gives an insightful insider's account of the U.S.–Russian reset. Still, not many studies have specifically looked into the rhetoric of the U.S.–Russian reset (see, for instance, Venkutė 2012), which constitutes the material for empirical analysis in the present thesis.

1.6. Political rhetoric in Russia

Byzantium exerted an immense influence on the culture of the early Russian state, whose inhabitants were converted to Byzantine Orthodox Christianity in 988, taking over its church architecture, canons of iconography, and liturgy. Byzantine missionaries Cyril and Methodius created the Cyrillic alphabet,

translated parts of the Bible into the Old Church Slavonic language, and created the first civil code and other documents. First books were brought to Rus' from Byzantium, schools of Rus' were established following the example of Byzantine schools, etc. Consequently, Russian rhetoric was initially epideictic, just like Byzantine rhetoric, for there was no need for deliberative or forensic rhetoric in Rus'.

In Russia, the reception of rhetorical theory began in the 17th century. Prior to this, ancient Russian scribes followed literary and oratorical examples from religious texts (Annushkin 2008: 49). In 1620, a handwritten translation of Philipp Melanchthon's *Institutiones Rhetorices* (1519)⁶ appeared in Russia. In the translation, the word *ritorika* was used for the first time in Russian (Kolesnikova 2014: 38–39). In 17th-century Russia, there was a system of seven liberal wisdoms [*svobodnye mudrosti*], three of which were philological wisdoms: rhetoric, based on the 1620 book on rhetoric, grammar, based on *Grammar* by Meletius Smotrytsky, and dialectics, based on *Dialectics* by John of Damascus.

Peter I introduced the Russian Empire to the Latin heritage. European books, science, and military strategies were emulated during his rule. This created a need for new coursebooks which would reflect the new social rhetoric (Annushkin 2008: 12). As a result, coursebooks on rhetoric appeared in Russian; e.g., by Usachyov in 1699 and Lomonosov in 1743 and 1748. Lomonosov gave the first scientific definition of rhetoric in Russian culture. While rhetoric, according to Lomonosov, was “the science of speaking and writing beautifully of each matter”, eloquence was “the art of speaking beautifully of each matter and making others share one’s opinion of this matter” (Annushkin 2008: 14). A distinction between rhetoric and eloquence was thus made explicit. Lomonosov’s *A Concise Manual of Rhetoric* (*Kratkoye rukovodstvo k ritorike* (1743)) and *A Concise Manual of Eloquence* (*Kratkoye rukovodstvo k krasnorechiyu* (1748)), which were critical in the development of Russian rhetoric, exhibit traces of Latin influence (Kolesnikova 2014: 38–39).

This tradition, as well as rhetorical education, however, was abruptly interrupted after the October Revolution of 1917. Official political position constituted the basis of rhetorical argumentation, while its major feature was allegiance to the authorities. The Soviet government devoted immense attention to propagandistic and agitational communication (Korotec 2017). Stalin took rhetoric seriously and was concerned with the nuances of language, and this reflected a broader Soviet and Communist tendency to believe that proper linguistic choices had the power to shape external reality (Toye 2013: 89). Until perestroika, oral political discourse in the Soviet Union can be characterized as being an entirely prepared, verified, and confirmed text, which did not allow for any deviations or improvisation. It was, in fact, orally pronounced, written political discourse (Sternin 2015: 16).

⁶ This handbook elaborates on the canons of rhetoric: invention, arrangement, and style.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, oral political discourse in modern Russia became shorter in form. Texts that were presupposed to be pronounced and received for several hours disappeared. Political discourse became more evocative, emotional, personalized, and improvisational. As to the content, Russian political discourse became more focused on the topics of economy and law enforcement. Abstract ideological theorization diminished, and pragmatic direction toward solving political issues increased. Political texts became easier to understand for the general public (Sternin 2015: 15). According to Yashin (2010), in post-Soviet political speech in Russia, we see the values of development, democratic state, and economy. Post-Soviet political speech is heavily affected by the style of scientific and business reasoning (Yashin 2010).

1.6.1. Approaches to research of political rhetoric in Russia

Owing to its sociopolitical situation up until the 1990s, studies of political text and talk in Russia did not evolve as intensively as in the Western societies. As Chudinov (2005) argues that, in the Soviet Union, it was almost impossible to publish research on the problems of political speech:

[i]t is well known, that under strict censorship and self-censorship it is extremely difficult to give an impartial characteristic of the features of Communist leaders' speech (their ideological purity and their high rank predetermined their outstanding talking skills in a way) and the speech of their political opponents. /.../ The situation was changed by perestroika. Glasnost made it possible to publish at least in some degree objective materials.

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russian scholars of political text and talk have been applying the approaches developed in the West as well as creating their own analytical frameworks. Within the Russian context, analyses of political text and talk mostly belong to the field of political linguistics. Initially, Demyankov (2003) proposed that political text and talk was the object of study of political philology that emerged at the intersection of political science and philology. The discipline contained two components: political literary criticism [*politologicheskoe literaturovedenie*] and political linguistics [*politologicheskaya lingvistika*]. The former considered the macrostructures of political text and talk, using tools from literary criticism (genre, motive, plot, etc.), while the latter was concerned with the micro level: syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of political discourses, as well as modes of interpretation of these discourses (Demyankov 2003: 119). Chudinov proposed the term *political linguistics*, which became widely accepted among Russian scholars of political text and talk (Vorozhbitova, Kegeyan 2014). Chudinov (2005) classifies recent Russian research in political linguistics into ten general *trends*. Among the trends, one develops the theoretical basis, categories, and terminology of political linguistics (e.g., Bazylev (2002; 2005), Baranov (2003), Gavrilova (2004), Demyankov (2003), Romanov (2002), etc.); another investigates changes in the

political vocabulary in the pre-Soviet, Soviet, and post-Soviet period (e.g., Osheeva (2004), Luchinina (2003), etc.); the third contains comparative studies, juxtaposing Russian political communication with that of other countries (especially that of the U.S.) in different periods of history (e.g., Kaslova (2003), Krasilnikova (2003), Shudegova (2002), Zyatkova (2003), etc.). Another noteworthy trend is the division of approaches to political text and talk into descriptive and normative. The latter often demonstrate and lament that “Russian political elite, with respect to its rhetorical skills, is still far from Cicero or Demosthenes” (Chudinov 2005).

Eduard Budaev and Anatoly Chudinov are among the most prominent Russian scholars of political discourse and authors of several textbooks (e.g., *Political Linguistics: A Tutorial [Politicheskaya lingvistika: uchebnoe posobie]* (2006), *Political Linguistics Abroad: A Tutorial [Zarubezhnaya politicheskaya lingvistika]* (2008), *Contemporary Political Linguistics: A Tutorial [Sovremennaya politicheskaya lingvistika]* (2011)). They are especially interested in conceptual metaphors and tend to treat other approaches to political text and talk (like the rhetorical approach, discourse analytical approach or content analysis) in terms of metaphors, rather than by explaining the wider theoretical perspectives of these approaches in their coursebooks. Generally, conceptual metaphors in political discourse are an increasingly popular object of study among Russian scholars of political linguistics (e.g., Baranov and Karaulov (1994)). Budaev and Chudinov are also editors-in-chief of the journal *Political Linguistics*, published by Ural State Pedagogical University bilingually in Russian and English, although most of the contributors are from the Russian cultural context.

In her dissertation *Semiotics of Political Discourse [Semiotika politicheskogo diskursa]*, Sheigal (2002) sets out to build a semiotic model of political discourse. Sheigal views political discourse as a system of signs and considers the basic semiotic triad integration–orientation–agonality as the primary organizing principle of the semiotic space of political discourse. This functional triad is projected upon the basic semiotic opposition of Self–Other. Gavrilova (2005), a prominent scholar of (Russian) presidential discourse, wrote her dissertation on Russian political discourse, applying a linguistic-cognitive approach [*lingvokognitivnyy podhod*] that examines, among other things, the context of the communicative event, the overall structure of discourse, semantic particularities of the discursive space (aim, task, priority, issue, description of frequent lexical groups, content analysis, conceptual analysis of keywords, and observation of the transformation of a word’s semantic structure), demonstration of particularities of syntax and word formation of the discursive space, explanation of basic argumentative structures, verbal means of creating and maintaining rapport, rhetorical strategies, etc. Gavrilova’s corpus consists of over 1,500 texts, including inaugural addresses of Russian and U.S. presidents, addresses to the Federal Assembly by Russian presidents, official programs of Russian political parties at the beginning of the 20th century as well as at the beginning of the 21st century, and audio materials from news programs. The linguistic-cognitive approach undertakes an “explication of the ideological views of a political

actor: means of expression of president's leadership position, the Self–Other opposition, interrelation of the categories *individual–collectivity*, verbal representation of collective political knowledge, as well as individual convictions of a politician” (Gavrilova 2005).

There is ample research on the linguistic components of the orator's image [*obraz ritora*] on the examples of Russian politicians from different historical periods. Such work discusses the rhetorical ideals of the model speech and the ideal type of orator (e.g., Romanenko (2001), Chistyakova (2006), Sharafuddinova (2008)). According to Annushkin's prominent coursebook *Rhetoric. An Introductory Course. A Manual [Ritorika. Vvodnyi kurs. Uchebnoye posobiye]* for university students in the humanities the image of the orator needs to be consistent, the body of orations needs to be devoid of inconsistencies, and characterized by the diversity and richness of the messages. The delivery and gesticulation of the orator are also analyzed.

One of the particularities of Russian research on political text and talk is investigation of *archetypal keywords*, not frequently encountered in the Western framework. Romanenko (2001) and Yashin (2010), for instance, argue that archetypal keywords are words which are always present in the political speech: “[t]heir particularity lies in the fact that they are general, inconspicuous (in contrast to ideologemes and topical political lexis), and are not recognized by the speakers as symbolic keywords. These words build a system of common-places, which ascends to the foundations of ideology and organizes the verbal and mental activity of the speaker” (Romanenko 2001: 120).

There seem to be several distinctive features of Russian scholarly research on political text and talk. Sheigal (2000), Budaev and Chudinov (2006), Gavrilova (2005), Vorozhbitova and Kegeyan (2014), and most other scholars draw a boundary between descriptive and critical approaches. Sheigal, for example, specifies that she uses a cognitive approach, descriptive content analysis, and descriptive rhetorical analysis. Western research in political discourse tends to be critical about political authorities, while many works by Russian scholars tend to be descriptive by nature and, among other things, oriented toward political authorities. Romanov and Tsarkov (2009) even argue that “[p]olitical linguistics fulfills an important applied task of objective transfer of information to the leaders and party members in political discourse”. Although Sheigal (2000) views political discourse as permeated by struggle for power and manipulation, she still argues that insights from research on political discourse are important both for politicians, so that they would be aware of the most effective ways of affecting the audience, and for the people, so that they would know the real intentions and manipulative linguistic strategies of politicians. There are, however, also examples of CDA of contemporary Russian political discourse; e.g., Vedernikov's (2006) critical discourse analysis of Putin's utterances about civil society in Russia or Gavrilova's (2004) *discursive portrait* of Putin. Mikhalyova (2009) examines how Russian politicians use implicitly manipulative linguistic means to achieve a desired effect on the audience. Russian researchers also turn to, e.g., U.S. political discourse in order

to investigate topics such as *Public Political Discourse of a Conflict Situation* (Alyoshina 2015).

1.6.2. Presidential rhetoric of Dmitry Medvedev

In Russia, like in the U.S., presidential office is the top political post, vested with vast constitutional powers. The Russian president is in charge of foreign and security policy and has the authority to dismiss the cabinet and dissolve the parliament (Baturu and Mikhaylov 2014: 2). Through his rhetorical power of persuasion, the Russian president can set the national political agenda, increase the prominence of issues by emphasizing them (or decrease their prominence by deemphasizing them), and increase popular support for their policy proposals. Because the office of the president is focal in Russian politics, presidential rhetoric is highly publicized and influential. The Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly is the legally required annual policy address (Baturu and Mikhaylov 2014: 15). The prime minister also has to address the parliament once a year. Annual parliamentary addresses by the president and prime minister are comparable in form with the annual State of the Union addresses of U.S. presidents to Congress (ibid.). These addresses are

the most comprehensive documents in terms of their policy scope, most referenced in the media, and can be reasonably expected to reflect the policy positions of the leadership on several policy dimensions, rather than *cheap talk*. Presidential addresses usually discuss current problems, review policy implementation and declare policy directions for the future. The president also lays out tasks for the government and formulates legislative agenda, reviews the implementation of tasks and fulfilment of legislative agenda throughout the year. (Baturu and Mikhaylov 2014: 15)

Beginning with Yeltsin in 1994, all Russian presidents have annually addressed the parliament. The prime minister's legislative address was introduced by Putin in 2009. Annual addresses of both the president and the prime minister are rather lengthy documents with rather little room for improvisation: both address the legislature, dwell on the developments of the preceding year, and set goals for the next year. While legislative addresses of the Russian president and prime minister touch upon shared topics, they can diverge in the emphasis on, and prioritization of, particular policies, norms, and values (ibid.).

Roberts (2018: 238) refers to Russian "super-presidential" powers, meaning that, as compared to the president, the institutional presence of other foreign policy actors in Russia is rather small. Since the Russian president identifies Russian interests and has the executive authority to pursue them, his role in Russian foreign policy is paramount. Such concentration of decision power in the president's office, combined with the popularity of strong leaders in Russia, results in complete domination by the president of Russian law and politics (ibid.). The way that presidential authority has been executed has influenced

Russia's relations with the West in important ways. Hence, the post-Soviet presidencies of Yeltsin, Putin, and Medvedev can serve as lenses through which to examine the stages of U.S.–Russian relations after the end of the Cold War:

Powerful personalities – Yeltsin and Putin and, perhaps, to a lesser extent Medvedev – have exercised a tremendous amount of personal discretion and influence when it comes to relations with Washington. Strong executive-centered institutions combined with weaker legislative ones accentuate the importance of the president. (Roberts 2018: 238)

In the same vein, Trenin (2006: 320) argues that, in U.S.–Russian relations, ever since WWII, contacts at the highest level, especially summits, have played an immense role. Relationship between presidents constitutes an important factor in the situation of the absence of the tradition of friendship and manifold connections in various areas. Needless to say, personal relationships between heads of the U.S. and Russia cannot be equated with U.S.–Russian relations, since friendship at the leaders' level often turns out to be superficial: presidential diplomacy should be accompanied by cooperation at the level of senior assistants to the presidents and supported by the Security Council of Russia and U.S. National Security Council (ibid.).

Despite the elevated position of the president of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Medvedev, elected as a protégé of Vladimir Putin in 2008, lacked independent power, and, until September 2011, the cooperative rule of Medvedev and Putin was characterized as the *tandem*. Putin retained huge influence because most officials at different levels owed their posts and, therefore, also their loyalty to him (Baturu and Mikhaylov 2014: 4). Still, in 2009 and 2010, Medvedev and Putin differentiated their functions, after which Medvedev concentrated on strategic policies at international and domestic levels, and Putin controlled socioeconomic developments. According to Baturu and Mikhaylov (2014: 4), Medvedev distinguished himself from Putin by “signaling a distinct policy program”. Putin and Medvedev disagreed, for instance, on the question of intervention in Libya. Russia's accession to the WTO was Medvedev's initiative as well, since Putin had grown skeptical about Russia's chances. Medvedev actively sought partnerships with the political leaders of the EU and the U.S. Although, in September 2011, Medvedev stepped down and supported Putin's candidacy for the 2012 presidential elections, his presidency cannot be discredited as just place-keeping for a senior partner. Regarding the U.S.–Russian reset, Roberts (2018: 245) argues that

[b]y many accounts, the reset enjoyed some successes. It is difficult to know for certain the nature of Medvedev's commitment to the reset due to the complexities of the tandem presidency; however, it appeared as though he was committed to pursuing the relationship.

That Medvedev was not a mere figurehead can be seen in the fact that Putin returned to a much weaker regime, facing protests from late 2011–2012.

Medvedev's political rhetoric was characterized by his slogan "freedom is better than non-freedom". Medvedev's rhetoric was broadcast on Russian television for three years and increased the prominence of democratic values in Russian society, although democratic discourse had been heavily discredited among Russian audience after the socioeconomic turmoil of the 1990s (Baturu and Mikhaylov 2014: 23). Medvedev initially took over Putin's policy and spoke of a state-driven technological modernization of Russian economy (loc. cit. 2014: 7). However, over time, Medvedev began to promote economic and political liberalization. He reiterated that stability and resource-based economy at the expense of democracy and modernization were a wrong way for Russia. In his 2009 programmatic article "Russia, Forward!", Medvedev emphasized that economic, societal, and political modernization were necessary to move Russia forward. This emphasis increased in 2010 and 2011. At a press conference held on 18 May 2011, he stressed that his view of modernization differed from Putin's in terms of pace: while Putin believed modernization had to be a slow and gradual development, Medvedev believed it could be achieved much quicker (ibid.). Medvedev's emphasis on societal and political modernization was distinct from Putin's. Nevertheless, Medvedev never declared his position and only alluded to his policy differences. The distinctiveness of Medvedev's policy program was identified as more liberal by external observers (Baturu and Mikhaylov 2014: 8).

However, Morozov (2010) is skeptical about Medvedev's democratic rhetoric. In his close analysis of Medvedev's speech on democracy at the 2010 Yaroslavl Global Policy Forum, Morozov finds that the "universal standards of democracy" proposed by Medvedev largely amounted to reproducing the ideological stances of Russian conservatism. Security-driven modernization rhetoric was an attempt to express conservative voter preferences in the liberal language of potential investors. Speechwriters for the president were successful in inserting *correct* keywords into the speech, "so that Western observers readily read the message intended for them" (Morozov 2010). Zbigniew Brzezinski, for instance, said after the meeting with Medvedev at Gorky on 20 October 2010:

[e]veryone in the U.S. is in awe of you. Especially because you speak about the fact that Russia's modernization is inextricably linked to its democratization with such sincerity and such conviction. These are two processes that go hand in hand, and this has touched American hearts. This inspires me: talking with a young Russian president, who is creating historical opportunities. (Voice of Russia)

After a close analysis, however, *democracy* in Medvedev's rhetoric turned out to be closely associated with ensuring state sovereignty, paternalistic attitudes, and technocratic administration (Morozov 2010). Furthermore, Snetkov (2015: 157) notes that no change occurred between the presidencies of Putin and Medvedev in terms of Russia's seeking of international recognition of its national interests both regionally and globally, so that the post-Soviet legacy of concerns over

Russia's position in the world underpinned Russia's security agenda. This was reflected in the so-called "Medvedev Doctrine", formulated on 31 August 2008, after the Russo–Georgian War. In the doctrine, Medvedev pronounced the key priorities of Russia's foreign policy: the primacy of international law, adherence to the principles of multipolarity, avoidance of isolation, the right to protect Russia's citizens at home and abroad, and keeping Russia's privileged interests in its own region. Snetkov (2015: 157) also argues that Medvedev subsequently referred to the Russo–Georgian War as a warning to the West against the enlargement of NATO into the countries close to Russia's borders.

Although it can be said that Medvedev's rhetoric and presidency was not very influential in domestic politics (Makarychev 2012: 5), he can nevertheless be credited with improving Russia's international relations. Medvedev's liberalism, grounded in legal and economic arguments, was the most significant factor in depoliticizing Russia's international behavior, or making it less ideologically and more pragmatically driven. For instance, he was more inclined to admit that Russia was a regional, rather than a global, power; was open to dialog with the U.S. on cooperation in the post-Soviet area; weighted Russia's benefits from NATO's presence in Central Asia; did not interfere in the issues of noncitizens' rights in the Baltic states, etc. (Makarychev 2012: 3–4). This, in turn, facilitated Russia's movement toward a deeper integration with the West. Although the U.S.–Russian reset did not last longer than until September 2011, Medvedev "deserves some praise for having indirectly contributed to the growing plurality of Russian foreign policy discourses and alternatives" (Makarychev 2012: 5).

Medvedev's distinctiveness can also be seen to some extent in research on his rhetoric. For example, Medvedev has been studied in the context of Internet communication (e.g., Goroshko and Polyakova (2013)). Anna Ivanova (2011), applying corpus linguistics, examines the content of Medvedev's Twitter account, used only for political purposes. The three most frequent words used in Medvedev's tweets are *we*, *Russia*, and *today*, which suggests that Medvedev's discourse aspires to be inclusive. Mikheyeva (2010) analyses Medvedev's official blogs stylistically and compares Medvedev's rhetoric in writing and speaking. One conclusion Mikheyeva makes is that one can clearly see his skills in using Russian literary language to achieve the highest impact. Both Ivanova (2011) and Mikheyeva (2010) note that the style of Medvedev's written posts can be characterized as journalistic. Otherwise, Medvedev's presidential rhetoric has been considered mainly in research devoted to comparison or juxtaposition of rhetoric by several presidents or presidential candidates.

Klyuyev (2016), applying socio- and psycholinguistic methods, provides a comparative discourse analysis of major programmatic addresses by presidential candidates in the Russian presidential election of 2008. In this analysis, Medvedev's rhetoric is characterized by noting issues and explaining them, offering projective rather than definitive ways of solving complicated issues, and containing criticism and self-criticism (Klyuyev 2016: 173). However, Medvedev's discourse is also characterized by caution as he speaks about

reforming the system of governing (ibid.). Medvedev realizes the fragility of that system and proposes its gradual strengthening. The same strategy applies to democratic transformation of the society. Medvedev's rhetoric suggests that he is "an independent political figure", who has political patience, exhibits prudence, and considers all of his words and actions (Klyyev 2016: 174). As a result, Medvedev's pace of speaking is rather slow, which makes him appear to be in the process of contemplation.

Olga Malinova (2011) looks at how the topic of the past is used in the addresses to the Federal Assembly (and some other related addresses) by Russian presidents (Yeltsin, Putin, and Medvedev). Using content analysis and discourse analysis, Malinova examines how the symbolic resource of collective past is used in order to justify the current political course. Discourse analysis especially focuses on the representations of continuity and discontinuity in Russia's history. One important outcome of Malinova's analysis is that the Great Patriotic War is the only event in Russian history actively used in presidential addresses as a positive symbol, which is constantly being reinterpreted. Malinova also demonstrates that Medvedev, much less than Yeltsin and Putin, represented *Us* by distinguishing Us from the Other, traditionally called *the West* (Malinova 2011: 115). At the same time, Medvedev turned to history to emphasize not just continuity, but also the necessity to revise some perspectives. As a result, by admitting the heterogeneity of the past, it was possible for Medvedev to stress both continuity and the desire to distance himself from what is problematic. Medvedev also used to appeal to Russia's history to legitimize his most difficult decisions (e.g., military actions in Georgia in 2008). In Medvedev's rhetoric, positively assessed achievements of the Russian nation included, apart from *the unique culture*, also *territory* and *military potential*, which are associated with *imperial heritage* in modern public discourse. Like other presidents, Medvedev tended to justify his political course by contrasting it with the past. For instance, he compared his course of Russia's modernization with the modernization during Soviet times and even that by Peter I, and stressed that these earlier modernizations were accompanied by havoc, humiliation, and death of millions of people. To justify his political course of modernization, Medvedev criticized not only the 1990s, but also, although mildly, the 2000s, arguing that previous decisions merely reproduce the current model without developing it (Malinova 2011: 117).

More generally, Medvedev and his domestic as well foreign policy strategies tend to be discussed within the framework of studies focused on Russian domestic and foreign policy as well as Russia's relations with the West and NATO; e.g., Ratti (2009), Kropatcheva (2012), Tsygankov (2010a; 2015; 2016), Gvosdev (2014), Snetkov (2015). McElhinny (2018) discusses Medvedev's cooperation with Obama within the framework of broader discussion of the U.S. foreign policy. Utlej (2016) discusses Medvedev and his cooperation with Obama with the focus on fighting against terrorism. Tsygankov (2017) studies the media image of Russia in the editorials of leading American newspapers discussing Russia's internal politics during the period from 2008–2014. One of

the conclusions the author makes is that, despite the U.S.–Russian reset during Medvedev’s presidency, the media image of Russia was still very negative. Black (2015) and Pacer (2016) focus specifically on discussing Medvedev’s foreign policy from 2008–2012. However, no studies so far concentrated specifically on Medvedev’s construction of the U.S. as well as the U.S.–Russian reset in his political discourse during his presidential term from 2008–2012. The aim of this thesis is, therefore, to fill that gap.

CHAPTER 2: Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory

In addition to describing the cornerstones of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, the following sections explain the concepts used in the theoretical description and the empirical analysis.

2.1. Discourse and articulation

Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (whose key theoretical concepts are henceforth highlighted in italics) proceed, *inter alia*, from Saussure's insight that language consists of differences that constitute a system, or *structure*, in which each element can only be determined by its opposition to other elements (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 112–113). In Saussure's view, all signs are relationally fixed to a limited number of other signs from which they differ and gain meaning through these particular differences. This can be compared to a fishing net in which each knot has its particular place in relation to other knots (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 11).

This means that we can only understand *mother* through the contextualized relationship to *father*, *son*, and *daughter*, we can only see something as *nature* in its historically conditioned opposition to *culture*, and we can only account for the historical form of the *state* in relation to historical forms of *economy* and *civil society*. These historically specific, relational ensembles of mutually constitutive identities are called discourses. (Torfing 2005: 154)

Laclau and Mouffe view *discourse* in post-Saussurean terms: it is a relational structure of differential identities that lacks the underlying, unifying principle and seeks to obtain closure, which always remains an unachievable final goal (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 113). Discourse is a form of existence of the social reality – the latter is a meaningful field, the structure of which coincides with the structure of language as an intersubjective relational totality (Morozov 2009). Each object exists only insofar as it is constituted as an object of this intersubjective totality: an earthquake or the falling of a brick are material occurrences, but whether they are constructed as “natural phenomena” or “expressions of the wrath of God” depends on how the discursive field is structured (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 113). Importantly, the linguistic is co-dimensional with the social and constitutive of it:

when *workfare* is linked to *opportunity* and *duty* rather than *welfare* and *right*, and opposed to *welfare*, *greed*, and *patronage*, the consequence is that social benefits are cut, repressive quid-pro-quo schemes are introduced, and the incentives to take insecure low paid jobs are augmented (Torfing 2005: 157).

Thus, for Laclau and Mouffe, the semantic dimension of meaning and the pragmatic dimension of action are inherently interwoven.

The same pertains to the opposition between thought and reality, which Laclau and Mouffe dissolve by arguing that synonymy, metonymy, and metaphor are not products of thought that “add a second sense to the primary, constitutive literality of social relations”, but act as a real force in constituting social relations in the primary terrain (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 110). They abolish the relation between the discursive and nondiscursive and treat discourse as a series of complex language games (Torfing 2005: 162). To a recurrent criticism that the theory denies the existence of *real* objects, Laclau and Mouffe (2001: 108) answer that “[w]hat is denied is not that /.../ objects exist externally to thought, but the rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive conditions of emergence”. In other words, discourse, as a relatively stable fixation of meaning in a particular domain, serves as a *representation* of the world: it is only through representations that people *know* about the reality, as there is no reality outside discourse. Different discourses in a similar domain structure reality and present *the truth*⁷ differently and, therefore, set different guidelines for social action.

Because of the polysemy of signs, no signifier in a discourse can acquire a totally fixed meaning. As a result, most *elements* of discourse are *floating signifiers* because they have different meanings in different discourses, “and this floating character finally penetrates every discursive (i.e., social) identity” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 113). Since the polysemy of floating elements prevents their stable articulation, each discourse is organized around *nodal points*, or historically contingent privileged points of partial fixation of meaning. Nodal points are floating signifiers which partially fix the meaning of other signifiers in a discursive chain. Torfing (2005: 163) provides an example of how the nodal point *globalization* influences the fixation of meaning of such floating signifiers as *regulation*, *competitiveness*, and *the state*:

we see how in neoliberal discourse the reference to *globalization* tends to redefine *regulation* in terms of *the need for deregulation*, *competitiveness* in terms of *structural competitiveness*, and *state* in terms of *the enabling state*.

Elements of discourse that are partially fixed in relation to nodal points are called *moments*, while the fundamental practice of re-/constructing nodal points and turning polysemic elements into partially fixed moments of discourse is called *articulation*. Articulation is “any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 105). All articulatory practices in a social

⁷ Another criticism of Laclau and Mouffe’s theory maintains that, since everything is discursive, it is impossible to defend a particular set of values; e.g., of what is true, right, or good. However, as Torfing (2005: 166) argues, “[o]nly God is capable of transcending all discursivity; we mortals are stuck within particular discursive frameworks that define our criteria for judging something to be true, right, or good”.

field make up a discourse. Each articulation, to some extent, creates, reproduces, and changes the structure. No articulation would be possible in a fully sutured totality or closed structure where all elements would be moments; owing to incompleteness and contingency, however, a “no man’s land” appears, which ensures that transformation of elements into moments is never entirely achieved (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 111).

Importantly, articulation can function as a practice of fixation of meaning as well as (unpredictable) subversion of this fixation, or *dislocation* of discourse. Discourse is dislocated when it cannot domesticate, integrate, or explain certain events, which is especially evident during social crises. Each discourse is vulnerable to dislocation⁸, since it exists as an attempt at partial fixation of meaning (or suturing of the structure), which results in forcing an infinite “surplus of meaning” into *the field of discursivity*. The latter, in turn, always overflows each discourse and is, therefore, “inherent in every discursive situation”. The field of discursivity is also “constitutive of every social practice”, marking the limit between the internal and the external (ibid.). Laclau and Mouffe (2001: 112) maintain that “[a]ny discourse is constructed as an attempt to dominate the field of discursivity⁹, to arrest the flow of differences, to construct a center”. According to Howarth and Starvakakis (2000), discourse is “the reduction of possibilities”, which relates it to the exercise of power. The field of discursivity can also be called *a constitutive outside* of each discourse. Laclau (1990) and Mouffe (2000) adopt Staten’s notion of “constitutive outside”, inspired by Derrida’s undecidables¹⁰ and used in the sense of *an accident* that is a condition necessary for the possibility of *the essence* or *the object as such*.

Staten (and, after him, also Laclau) uses the concept of constitutive outside in two ways. On the one hand, it refers to the same idea as Laclau and Mouffe’s concept of the field of discursivity and means a threat to any identity, since it is an undecidable excess that has to be dealt with; for instance, excluded as the constitutive Other (Thomassen 2005: 110). The second way in which Staten uses constitutive outside, and in which this concept is used in this thesis, is a particular outside that each entity has, which serves as its limit and constitutes it as a particular kind (Staten 1984). Constitutive outside in the second meaning is not a threat to the identity: constitutive outside only threatens the purity of the

⁸ In the empirical analysis of this thesis, the implied presence in the analyzed text excerpts of counterarticulations that threaten to dislocate the promoted articulations of the nodal points and discourses in their entirety is referred to as *haunting*.

⁹ Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) propose to introduce into Laclau and Mouffe’s discourse theory Fairclough’s concept of *the order of discourse* to specify that fixation of meaning in a particular domain is threatened, above all, by discourses from the same domain, and less by discourses from different domains.

¹⁰ According to Derrida, texts create hierarchically ordered binary oppositions, and undecidables are the words and concepts that stand between the opposites: “between the positive and the negative, the good and the bad, the true and the false” (Derrida 1995: 86).

inside (identity) because of its necessity for the constitution of this identity and being the condition of possibility of the inside. It should be noted, however, that

[t]he constitutive outside dislocating the inside is not an outside of the inside, it is not a determined outside beyond a fully constituted inside, but rather an internal limit, thus subverting the inside/outside distinction. It is only the *negation* of this dislocation – its externalization – that creates the purity of the inside. (Thomassen 2005: 111)

To overcome, or *suture*, the dislocation, constitutive outside can be constructed and excluded as *the constitutive Other* insofar as it is perceived as negating the identity of the Self. Importantly, individual moves aimed at eliminating dislocation locally will be referred to in the empirical analysis as *decisions*, in line with Laclau (1990) and Leek and Morozov (2018). Decision eliminates obvious dislocation, partly fixes identities, and inscribes the events upsetting common sense in the mainstream historical narrative. Decision involves both the new articulation and its material consequence, or action. It provides a new reading of the situation, so that dislocation is at least partially fixed and some cognitive certainty is provided (Leek and Morozov 2018: 144).

2.2. Social antagonism and the constitutive Other

Laclau distinguishes between the limit, or dislocation, and the expression of the limit, or antagonism. In *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, Laclau and Mouffe stress the role of social antagonism as a crucial condition for the existence of the social, providing the latter with limits. Antagonism is conceptualized as “the limit of all objectivity”, a discursive form in which the infinite flow of differences is interrupted (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 122). Objective and positive¹¹ relations are differential relations between objects. Since antagonism interrupts difference, it is the discursive expression of the limits of objectivity. Antagonism exists between two incomplete identities: “[t]he presence of the Other prevents me from being totally myself. The relation arises not from full totalities, but from the impossibility of their construction” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 125). The function of antagonism is to subvert the permeating consciousness of the impossibility of constructing a closed structure. “Antagonism as the negation of a given order is, quite simply, the limit of that order, and not the moment of a broader totality in relation to which the two poles of antagonism would constitute differential – i.e., objective – partial instances” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 126). It is, therefore, impossible to perceive what is beyond the limits of the social because it will otherwise be another difference within the system, not an antagonism. Discursively, antagonism as a negative instance

¹¹ *Positive* and *negative* are used to mean ‘of or relating to being or the possession of qualities’ /.../ and ‘non-being or the absence of qualities’, respectively within this context (American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language).

(i.e., lacking any positive, or differential, form) is expressed through the construction of *chains of equivalence*, in which differences are used not to signal their specificity, but to express opposition to an object of antagonism: “[e]quivalence creates a second meaning which, though parasitic on the first, subverts it: the differences cancel one other out insofar as they are used to express something identical to them all” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 127). Chains of equivalence can be formed against any position within the system of differences, which is negated and thus becomes a locus of an antagonism (there can be a plethora of antagonisms penetrating and constituting the social).

Antagonism serves as a means of constructing the center of the structure. Laclau and Mouffe (2001: 112) adopt Derrida’s theorizing that no structure has a center or origin (e.g., *eidōs*, *telos*, *energeia*, *natura*), called *the transcendental signified*, which would fix a meaning underlying the flow of differences. If we subscribe to the idea of the existing center of the structure, then the center would structure the system, but remain itself outside this structuration, to use Laclau and Mouffe’s notion, or would be external to the system. In Derrida’s terms, the center is a function rather than a locus, and it does not exist externally from the system of differences. Consequently, each structure attempts to construct its center: “[t]he social exists as an attempt to fix itself in the intelligible and instituted forms of a *society*, to construct that impossible object a society actually is” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 112). Laclau (1996) refers to signifiers, like *society*, as *empty signifiers* because they signify the system as a whole, or its center, which no signifier, or difference, can signify. Therefore, an empty signifier is the signifier in which the dimension of equivalence is almost fully privileged over the differential nature; so, it is not attached to any signified: “there can be empty signifiers within the field of signification because any system of signification is structured around an empty place resulting from the impossibility of producing an object which, none the less, is required by the systematicity of the system” (Laclau 1996: 40). Thus, empty signifiers are used to signify such fundamental structural positions as the constitutive Other and structural center.

Laclau (1996) explains how this logic functions in politics; for example, in the history of a state, there have been many struggles that have their particular objectives (dimension of difference), but can also be seen as struggles against repressive power (dimension of equivalence). When, at some point, a community is being united against a repressive power, all concrete struggles known in the history of the state lose their uniqueness and become identical in the chain of equivalence constructed in opposition to the repressive power; hence, the latter is impossible to define as the chain of equivalence grows. Repressive power becomes a pure anti-community, the constitutive Other, allowing equivalential expansion, which is the condition for communitarian fullness otherwise absent, or the center of the system (Laclau 1996: 42). Importantly, “the actualization of what is beyond the limit of exclusion would involve the impossibility of what is this side of the limit” (Laclau 1996: 37), and, as a result, internal divisions within the community become

inconspicuous.¹² In contrast, the community is constructed in nonantagonistic terms within the logic of difference; hence, both equivalence and difference are vital in the construction of the social (Laclau 2005: 107).

2.3. Hegemony

According to Laclau (1996: 44), a hegemonic relationship arises when a particular difference becomes the signifier of the absent communitarian fullness. Because a concrete signifier at a concrete moment of history assumes the role of representing the system as a whole, there opens up an opportunity for struggling forces to define this empty signifier. The purpose of an empty signifier is to “give a particular demand a function of universal representation – that is to give it the value of a horizon giving coherence to the chain of equivalence and, at the same time, keeping it indefinitely open” (Laclau 1996: 57–58). Importantly, “no one has the *monopoly* over the signs that we share” (Mercer 1992: 427; cited in Dapía 2000: 13), meaning that a sign can be equally appropriated (or defined) by different groups and discourses.¹³ A sign can be disarticulated from one discourse and become appropriated and rearticulated by another discourse, possibly oppositional to the former; for instance, in Nazi Germany, left-wing signifiers *the people* and *socialism* were hegemonized by right-wing discourse (Nabers 2009: 8). Opposing forces struggle to articulate floating hegemonic nodal points in their own way and thus influence the social order: “discursive struggles about the ways of fixing the meaning of a signifier like *democracy*, for instance, are central to explain the political semantics of our contemporary political world” (Laclau 1995: 435). As a result of hegemonic discursive struggles, some meanings become relatively fixed and, therefore, *sedimented* over time, so that their political origin is gradually forgotten (but can be reactivated), and they, all in all, become to seem *objective*. As Macgilchrist and Van Hout (2011) note, “[o]bjectivity /.../ is precisely a discursive and power-laden matter of (institutionalized) forgetting of other alternatives which are, or could be, available. The contingent nature of what appears as objectivity, the original dimension of power, is not visible.” This is why, in Laclau and Mouffe’s theory, the political is primary to the social: it is in politics that

¹² Laclau has been criticized for creating clear limits between the inside (the community) and the outside (the constitutive Other). To solve this problem, Laclau introduced the concept of heterogeneity, meaning the (excluded) undecidable between the inside and the outside. Heterogeneity is a result of tension between equivalence and difference. Therefore, empty signifiers are only tendentially empty because they still contain “differential remainders”, whereas the limit of objectivity also arises from this tension and not from antagonism (Thomassen 2005).

¹³ The idea that signs have no ideological, political, or class-related belongingness contradicts Marx’s idea that ideological elements belong to particular social classes intrinsically and transhistorically (Hall 1996a: 142; cited in Dapía 2000: 13).

decisions are made pertaining to which particular meanings are to become universalized and, later on, seem objective within the complex organization of the social.

Hegemonic operations involve the presentation of the particularity of a group as an incarnation of the empty signifier that refers to the communitarian order as an absence, an unfulfilled reality (Laclau 1996: 44); for instance, during crises, various political forces struggle to fill the empty signifier *order* with their particular demands. To hegemonize something is exactly to fill the signifier of the lack with particular content. The chains of equivalence that are consequently constructed around the empty signifier make it ever emptier and break its link with the original promoter (Laclau 1996: 45). Laclau (2005: 81), for instance, explains how the meaning of *Solidarność*, a specific group of workers in Gdansk in the 1980s, was emptied and universalized to assume the meaning of popular opposition to repressive power (cited in Nabers 2009: 196). Consequently, empty signifiers “may /.../ mean different things to different people: they may stand for various or even *any* signified; and they may represent whatever their authors want them to represent” (Nabers 2009: 196). As hegemonic discourse expands, it seeks to *domesticate* as many signifiers as possible and make a particular identity universal (Casula 2013a: 4). Hegemonic, or official, discourse is expansive, composed of demands of different groups, and its purpose is to divide political space into two antagonistic camps (ibid.). The difference between empty and floating signifiers is precisely that the former maintains this antagonistic two-camp division, whereas the latter allows this frontier to be displaced (Nabers 2009: 196).

Hegemony is “a type of political relation” which operates in an open social structure, where elements have not been completely transformed into moments, and which is, therefore, a field of articulatory practices (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 134). Consequently, discursive hegemony can be viewed as “a battle over which signifiers are tied to which signified” (Nabers 2009: 196). Articulation institutes nodal points that partially fix the meaning of other differences within the structure: to be hegemonic, an articulation needs to stand in confrontation with antagonistic articulations, creating equivalential relations and frontiers. Frontiers between antagonistic forces need to be mobile, so that there would exist a vast number of floating elements that can be articulated by opposite camps. A hegemonic articulation creates a chain of equivalence out of relatively floating and unfixed elements, the relations between which are also relatively unfixed. This ultimate unfixity implies that hegemony itself is rather unstable (Thomassen 2005: 104) and, therefore, needs to be constantly rearticulated.

“We are always somewhere in between the two ends of a continuum ranging from full equivalence to pure difference, both of which would have the same result, namely the complete fixation of meaning and the end of hegemony” (Thomassen 2005: 105). Therefore, hegemony is never stable, for the chain of equivalence needs to constantly suppress the differential remainder, which is both threatening to hegemony and makes it possible. G. W. Bush, for instance, needed to constantly reiterate the terrorist threat “as a videotape, a bomb, as a

security alert” to make it seem absolute (ibid.). Thus, hegemony is never an a priori fact, but a continuing process that needs constant rearticulation and is unavoidably subject to interruption and challenge. Fissures and ruptures are, therefore, essential to *hegemonic formations*, or “articulated totalities of differences”, and no consensus can ever be absolute (Van Hout and Macgilchrist 2011). As articulation also depends on *an outside* that prevents its full realization, several *hegemonic projects* – each articulated in everyday interactions, through language, images, silences, gesture, architecture, institutions, etc. – will vie for hegemony at any given time” (ibid.). Hegemonic articulations are not defined from the beginning; conversely, opposite camps are redefined at each moment of articulation. A hegemonic formation contains the opposing force because the “place of negation” is situated within the hegemonic formation: what is contested is a certain set of articulations produced according to the internal parameters of the hegemonic formation (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 139–143). Therefore, “[t]he partial acceptance of hegemonic subordination as legitimate differentiates it from pure antagonism, which does not allow for any shared identity between the antagonistic forces” (Morozov 2010: 188).

Having achieved hegemony, a social force, for some time, succeeds in establishing a particular vision of reality for those partaking in the communicative process as well as defines the terms of collective identity formation. Hegemonic discourse sets the framework of people’s everyday understanding of social relations and the world in its entirety. Making the world intelligible involves an act of power: “[t]he power of discourse to materialize its effects is thus consonant with the power of discourse to circumscribe the domain of intelligibility” (Butler 1993: 187; cited in Nabers 2009: 197). Hegemonic discourse is considered *objective*, for it becomes institutionally fixed and undergoes the process of social sedimentation¹⁴. As a consequence, a new hegemonic project (depending on the degree of a crisis) needs to take into account the sedimented practices that form the normative framework of a particular society.

The analysis in this thesis will be concerned with Obama’s and Medvedev’s hegemonic moves to partially fix the empty signifier *security* to their respective advantage. As will be evident from the discussion in chapter 4 of this thesis, security matters have, owing to historical circumstances and structural constraints, remained pivotal in U.S.–Russian relations. The analysis will examine respective decisions made by Obama and Medvedev to eliminate existing and potential dislocations in various contexts.

¹⁴ Social *sedimentation* means that political struggles, associated with hegemonic discourse, are forgotten. However, contingency of hegemonic discourses can be reactivated at any time, as they become problematized in new articulations (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 36).

2.4. Split subject and identity

Laclau and Mouffe (2001: 115) understand subject as *a subject position* within a discursive structure that is not “the origin of social relations”, for all *experience* is structurally predetermined. Therefore, all subsequent references to *subject* throughout this chapter refer to subject positions. Laclau and Mouffe’s conception of subject position differs from, e.g., that of structural Marxism, as theorized by Louis Althusser. The latter saw subject positions as *interpellations*, meaning that ideology, by hailing people, makes them ideological subjects and thus prevents them from discovering the true nature of social relations: “[e]xperience shows that the practical telecommunications of hailings is such that they hardly ever miss their man: verbal call or whistle, the one hailed always recognizes that it is really him who is being hailed” (Althusser 1971: 174). In the empirical analysis of this thesis, *interpellation* means an attempt to make an addressee position her- or himself within a promoted discourse.

Nevertheless, Laclau and Mouffe still allow a subject a certain degree of subjectivity because of the radical undecidability at the heart of the structure that prompts constant dislocations, in which choices that are not structurally determined need to be made. For Laclau (1993: 435), hegemony “is a theory of the decisions taken in an undecidable terrain”. However, once a decision is made, it is also naturalized at the cost of repressing another decision. Moreover, each subject position in itself is an overdetermined¹⁵ and decentered entity. Inspired by Slavoj Žižek, Laclau (1990) incorporates Lacan’s psychoanalytic theory of the subject to explain why individuals are interpellated by discourses. According to the theory, an infant experiences completeness living in symbiosis with its mother, but never regains this completeness after being gradually separated from her. In the process of socialization, the child is presented with discursive images of who he or she is. A child comes to know her- or himself as an individual by identifying with something outside the Self, or such discursive subject positions as *daughter, patient, pupil, sister, son*, etc.

The child internalizes the images, but always experiences that its identification with them is incomplete in comparison with the experience of wholeness as an infant; so, the subject is inherently *split*. As a result, a person is constantly struggling to regain ideal fullness that he or she once experienced, which is parallel to Laclau and Mouffe’s view of social entities as incomplete structures struggling to regain wholeness. Lacan conceptualizes individuals as penetrated by a constitutive lack that they seek to fill by identifying with subject positions. Every effort to resolve the lack is bound to fail, but provide the identity with “the name of what we *desire* but can never *fully* attain” (Starvakakis 2005: 70). Through Lacan’s theorizing, Laclau and Mouffe find the driving force that makes people become interpellated by, and make personal investment in, the structure. In other words, people invest in particular discourses as they position

¹⁵ *Overdetermination* means that the subject is always positioned by various conflicting discourses among which a conflict arises (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 41).

themselves within these discourses. As a result, people draw on these discourses, and not others, to form their identity and use in everyday communication (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 113).

Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 105) draw parallels between identity and a linguistic sign with respect to their relational nature within the discursive structure. Identity is a discursive articulation: individual identity results from identification with certain subject positions, or nodal points, of identity. Since the latter are empty, they are given meaning through chains of equivalence that link signifiers and establish identity relationally (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 42). Identity, or representation, is constructed by structuring chains of equivalence and difference around a nodal point; e.g., *a man*, in some discourses, may equate with *strength*, *reason*, and *football*, whereas it differs from *a woman*, which may equate with *passive*, *passion*, and *cooking*. Discourses provide behavioral instructions for how to be, e.g., “a real man” (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 43). Collective identity is constructed in the same way: objective groups do not exist, but are created based on contingent chains of equivalence. Therefore, no group can preexist its representation. A group and its representative are constituted in the same movement: “it is not until one speaks of, or to, or on behalf of a group that it is constituted as a group” (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 45). Representing a group, which is constituted as opposed to other groups, reveals the speaker’s overall understanding of how society is structured.

Furthermore, in collective identity construction, floating signifiers, like *society* or *country*, are *myths*, something impossible but necessary for people to imagine in order to have a horizon for their acts. According to Laclau (1990), a myth emerges when discourses are destabilized by dislocation: impossibility to symbolize and integrate uncertainties, the state of “indeterminacy and indeterminacy of articulations of different identities” (Nabers 2009: 197). Formation of a myth serves as an attempt to *suture* the dislocated space and create a new space of representation. Creation of a myth is, therefore, inherently hegemonic, since “it involves forming a new objectivity by means of the rearticulation of the dislocated elements. Any objectivity, then, is merely a crystallized myth” (Laclau 1990: 61). Myths are constructed by particular groups to represent their interests, whereas *social imaginaries* are developed when groups start to think universally. To construct a social imaginary, chains of equivalence are produced, which eliminate the boundaries between social groups by “relating them to a common project and by establishing a frontier to define the forces to be opposed, the *enemy*” (Mouffe 1993: 50). The construction of national identity is a telling example of that (Rear 2013: 10). Importantly, according to Laclau and Mouffe (2001: 126), as long as a subject is constructed through language and is metaphorically incorporated into the symbolic order, each questioning of that order leads to identity crisis.

In Laclau and Mouffe’s terms, identity formation is a result of hegemonic struggles. Since differential entities that comprise a community are not united by an essence that underlies them all, it is a hegemonic relation that constructs identity and limits of the community (Thomassen 2005: 104). “Identities are

social constructions, which come into being through the competition of hegemonic (and counter-hegemonic) discourses for the definition of empty signifiers, such as *democracy* or *the nation* (Casula 2007: 3). Hegemonic articulations shape a community and operate therein. When hegemony fails to close the gaps in articulatory structures, and its constellation is broken, it creates the ground for the completeness of a community as a future promise: “identity-building, in consequence, resembles an open-ended hegemonic struggle” (Nabers 2009: 196). By conceptualizing identity as the contingent result of discursive processes and as part of the hegemonic struggle, Laclau and Mouffe reject, e.g., the Marxist idea that each individual has an objective class identity, even without realizing it. They also step away from essentialism, which considers identity as an “inner core to be expressed across contexts” (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 43) or as a stable set of features believed to represent an individual or a group and distinguish them from other individuals or groups.

As can be seen from the above, Laclau and Mouffe strive to create a social theory, and they thus operate with abstract notions. In order to make the theory more easily applicable to an empirical analysis of linguistic material, we need to combine it with some other schools of thought.

CHAPTER 3: Methodology

Jørgensen and Phillips (2002: 4) call Laclau and Mouffe's theory a "theoretical and methodological whole". However, although Laclau (2004: 280) argues that his theory of discourse is "close to that which in other approaches has been called *practice*", Laclau and Mouffe work at a high level of theoretical abstraction without providing a practical analytical framework for an empirical study. Many scholars have made efforts to implement Laclau and Mouffe's theory in empirical research. Ventsel (2011) developed what he called a "semiotic theory of hegemony" by combining elements of Laclau and Mouffe's theory and Lotman's semiotic theory, and he used this model to analyze texts as well as other semiotic phenomena. Phelan (2005: 129) supplemented the discourse-theoretical approach to media politics with Bourdieu's field theory. According to Phelan (2005: 128), Bourdieu's focus is on *interorganizational* dynamics and his concepts like *field*, *habitus*, *doxa*, *capital*, and *symbolic violence* are methodologically effective for analyzing material-discursive constraints, which Laclau conceptualizes only generically within the context of sedimentation. In turn, Laclau's theory of hegemony helps to move the focus of the analysis from the narrow journalistic field to the symbolic power of the media in general. Such Laclau's concepts as *social antagonisms*, *heterogeneity*, and *dislocation* also make it possible to examine the tensions between the journalistic field and other social spaces; for instance, the academic field (Phelan 2005: 148).

Norval (1996) applied Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory to examine verbal and nonverbal practices and rituals of apartheid discourse, which contributed to promulgating, naturalizing, and institutionalizing a particular horizon of reality, within which sense could be made of various events. She examined presuppositions informing opinions of the parties and the identity logic informing apartheid and contesting discourses. Norval looked, among other things, at how the category of the Other was filled within a particular historical situation.

Ethnographers have also made fruitful attempts to apply Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory in empirical research. Discourse theory has been combined with ethnographic methodology for a close analysis of discursive practices (e.g., Müller 2009). Macgilchrist and Van Hout (2011), for instance, conducted a computer-based ethnographic observation of how a French journalist wrote a financial news story based on different press releases about Gazprom's gas supply to France and, in the process, subtly constructed Russia as a threat to the French people by

associating Gazprom with threat and increasing control of France's gas supply, [which] is the subtle back-drop reconstituting the more obvious association of Gazprom with the Red Army or with Putin and his instruments of power as indicated in the headlines discussed. The news text thus obliquely cites discourses

of anti-democratic tendencies in Russia, and hence constitutes France or perhaps *the West* as the democratic Other to Gazprom.

Macgilchrist and Van Hout's analytical interest lies in the process of citation and circulation of discourse through practices common in the sphere of the media. They argue that the analysis of hegemony should also focus on the smallest daily practices, which are the cornerstone of maintaining hegemony. Their computer-assisted ethnographic discourse analysis allows for simultaneously considering *large questions* and tying them with specific, situated practices. It is the stance the present project also promotes: a broader question concerning the development of U.S.–Russian relations is addressed, and specific parts of Medvedev's and Obama's political rhetoric regarding U.S.–Russian relations and their reset are analyzed in detail.

Nonhoff (2006) introduced the concept of hegemonic strategy as a link between Laclau and Mouffe's theory and empirical analysis of texts. For Nonhoff, hegemonic strategy is the driving force of arranging discursive elements with the help of stratagems. Nonhoff elaborates nine stratagems that can create different relations between signifiers. Nonhoff's core stratagems characterizing political discourse include particular demands oriented toward the universal, division of public space, and the representation. These are followed by a fundamental stratagem (super differential boundary) and complementary hegemonic stratagems (openness of interpretation regarding the universal, creation of subject positions, and punctual breaking of a dichotomy). Nonhoff conducts a textual analysis of economic and political documents of Germany from the late 1940s and the 1950s, where he traces how the stratagems are implemented through language and contribute to the emergence of hegemony of social market economy in postwar Germany. Nonhoff views discourse as open and dynamic, and, therefore, its analysis benefits from reciprocal influence between practice and theory.

Angermüller (2013) combines poststructuralist and pragmatic developments in social theory and treats discourse as a "polyphonic positioning practice". He researches (subject) positions that are realized in utterances (or linguistic materializations of speech acts): in many utterances, heterogeneous positions are simultaneously expressed and "evoke a complex dialogical spectacle" (Angermüller 2013: 271). Aware of the general "configuration of discourses" (Müller 2009) theorized by Laclau and Mouffe, and informed of the context of the specific discourse, the aim of this thesis is to examine how microlevel linguistic mechanisms of specific textual excerpts operate to reflect and re-/shape macrolevel discursive processes. In this thesis, discourse is viewed as consisting of verbal and nonverbal discursive practices, which "performatively" (Butler 1997) cite and circulate it. The macro- and microlevel of analysis are also closely tied.

3.1. Laclau and Mouffe's theory and critical discourse analysis

The present thesis combines analytical tools from Laclau and Mouffe's theory with methods for empirical analysis designed within critical discourse analysis (CDA). Jørgensen and Phillips (2002: 147), Sjolander (2011), and Rear (2013) suggest that Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory could be combined with CDA to give the researcher more specific tools for studying linguistic material. Nabers (2009: 199) regards CDA as "the strand of discourse analysis that probably comes closest to /.../ Laclau's and Mouffe's theory, and provides a fruitful ground for a methodological extension of their thinking". He also believes that, since "the theoretical strands of CDA and hegemony rely on broadly parallel intellectual traditions, unjustified eclecticism can be avoided" (Nabers 2009: 194). In his CDA approach, Fairclough (2003) actually operationalizes Laclau and Mouffe's conceptualization of hegemony (in the sense of universalization of the particular) as well as the logics of equivalence and difference, looking at how these conceptualizations work at the textual level. The major distinction between Laclau and Mouffe's theory and CDA is their view of discourse: Laclau and Mouffe do not distinguish between the discursive and the nondiscursive elements of the social, in contrast to CDA. In the latter, discourse is regarded as discursive practices, or processes of production and consumption of texts, which constitute, and are constituted by, the social world (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 62). CDA retains Marxist elements in seeing ideology as subjugation of one social group to others; in turn, discursive practices are considered as contributing to the creation of unequal power relations between social groups. Representations of the world, social subjects, and social relations are constructed through discursive practices and play an important role in advancing interests of particular groups. CDA employs textual analysis to study how discursive processes operate through linguistic features of specific texts (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 63).¹⁶

Nabers (2009) develops a conceptual framework, combining CDA and Laclau and Mouffe's theory to analyze the construction of "the war on terror" between September 2001 and May 2003. In order to resolve the difference in the conceptualizations of discourse in Laclau and Mouffe's theory and CDA, Nabers treats texts as a materialization of past hegemonic, or sedimented, discourses. Nabers (2009: 194) views CDA "from a Laclauian perspective, and not vice versa". The present thesis also adopts this perspective. In her partly linguistic analysis, Macgilchrist (2011) combines insights of Laclau and Mouffe with those of Fairclough and Foucault to reveal tensions in the construction of Russia by European and North American (jointly referred to as *Western*) news media. In her microlevel linguistic analysis, Macgilchrist examines nodal

¹⁶ CDA is an umbrella label that covers many strands of work. This thesis draws on the works of Fairclough in particular.

points, chains of equivalence, different verbal representations of the same idea, and metaphors in which Russia was conceptualized in some contexts. This thesis, in turn, adopts two analytical tools from CDA for the microlevel, empirical study to tie the analysis of textual excerpts with the analytical tools of Laclau and Mouffe's theory.

Laclau and Mouffe's theory is the theory of the social and presupposes a large-scale interpretative analysis rather than a close linguistic examination of a limited corpus. However, the analysis of concrete linguistic excerpts with the help of CDA can help detect the actual realization of the Laclau and Mouffe's analytical tools and thus contribute to the interpretation of the general configuration of discourse(s). The strength of CDA is that it does not impose a specific empirical framework on the researcher and offers a rich repertoire of tools for analyzing microclaims. To quote Nabers (2009: 3), "[l]anguage is an irreducible constitutive part of social life, which leads to the claim that social research can be based on the analysis of language. /.../ Texts are elements of social life that bring about change as they cause changes in knowledge structures and with it change in the social per se." Discourse scholars are trying to fill the "gap between some of the abstract ontological concepts and the need for concepts dealing with the ontic level" (Torfing 2005: 165).

Since, by referring to Russia, Obama inevitably constructs and promotes a particular image of the U.S. and proceeds from a particular image of the U.S. (and the same applies to Medvedev when he is referring to the U.S.), this thesis requires an overarching theoretical framework that provides a comprehensive account of identity construction, like the one found in Laclau and Mouffe's theory. Bringing together Lacan's idea of an always-already dislocated subject and the construction of identity through chains of equivalence around an empty universal provide especially valuable insights. This is where CDA tools are particularly useful, as they can manifest the implicit meanings motivated by the processes of state identity formation. They can also demonstrate the ambiguity of these processes. This thesis will, specifically, use indexicality as theorized by Chilton (2004) and assumptions as theorized by Fairclough (2003).

3.2. Indexicality

Utterances are produced and interpreted in relation to the situation in which the speaker and the interpreter are positioned, meaning their "relationship to their interlocutor(s), to their physical location, to the point in time of the ongoing utterance, and to where they are in the ongoing discourse" (Chilton 2004: 56). Indexical expressions are linguistic mechanisms that make the interpreter relate to the positioning expressed by the speaker. Positioning, among other things, communicates certain representations of the world. From a cognitive position, representations are mental models of content and context stored in long-term memory as "social information about ideas, values, and practices" (Chilton 2004: 51). Short-term memory generates mental models in the process of

discourse production and interpretation. Long-term memory stores scenarios or frames that structure different situation types and their expression in language conceptually. Frames are “packets of [cultural] knowledge”, such as “knowledge about transport, the structure of houses, what illness is and what doctors do” (Chilton 2004: 52). Consequently, conceptual structures of group members serve as a link between social structure and textual structure. As discourse¹⁷ unfolds, a discourse world, or discourse ontology, is created by the speakers, which is either their believed reality or the reality entertained by somebody else and represented by them (Chilton 2004: 54).

Chilton’s discourse ontology is a conceptual structure that consists of three intersecting axes (space, time, and modality), along which people place entities present explicitly or implicitly in discourse: “[s]o, we are suggesting that in processing any discourse people *position* other entities in their *world* by *positioning* these entities in relation to themselves along at least three axes, space, time, and modality” (Chilton 2004: 57–58). The deictic center, or the Self, lies at the intersection of the axes and is the origin of the three dimensions. Other entities, if they exist, are defined according to their coordinates on the three axes. The deictic center is the anchoring point of all conceptualizations, and “depends on cognitive frames that embody conventional shared understandings about the structure of society, groups, and relations with other societies” (Chilton 2004: 56). The point of intersection, where the Self is located, is taken for granted (Chilton 2004: 61).

Along the spatial axis, speakers locate entities according to their proximity or remoteness from the Self, using pronouns, indexical cues, and background assumptions; e.g., *I, we, here* (the deictic center), *there, they* (the remote end of the spatial axis, where the Other is located). This scale does not reflect actual geography: “to English people, Australia might seem *closer* than Albania” (Chilton 2004: 58). The axis also indicates metaphorical *social* distance; e.g., *close cooperation, remote connection*, etc. (ibid.). However, participants can be located along the spatial axis without explicit indexical markers; for instance, by using conceptual metaphors. According to Chilton (2004: 52), “[s]ocial groups, and in particular sovereign states, involve the spatial source domain (grounded in spatial experience) rooted in the experience of containment and boundary setting”. As a result, conceptual metaphors of *a center, insiders, outsiders, people on the margins*, etc. are pervasive in discourse. In political discourse, addressees are often induced to conceptualize themselves in the same physical time and place as the speaker, so that both see the external events from the same territory. The speaker can thus legitimize her/his actions by either positioning the addressee (and her-/himself) close to the source of a threat or, alternatively, locating the threat close to the addressee and her-/himself (Cap 2008).

¹⁷ In CDA, the distinction between the discursive and the nondiscursive is maintained. In this case, *discourse* means symbolic realizations of the social.

On the temporal axis, “the origin is the time of speaking, surrounded, so to speak, by the area that counts as *now*” (Chilton 2004: 58) Historical events are distanced from the deictic center in the direction of *the past*, predicted events in the direction of *the future*. “For political discourse in general, subjectively *positioned* time periods can be of particular importance: history, and which parts of it are *close* to the *us* is central to national ideologies¹⁸ and to justifying present and future policy” (Chilton 2004: 59). A historic or predicted event can be positioned closer to the deictic center to signal salience and imminence.

Finally, the modal axis suggests that the Self is not only here and now, but the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right (Chilton 2004: 59). That is, the modal axis entails degrees of certainty (epistemic capacity) on the one hand, and a scale of morality/obligation (deontic capacity) on the other hand (ibid.). Unquestionable beliefs are situated at the deictic center, contested beliefs far from the deictic center. Therefore, the true is near, or co-located with the Self, whereas falsity, moral or legal wrongness, is co-located with the Other. The scale of obligation is directional and reflects the Self’s authoritative position in relation to the Other. Deontic and epistemic scales are closely related: “what is right is both truth-conditionally *right* and legally or morally *right*, and correspondingly for *wrong*” (ibid.).

In general, each discourse is grounded on an expectation that the interpreter locates what is being talked about according to the implied or asserted coordinates on the three axes (Chilton 2004: 60–61). Explicitly, coordinates are indexed by tense, prepositional phrases, pronouns, modal expressions, etc. in conjunction with frame-based knowledge that can be elicited by studying the context. According to Fahnestock (2011: 327), “[d]eictic terms /.../, sometimes metaphoric, reveal the speaker’s attitudes to events and to others, invoking schemas of *center/periphery* in hearers’ or readers’ minds”.

Chilton’s (2004) idea of the three deictic axes is mirrored in Hansen’s (2006) three dimensions of identity construction: spatiality, temporality, and ethicality. Hansen (2006: 41) points out their significance in constructing identity and difference in foreign policy discourse: “Even abstract discourses constitute subjects by situating them within particular boundaries, by investing them with possibilities for change or repetition, and by constructing ethical relations”. However, as Hansen notes, the three dimensions are always interrelated, which suggests that it might be difficult to distinguish between, e.g., spatial and modal axes in the empirical analysis (since, for instance, two entities being constructed as close on the spatial axis often implies that they do the right thing and have similar values, meaning that they are also constructed as close on the modal axis). Therefore, the concept of spatial-modal axis will be used to analyze the cases in which spatial or modal dimension is not triggered by specific linguistic devices discussed above or is especially difficult to differentiate.

¹⁸ In CDA, ideologies are defined as “representations of aspects of the world which can be shown to contribute to establishing, maintaining and changing social relations of power, domination, and exploitation” (Fairclough 2003: 9).

Cap (2008) notes that it is very important to follow symbolic shifts in which peripheral elements are construed as parts of the deictic center – this can be done by analyzing indexical expressions and background assumptions. Fairclough (2003: 11) argues that “what is *said* in a text always rests upon *unsaid* assumptions, so part of the analysis of texts is trying to identify what is assumed”. Since background assumptions are crucial in the creation and interpretation of discourse, they are used as an associated analytical tool in this project.

3.3. Assumptions

Fairclough (2003) distinguishes between interdiscursive and intertextual relations residing in texts. Interdiscursive or internal relations occur between elements of different genres, discourses, and styles coexisting within a text. Intertextual or external relations, in turn, concern the relations of a text with other texts to which it is related or elements of which it contains. A text can be intertextual explicitly (e.g., containing a direct quote, an un-/attributed indirect quote, summary of other person’s words, etc.) and implicitly, through assumptions. All texts make assumptions. The term covers the implicit processes of meaning-making in texts. Assumptions include presuppositions, logical implications or entailments, and implicatures, as theorized in linguistic pragmatics (Fairclough 2003: 40).

In terms of assumptions, Fairclough’s major concern is with presuppositions. Semantically, presupposition allows avoiding redundancy (e.g., we say “Tom’s aunt” instead of saying “Tom has an aunt” each time). Pragmatically, presupposition allows a speaker to establish common ground or mutual knowledge with the audience (Stalnaker 1978; cited in Mazid 2007: 355). Fairclough (2003: 55) argues that common ground is crucial to social interaction, and hegemony seeks to influence its nature and content. Therefore, in CDA, presuppositions are not only about knowledge, but about “what the discourse producer wants, or forces, the audience to take for granted” (Mazid 2007: 357). According to van Dijk (2000), presupposition “allows people to make implicit assumptions about things being true that may not be true at all. By presupposing *q*, instead of actually asserting *q* explicitly, speakers may want to hide or downplay the fact that *q* may be false or at least questionable”. Strategic use of presuppositions enables a speaker to avoid being challenged or rejected. According to Chilton (2004: 64), “[s]uch avoidance has two advantages: it evades social threats and it may result in unconscious cognitive adjustments, in which the hearer adds propositions to representations of the world in memory – this being effectively what we mean by *taking something for granted*”.

Presupposition is analytically important because it is often *existential*, or expressing the taken-for-granted existence of a referent. All texts make assumptions about what *is* and relations between *existing* entities. The degree to which something exists is also important: “people’s representations have entities that

may exist, might have existed, reportedly exist, definitely don't exist, and so on" (Chilton 2004: 57). In political discourse, foreign policy discourse in particular, the objects of communication often cannot be present or tangible for the interlocutors, which is why there needs to be done much discursive work in order to make the hearer mentally create a representation. Discourse achieves coherence as referents are recurrent and links between them are established within the discourse world (Chilton 2004: 54).

Presupposition allows for strategic *packaging* of information lexically, syntactically, and intonationally as *old* (common and accepted) and *new* (presumably unknown to the interlocutors). In analysis of political discourse, presupposition is associated with consensus, being "one micro-mechanism in language use which contributes to the building of consensual reality" (ibid.). As Norval (1996: 4) points out, a hegemonic discourse generally depends on the processes directed at forging consent: if such processes fail, domination is exercised. Consent is directed at, and limited to, insiders, whereas outsiders are subjected to acquiescence, often followed by domination (as evident in Norval's deconstruction of apartheid discourse).

Fairclough categorizes assumptions into existential (what exists), propositional (what is, or can be, the case), and value assumptions (what is good or desirable). Many assumptions are implicit, while assumptions can be "triggered" (Levinson 1983) in some cases by linguistic features in a text; for instance, existential assumptions can be triggered by definite articles and demonstratives (*the, this, that, these, those*) (Fairclough 2003: 56), propositional assumptions by *how*-questions and factive verbs. "I realized (forgot, remembered) that managers have to be flexible" assumes that managers have to be flexible, as it is something the speaker considers to be a fact by realizing, recalling, or remembering it (ibid.). Another example of a propositional assumption is a bartender's question, "How old are you?" – the propositional assumption here is that alcoholic drinks can only be served to customers of a certain age. Value assumptions can be triggered by such words as *help*; e.g., "a good training program can help develop flexibility" – the value assumption here is that flexibility is desirable (generally, what is helped is desirable) (Fairclough 2003: 56). It is important that the interpreter knows and recognizes the value systems on which a text is based.

"What is *said* in a text is *said* against a background of what is *unsaid*, but taken as given" (Fairclough 2003: 40). Like intertextuality, assumptions connect a text with other texts, but with unspecified ones, conceptualized in the vague elsewhere. Assumptions and intertextuality can be regarded as claims on behalf of the author that what is reported was indeed said or that what is assumed was said, thought, written, heard, or read elsewhere. Such claims can be false, dishonest, or manipulative (Fairclough 2003: 40).

It should be noted that social events and interactions are oriented toward, and open to, social difference, inclusion of different viewpoints, and interests. "An important contrast between intertextuality and assumption is that the former broadly opens up difference by bringing other *voices* into a text, whereas the

latter broadly reduces difference by assuming common ground” (Fairclough 2003: 41). Voices in Fairclough’s (ibid.) terms refer to “ways of being or identities in their linguistic and more broadly semiotic aspects”, but also to voices of concrete individuals. Parallels can be drawn between intertextuality and Mikhail Bakhtin’s dialogical theory of language. “A word, discourse, language or culture undergoes *dialogization* when it becomes relativized, de-privileged, aware of competing definitions for the same things” (Holquist 1981: 427; cited in Fairclough 2003: 42). Thus, dialogicality presupposes proliferation of social difference, openness to polemics, and dialog. A text is more dialogical when it represents and responds to different voices within it; in contrast, a text is less dialogical when it excludes and suppresses various voices within it (Fairclough 2003: 214).

Bakhtin stresses the importance of the communicative function of language, in which the listener or reader perceives the meaning and simultaneously takes an active attitude toward it: agrees or disagrees with the speaker (fully or partially), adds something to the speaker’s utterance¹⁹, applies it, etc. (Bakhtin 1996: 169). Each speaker is thus, to a greater or lesser extent, a responder: he/she is aware of the existence of the language system that he/she uses and also of the existence of previous utterances – her/his own or ones by others – on which he/she relies, with which he/she argues, which he/she silently presupposes, etc. It makes each utterance a link in the “complexly organized chain of other utterances” (Bakhtin 1996: 170). Bakhtin (1996: 351) argues that human consciousness and human life per se have dialogic nature:

[t]o live means to participate in the dialog – to ask, to listen, to respond, to agree, etc. In this dialog, a human being participates as a whole and with all of her/his life: eyes, lips, hands, soul, spirit, body, and acts. S-/he puts all of her-/himself into the word, and this word enters the dialogic fabric of human life, a world symposium.

Owing to the dialogic nature of social life, meaning can never be complete, but it is always developing and absorbing numerous voices, being thus polyphonic. Bakhtin defined dialogism as interaction between consciousnesses equal in value and rights, as opposed to monologism, which denies equality (Bakhtin 1996: 350–351). Any utterance is full of dialogic overtones, without consideration of which it is impossible to fully understand the language choices therein. Even if an utterance appears to be explicitly monologic and narrowly focused on its topic, like a scientific or philosophical treatise, it answers, to some extent, to something that has already been said on that topic, although this responsive reaction may not be explicit.

According to Fairclough (2003: 42), texts manifest various degrees of dialogization or orientation to difference. Difference can be recognized (as in a dialog), accentuated (as in a polemic), negotiated (as in attempts at resolution),

¹⁹ Bakhtin’s definition of utterance largely corresponds to Fairclough’s definition of text.

bracketed (as in stressing solidarity), or altogether suppressed under consensus. Difference can be suppressed, for instance, through the use of categorical assertions (e.g., “it imposes”), which are not modalized (e.g., “it may impose”), excluding other possibilities. Assumptions are even less dialogical, since they just take one vision for granted (Fairclough 2003: 46). Attributing a universal status to particular visions and representations of the world is a process of hegemonic struggle.²⁰ However, even if different voices are equally present within a text, they can be covertly structured as unfavorable to one party (antagonist) and favorable to another (protagonist). Different voices in texts may actually draw on different discourses (Fairclough 2003: 54).

3.4. Analytical procedure

In the empirical part of the thesis, the corpus will be explored, applying the three methods described above (examination of indexicality and assumptions, as well as detection of analytical concepts from Laclau and Mouffe’s theory: articulation, elements, moments, empty signifier, nodal point, chains of equivalence/difference, constitutive Other, constitutive outside, dislocation, decision, interpellation, structural closure, and hegemony / hegemonic move). The linguistic analysis identifies how, in a hegemonic move, empty signifiers (for instance, *security*) are partially fixed with specific nodal points (for instance, *nuclear nonproliferation*) and how other elements of discourse (e.g., *the U.S.*, *Russia*, *NATO*, etc.) are placed in relation to this nodal point (thus becoming moments) as well as in relation to each other in specific articulations. Analysis of assumptions allows detecting how relations to other elements (especially within counterarticulations) are avoided and suppressed. The analysis of assumptions traces whether the suppressed counterarticulations are striking back and *haunting* the promoted articulation, making it unstable and fuzzy or even dislocating the entire discourse. Various decisions are examined, which aim at eliminating either existing or potential dislocation of the promoted discourse. The analysis looks at how common ground is created through assumptions, muting difference, aiming at hegemony, and interpellating other participants into supporting the speaker’s viewpoint and positioning themselves within his promoted discourse. The analysis looks whether a chain of difference or chain of equivalence is constructed to articulate an identity.

In his operationalization of the logics of difference and equivalence, as well as their interplay, Fairclough (2003: 88) proposes that researchers examine how entities (people, objects, organizations, etc.) are differentiated in texts and how differentiation is suppressed to texture equivalence. Difference is textured, e.g., by using semantic expressions of contrast (*but*, *instead of*, *however*), whereas equivalence is textured, e.g., by including entities in lists. The construction of

²⁰ Fairclough (2003: 61) stresses that, “[f]ollowing Laclau, we can see hegemony as the attempted universalization of particulars /.../, which entails a reduction of dialogicality”.

the deictic center is analyzed by looking at indexical expressions, how and in which situations peripheral elements move closer to the deictic center or even become part of it, or how the constitutive Other and the constitutive outside are constructed. This is done by looking at indexical expressions and assumptions that position entities along spatial, modal, spatial-modal, and temporal axes with respect to the deictic center.

According to van Dijk (2000: 91), discourses are “*incomplete* and *implicit* in the sense that much information is not expressed, but only understood to be *implied* or *presupposed*”, and, in order to infer implicit information from texts, knowledge of specific events and knowledge of general sociocultural context is necessary. As pointed out above, sociocultural frame-based knowledge serves as a vital link between the social structure and the textual structure (Chilton 2004: 52). As Norval (1996: 2) puts it, “[a]ny attempt to come to an understanding of the political grammar of a particular discourse presupposes that there is a context to be explicated, and logics to be made visible”. In order to frame the analysis, the next chapter explicates the context of U.S.–Russian relations.

3.5. Principles of corpus selection and limitations of research

Although a more detailed description of the corpora of Obama’s and Medvedev’s texts will be provided in chapters 4 and 5, respectively, it is important, at this stage of discussion, to point out the limitations of qualitative analysis conducted with the help of the research method described above. The limitations of such an empirical study have their roots in sampling, for it is, needless to say, a difficult task to decide definitively what constitutes a representative sample for a deep qualitative analysis. Carminati (2018: 2097–2098) concedes that “defining the adequate sample size in qualitative research is ultimately a matter of the researcher’s experience and judgment of the quality of the data collected and the research method employed”.

Contexts were chosen where there was a dialogic relationship between the two presidents. In the Obama corpus, the choice was determined by the concrete policies in connection with which Obama spoke about Russia: global nuclear nonproliferation, elaboration and ratification of the New START Treaty, Russia’s WTO accession, and the reset of U.S.–Russian relations – these contexts contained the greatest number of texts in which Obama referred to Russia; the same can be said about Medvedev, aside from the first context. The fifth context, missile defense (and NATO–Russian relations), was selected as a result of a close reading of the Medvedev corpus, since the topic of missile defense was immensely important for Russia, while Obama was generally unwilling to comment on this issue. For that reason, the context of missile defense was chosen over the context of sanctions on Iran, another potential

context for empirical analysis. The context of global nuclear nonproliferation (Obama's security-related hegemonic move) was, in the case of the Medvedev corpus, replaced by the European Security Treaty (his security-related hegemonic move, respectively).

Since both presidents made numerous statements about the other's country during their presidential terms in 2008–2012 (Obama mentioned Russia in 149 texts, and Medvedev mentioned the U.S. in 292 texts), the whole corpus could not be subjected to a detailed qualitative analysis. For that reason, narrower subcorpora had to be selected for a detailed analysis.

The first criterion of selection was formal: the excerpts had to contain more than three sentences and no more than twenty sentences. One of the assumptions was that intense discursive struggles cannot be identified in shorter excerpts. Another assumption was that the longer the excerpt, the more linguistic features triggering the applied analytical tools can be found, and more insights can thus be gained from the inevitably limited number of text fragments.

The second criterion was the topic. Within each context, after a close reading of each text, the excerpts that contained the richest variety of articulations were selected. In the case of Obama's texts referring to Russia, his many official addresses (for instance, all of his first-term State of the Union Addresses) tended to refer to Russia with one or two sentences. As a result, eight of the thirty text excerpts selected from the Obama corpus were taken from his interviews and press conferences in which he expanded on the issues related to Russia or, conversely, was made to comment on Russia-related issues as a response to a journalist's question. Other texts were taken from Obama's landmark speech on global nuclear nonproliferation in Prague on 5 April 2009 and 8 April 2010 (when the New START Treaty was subsequently signed), Obama's remarks after bilateral meetings with Medvedev and leaders of other countries, and Obama's remarks after meetings with U.S. politicians and NATO officials.

In the corpus of Medvedev's texts referring to the U.S., the U.S. appeared in connection with almost all topics addressed by Medvedev, and the selected excerpts thus come from all kinds of addresses (official speeches, statements, articles, press conferences, interviews). In many texts in the Medvedev corpus, both the U.S. and other countries and organizations were constructed as an implicit Other, looming large at the background of what was being said, but without ever being explicitly mentioned. The same did not appear in Obama's texts referring to Russia. Based on the analysis in this thesis, it could be argued that Obama tended to be more specific, while Medvedev used vague language quite often, but making such a generalization would be beyond the scope of the current project.

Because this thesis is an example of qualitative research, the six excerpts in each of the five contexts for the two presidents are not intended to be representative or generalizable. However, the analyzed corpus is sufficient for drawing conclusions about the variety of discursive moves in the empirical part of the thesis. Since the preliminary phase of analysis looked at a larger corpus

of the two presidents' texts, it can be said that the five contexts (each containing six text fragments) appear to have achieved theoretical saturation in the empirical analysis of this dissertation.

Nevertheless, like in any qualitative study, much material had to be left out of this dissertation, including landmark addresses, in which the discursive field of the studied period was defined. In the speech given by Putin in Germany on 10 February 2007 at the Munich Security Conference, for instance, Putin formulated the future direction of Russian foreign policy. He warned about the dangers of the U.S.-led unipolar world and argued that Russia would resist NATO's expansion to former Soviet states (Putin 2007). Although this later reverberated in Medvedev's presidential discourse, excerpts from Putin's Munich speech could not be included in the empirical analysis. Medvedev's speech on the recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia after the Russo–Georgian War in August 2008, in which he formulated the so-called Medvedev Doctrine, did not fit the narrower corpus, since Obama had not yet been elected as the U.S. president. Furthermore, many key addresses indicating the direction of Russia's and the U.S.'s foreign policy concerned the Arab Spring, but they were not included in the empirical analysis because the number of texts in this context was smaller than in those selected for analysis.

Based on such a small corpus, the thesis can only comment on what could be detected in the analyzed excerpts, without making any broad generalizations. However, since the main purpose of the thesis is to find out whether the proposed research method works, the limitations of research do not critically undermine the results.

An additional challenge arises from the need to translate Medvedev's text fragments from Russian into English. First of all, it should be noted that the transcripts of Obama's and Medvedev's messages were verbatim records of what was actually said by the two presidents (on both the whitehouse.gov and kremlin.ru websites, the transcripts were provided together with the respective video files). Secondly, the official Kremlin website did not include English versions of the transcripts. Thus, the author had to translate Medvedev's text fragments herself. The translations aimed to convey the meaning verbatim, without polishing the language into idiomatic English, but a certain degree of subjectivity is naturally inevitable in any translation. However, translation imperfections should not substantially undermine the final conclusions because thorough empirical analysis was made of Medvedev's texts in the original Russian and his Russian word choices.

CHAPTER 4: Russia and the U.S., NATO, and the West

This chapter is devoted to U.S.–Russian relations and Russia’s role in the re-/construction of the U.S. state identity. Re-/constructions of Russia’s state identity are examined in relation to the U.S. and other essential actors influencing Russia’s identification processes, like NATO and the West, both of which include the U.S. as a prominent member. Among other things, this chapter aims to demonstrate that Putin and, later, Medvedev structurally did not have any other choice but to promote Russia’s identity as a great power pursuing its national interests. Hence, for Obama and Medvedev, the U.S.–Russian reset could only be achieved by focusing on common interests as much as possible, leaving divergences untouched.

4.1. Russia and the West

The reset agenda was officially articulated by Vice President Joe Biden in his remarks at the 45th Munich Conference on Security Policy on 7 February 2009. Soon thereafter, large-scale cooperation was negotiated between the U.S. and Russia. In their mutual statement, Presidents Obama and Medvedev sought to “move beyond Cold War mentalities and chart a fresh start in relations between [their] countries”²¹, and their administrations achieved substantial progress in the areas of security and economy between 2009 and 2011. As a result of the reset, from 2009–2011, Obama and Medvedev managed to organize air transit for the U.S. troops in Afghanistan through Russian territory; agreed on sanctions against the nuclear programs of Iran and North Korea; signed the New START Treaty to reduce the U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals by two-thirds. Additionally, Russia did not veto NATO intervention in Libya against the Gaddafi regime, lifted its ban on import of chicken from the U.S., joined the WTO, etc. Obama, in his turn, tended to avoid criticisms of Russia on the issues of democracy and human rights²², proposed abandoning the Jackson–Vanik amendment, which restricted trade with Russia (it was repealed in 2012), etc. However, in 2011, the process of reset started to fade, especially after the XII Congress of the United Russia, held on 24 September 2011, at which Medvedev supported the candidacy of Putin in the forthcoming presidential elections. Many U.S. politicians later sharply criticized legislative elections held in Russia on 4 December 2011, and Medvedev expressed his disappointment with that

²¹ Joint Statement by President Dmitry Medvedev of the Russian Federation and President Barack Obama of the United States of America on 1 April 2009.

²² Article named “Time to reset the reset in US–Russia ties” appeared in *The Christian Science Monitor* on 21 October 2010, urging the Obama administration to not close their eyes on Russia’s human rights and democratic failings.

criticism (Medvedev 2011). By the end of his presidential term, in 2011, Medvedev said that perhaps it was *an overload*, rather than *a reset*, of U.S.–Russian relations.²³ As Singh (2012) argues, “[i]t would be naïve to imagine that the U.S. and Russia could overcome decades of zero-sum logic about international relations, bipolar competition, nuclear parity, and ideological rivalry in a matter of four years”.

Venckutė (2012) examines how Russian and American political leaders define the reasons, interests, obstacles, and expectations of the reset and shows significant differences in their perceptions. Venckutė’s (2012: 103–104) analysis concludes that, “[u]nlike the USA, Russia is not prone to reach a consensus by mutual effort: it is clearly stated that national interests will always stand above mutual concerns and that the USA must make concessions without expecting a similar response from its counterpart”. For instance, while one of the expectations of the reset on the U.S.’s part is Russia’s democratization, Russia ignores this expectation and only seeks to enhance its own economic capacity through a more active partnership with the U.S. and to secure Russia’s place as a great global power. Even before Medvedev’s presidency, however, as Browning (2008: 5) argues, Putin’s position was more sophisticated and ambiguous than ruthless pursuit of national interests, and its analysis needs to be informed by an understanding of Russian identity. According to Browning, “[t]he core identity strands at play are arguably encapsulated in tensions surrounding Russia’s desire to be accepted into international society, its desire to reassert great power status, and its tendency to assert an identity of European-ness while, at the same time, remaining suspicious of Western intentions” (ibid.).

Tensions arise as Russia seeks to be a great European power, but simultaneously accepts the subordinate, *learner* position delineated for it in European (and Western²⁴) discourse. Neumann (1996) argues that, since the Enlightenment, Russia has been constructed as Europe’s complementary Other, as the “barbarian at the gate” of *civilization*. Because of that, for five hundred years, Russia has been considered as a learner (of varying degrees of success) who “has just been civilized” and Europe as a teacher who can sanction “bad learning behavior”. After the Napoleonic Wars, to exclude Russia from the European balance of power, the U.S. was included into the balance, changing it from intra-European to a European-focused one (Neumann 1996: 19). Ever since the U.S. was included in the European-focused balance of power, Russia has been struggling with the U.S. for Europe (Morozov 2009).

Such identity struggles have been shaping the meaning of the empty signifier *Europe*. Wolff (1994), for instance, examines how, in order to *invent* Eastern Europe, philosophers of the Western European Enlightenment ascribed

²³ When Hillary Clinton offered Sergei Lavrov to press the *reset* («перезагрузка») button, the Russian translation was misspelled as *overload* («перегрузка»). Medvedev mentioned the overload in his meeting with United Russia on 17 December 2011.

²⁴ For a detailed discussion of the constructed nature of *the West*, see Morozov (2010).

similarities to different cultures of Russia, Poland, Hungary, and the Ottoman Europe, which located these states as subordinate to Western Europe under the developing notion of *civilization*²⁵. In its turn, since the 19th century, Russia has differentiated between *true* and *false* Europe. During the 19th century, the Russian state constructed itself as *the true Europe* when, after the French Revolution, the rest of Europe had failed its own tradition by rejecting the past autocratic values (*anciens regimes*). During the 20th century, the Russian state constructed itself as *the true Europe* in the circumstances where the rest of Europe had again failed its own tradition by rejecting “the future values of socialism” (Neumann 2003: 194). Recently, as more and more European states have reassessed the legacy of World War II and equated Stalinism with Nazism – with it, what Russians considered *the liberation of Europe*, but what has come to be called Soviet occupation – Russia constructed *the true Europe* that included those European states that respected Russia’s sacrifices in WWII, whereas *the false Europe* embraces the European states that rejected Russia’s primary role in saving Europe from Nazism. Therefore, using the dividing lines between the *true* and the *false* Europe, Russia has been claiming its Europeaness as belonging to the former, and not the latter.

Europe has played a crucial role in Russian identity formation since at least the late 17th century: what Europe is defines what Russia is and should be. In discussing Europe, Russians have “talked themselves into existence” (Neumann 2003: 194). The Russian state in the 18th century offered its citizens two models of identification: Westernism and Slavophilism. The Westernizers sought to imitate European political and economic models. The aim of the Westernizers was to demonstrate that Russia “was *already* developing along European lines” politically and economically and that this development could be accelerated despite the conditions prevailing in Russia (Neumann 2003: xii). The Slavophiles grew out of the 18th-century romantic nationalism, the roots of which are in German romantic thought. It emphasizes the organic nation made up of interdependent parts. The state, as *the head* of the organic nation, leads and protects it. Therefore, Russian romantic nationalists believed in the spiritual unity between the tsar and the people and that the nation, as a harmonious whole, is protected by God (Neumann 2003: 194).

²⁵ According to Wolff, who studied historic maps, traveler reports, letters, etc., the situation was quite different during the Renaissance, when the dividing lines were conceptualized between Southern and Northern Europe. Italian city states were unquestionably considered primary in art and learning, whereas the French were considered *barbarians*. Germans were also regarded as barbarians, who “lacked the refinements of culture” (Wolff 1994: 5). The naturalized division of Europe between Italian culture and Northern barbarism was reconstructed in the 18th century, as Paris, London, and Amsterdam displaced Rome, Florence, and Venice as Europe’s centers of culture and finance. Consequently, the barbarism and backwardness that characterized the North were projected upon the East. The Age of Enlightenment needed to invent Western Europe and Eastern Europe as complementary entities, which would constantly define each other through opposition and contiguity (*ibid.*).

For the Slavophiles, the Russian Westernizers are an alien element, since their political stance coincides with that of Europe and the West. The Slavophiles have tended to disregard Russia's inferior economic state by claiming that Europe has gained its riches through *spiritual death*, stressing Russia's moral superiority over Europe (Neumann 2003: 199). The Slavophiles tend to believe that the European superior military strength was the result of the essentially violent nature of European states; in contrast, the peaceful and morally superior Russian state was less militarily effective. The Slavophiles have explored Russia's Asian identity, which might allow Russia to escape the apprentice position in Europe and become a European-like imperial power in the less-developed Asia. It can be, therefore, concluded that Slavophilism may also be called Russian exceptionalism. All in all, the debate between the Slavophiles and the Westernizers has continued to shape the domestic politics in Russia.

According to Tsygankov (2010), for instance, one can trace the framing of post-Soviet Russian foreign policy through concepts like *unipolarity* or *multi-vector foreign policy* back to the mid-19th century Westernizer/Slavophile debate about the Russian idea. Tsygankov (2010) identifies three distinct Russian ideologies that have framed the idea of Russia throughout the centuries by defining Russia's Self and Other: Westernism, Statism, and Civilizationism. These ideologies overlap and compete for the framing of Russian foreign policy.

For the Westernizers, Russian idea means Russia being part of the West, seen as the most progressive civilization in the world. The Westernizers emphasize similarities between Russia and Western states. The early Westernizers like Alexander I aimed at presenting Russia as a "loyal member in the family of European monarchies" (Tsygankov 2010: 668). Beginning from the mid-19th century, Westernizers like Alexander II started to identify with the West's "constitutional freedoms and political equality" (ibid.). Soviet westernizers conceptualized Russia as being close to ideas of European social democracy: "for instance, one of Mikhail Gorbachev's favorite lines of thinking was that the Soviet Union had to *purify* itself of Stalinist *distortions* and become a democratic, or *human*, version of socialism (*gumannyi sotsializm*)" (Tsygankov 2010: 668). Liberal post-Soviet westernizers claimed that Russia was inherently close to the West through such shared values as democracy, human rights, and free market. Like many in the West, liberal Russian westernizers, as among them Andrei Kozyrev and Boris Yeltsin, expressed fear of the non-Western Other. They advocated for building Western liberal institutions and integrating with the community of "Western civilized nations" as a way to ensure Russia's security and to cope with its economic and political problems (Tsygankov 2010: 669).

Statists conceptualize Russia as a strong independent state, or *derzhava*, which is able to govern and maintain social and political order. Russia's Other is constituted by external threats to Russia's security, since, as a result of two-centuries-long conquest by Mongols, "Russians have developed a psychological complex of insecurity and a readiness to sacrifice everything for independence

and sovereignty” (Tsygankov 2010: 669). Statists seek West’s recognition of Russia for its economic and military capabilities. Under monarchy, statists valued autocratic power in Russia; the socialist statists supported Communist party’s firm control over society to preserve political order and avoid capitalist threats. In foreign policy, statists may express dualism with respect to the West: both balance/contain it and seek to reach an agreement with it. Nikita Khrushchev, for instance, sought to move Soviet Russia away from isolationism and bring it closer to Europe; in contrast, Stalin made a pact with Hitler, while Brezhnev proposed his “correlation of forces” strategy in order to counter external threats (ibid.). In post-Soviet foreign policy, such dualism was present, for example, in the policies of Primakov and Putin. For both, Russia’s greatness and strength was the main foreign policy goal, but Primakov pursued reintegration of the former Soviet space and containment of the U.S. through an alliance with China and India, while Putin prioritized bilateral relations in Russia’s periphery and sought to develop a counterterrorism partnership with the U.S. (Tsygankov 2010: 669).

Civilizationists conceptualize Russia as an independent civilization and advocate for the spread of Russian values in the world. The West with its values, as well as other civilizations, are conceptualized as Other. Examples of civilizationism include the idea that “Moscow is the Third Rome”, adopted under Ivan the Terrible; the notion of Slavic unity and the ideology of Pan-Slavism, promoted in the mid-19th century; Soviet Russia viewing itself as superior to *rotten* Western capitalist civilization; the idea of world revolution advocated by the early socialist civilizationists; Eurasionism, etc. Still, many civilizationists also promote intercivilizational dialog and learning from diverging perspectives (ibid.).

The above discussion shows that the West has played a paramount role in the re-/construction of Russia’s state identity. In his analysis of the construction of Russia’s identity and the borders of the Russian political community, Morozov (2009) concludes that, in most Russian political discourses, the West (meaning either an abstract entity or the U.S. alone or the U.S. together with Western Europe) has continually been constructed as Russia’s constitutive Other. However, this influence is mutual, meaning that Russia also constitutes a significant factor in the dynamics of the West’s identity formation. Continuing the European tradition, the West sees Russia as its mirror image (Tsygankov 2017: 20). Furthermore, by partly accepting Western hegemony, but seeking to challenge it at the same time, Russia contributes to the reiteration of this hegemony. Russia uses the same nodal points as the West, but seeks to fill them with alternative content and, through that, challenge Western hegemony. For instance, as a former global superpower, Russia made assertive attempts to influence contemporary politics by, e.g., claiming that the war in South Ossetia was a humanitarian intervention on the Russian part to prevent genocide, just like the war in Kosovo was claimed to be on the part of NATO (Morozov 2010). Morozov (2010) suggests that Russia constitutes, in Derrida’s terms, an *irreducible signifier* in the Western universalist discourse: it shares Western nodal points, but refuses to

accept Western disciplinary framework; it cannot be included in the West, but it also cannot be totally excluded from it.

These logics of in-/exclusion are manifested in, for instance, Le's (2002) analysis of editorials of the French newspaper *Le Monde* that were written to denounce human rights violations in Chechnya and were perceived in Russia as an attack against Russian identity.²⁶ The editorials represent common ground on which French national identity rests and promote it as an example for the rest of the world. Russian journalists treat these editorials as an instrument in an ideological battle, and the issue of human rights in Chechnya ultimately disappears from the debate. Consequently, Le questions the potential dual role of human rights discourses as a means of propagation of specific values and ideological battle. She demonstrates an intercultural impasse between France and Russia in which the French (and the West in general) use accusation discourse ("Russians are barbarians") and Russia uses victimization discourse ("the West does *not* understand us", "the West does not like us", "the West wants us to be like them") (Le 2002: 399). The intercultural impasse shows the mechanisms of identity formation and struggle for hegemony between Russia and the West by seeking to define the empty signifier *human rights*. Since they exclude each other as Other, Russia and the West cannot avoid mutual suspicions.

Another pertinent example of Russia–West identity struggles is Browning's (2003) examination of the construction of Russia in the initiatives of Scandinavian region-builders of the 1990s.²⁷ They believed that negative representations of the Cold War could be overcome by constructing policies "through dialog rather than negotiation or diktat" (Browning 2003: 47). However, the representational practices they used merely allowed them to reproduce the world they sought to change. Despite attempts to construct an egalitarian relationship with Russia and transform traditional Self/Other perceptions, Russia continued to stand in opposition to Western Europe in the underlying discourses of region-building projects:

[t]he region-building often resonates badly with a *West*-European legacy that constitutes Europe as a unified civilizational empire. This offers Russia the option, either of being imperialized within its folds, or alternatively remaining marginalized on the periphery of Europe. In this discourse, Russia is constructed as an object to be acted upon, the diseased that needs to be cured. (Browning 2003: 48)

²⁶ The Russian corpus studied by Le included three Russian dailies: *Izvestia*, *Segodnya*, and *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*. Le specifies that these media outlets, controlled by oligarchs, not the government, are most read by the educated audience and cannot be categorized as "nationalistic, conservative (in the Russian context), or anti-western", while maintaining balance between Westernism and Slavophilism (Le 2002: 393–4).

²⁷ Region-builders included academics and politicians who had constructivist understanding of the social reality and, therefore, sought to question and rethink the ontological status of regions. They rejected regions as natural phenomena whose ontological status is unproblematic. Region-builders of the 1990s made scholarly attempts to examine the discursive and institutional practices that had been employed in regional construction in order to remake/reconstruct the post–Cold War world (Browning 2003: 48).

The new region-building saw Russia as devoid of agency. Russia served as a nodal point of difference for Western identification: “those not like us will remain outside to remind us who we are” (Browning 2003: 64). Russia has continued to occupy the necessary structural position at the limits of the Western identification discourse, and such situation is to remain until major social crises and consequent structural changes.

Owing to the aforesaid, “our ability to engage in projects of social construction is always constrained and influenced by various other discursive structures within which we are inevitably embedded” (Browning 2003: 65). According to Browning, Russia’s difference allows the West to construct itself as benevolent and charitable (teaching wisdom to the needy). Russia’s undecidable position in the hegemonic Western discourse also resonates with Norval’s (1996: 9–10) contention that the force of hegemonic discourse lies in the suspension of *decidability*, or refusing to decide in either direction; in our case, inclusion or exclusion. Thus, it can be said that, among other things, Western hegemony (of which the U.S. is a quintessential actor) operates through both logics of exclusion and differential forms of inclusion of Russia. It is also true that, as Browning suggests, hegemonic discourse provides actors that are not part of it with a limited number of identification options (just like in the above example, either to become imperialized or remain marginalized). The next section discusses the situation in which, after the end of the Cold War, hegemonic NATO discourse, to reproduce NATO’s identity as a democratic security community, left Russia with precisely two options of state identity: either an apprentice seeking to become part of Western civilization and thus approving of NATO enlargement or a neo-imperialist, anti-Western state, opposing NATO enlargement.

4.2. Russia and NATO

The evolution of NATO can be considered as one of the most significant developments in post-Cold War international security (Williams and Neumann 2000: 357). Although it was expected that, after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, NATO, as a military organization, would discontinue (and, as Russian foreign policy-makers hoped, a new, comprehensive security structure would be created), the alliance reemerged as the dominant institution in post-Cold War security relations. NATO was seen as a way of avoiding fragmentation and returning to the fragile military pacts of the past. This past was conceptualized as Europe’s Other (loc. cit. 366). NATO not only managed to effectively counter claims that it had lost its meaning in the post-Soviet world, but also assumed a new role: “the consolidation of a Western civilization which had been illegitimately torn asunder by the Cold War” (Williams and Neumann 2000: 361). Increasingly, NATO came to be represented as a cultural or civilizational entity “whose basic identity and history should be understood less in terms of Cold War military balancing and more as the result of a deep, enduring, and profound cultural commonality” (loc. cit. 368).

At the same time, the meaning of security and threat were being redefined. Security came to be defined in cultural terms and associated with the cultural and civilizational principles at the core of the reconstructed identity of NATO. Threats, in turn, were associated with the absence of such principles. Hence, the challenges NATO is facing are no longer predicated on military response to a geopolitical threat or the geopolitical logic of power balance, but rather on the absence of certain democratic cultural and political institutions articulated with security. NATO articulates challenge with instability: “[t]he shift from a traditional conception of security focusing on military power and the balance of capabilities to a focus on issues of societal (in)stability and political-cultural structures is one of the most striking transformations in NATO’s pronouncements on security in the 1990s” (Williams and Neumann 2000: 370). NATO began to be conceived as the military and material operationalization of civilizational structure based on values. NATO’s external relations were not presented in adversarial military-territorial terms, which allowed for “a rhetorical de-territorialization of security and redefined NATO as a highly integrated cultural community” (loc. cit. 371). New members were, therefore, perceived not merely as new allies, but as belonging to NATO based on their political structure and cultural values. Hence, the aim of NATO enlargement was conceptualized as the extension of this community of pacific values and institutions, welcoming new members who share them, not directed against anyone, and not seeking to exclude anyone (ibid.).

This reconstruction of NATO’s identity played a crucial role in the simultaneous debates in Russia with respect to its own post–Cold War identity and relations with the West. The fundamental question was whether Russia constituted part of Western civilization. In line with Gorbachev’s thinking, the West was rearticulated from hostile capitalist bloc to the common European home. Gorbachev’s idea was that the West, as a unified bloc, could be separated from *Europe*. The “new political thinking” framed domestic reform in terms of Russia’s “return to Europe” or “return to civilization”, since tsarist Russia was perceived as having once belonged to Europe as a civilizational entity (Williams and Neumann 2000: 375). Russia sought “recognition /.../ as an essential pillar of the European security arrangement” (Roberts 2018: 240). However, Europe refused to recognize Russia as a legitimate and essential European actor: “European states saw Russia as a decreasing security concern, but they did not view it as a member of the European *community*” (Williams and Neumann 2000: 377). Additionally, it soon became clear that, instead of disappearing or being substituted, NATO was, in fact, increasing its role in European security. As an alternative to NATO expansion, Russia proposed a European security framework with Russia’s active participation (Roberts 2018: 239). Nevertheless, there were still fears in the West that Russia’s past could cause a negative impact on its future. “Return to Europe” was also challenged by the political and economic turmoil in Russia in the 1990s (Williams and Neumann 2000: 377).

Taking into account this situation, Russian debates over relations with NATO can be considered in terms of three overlapping and competing agendas

for Russian foreign policy. As the first foreign policy response to NATO's identity claims, Russia could reject the Western civilizational role claimed by NATO and oppose NATO enlargement, which would be seen as a hostile move that had to be contained by cultural consolidation by Russia and its cultural area (some, or even all, CIS countries). Such a response would draw upon the civilizational aspect of the traditional Soviet–Western opposition. This was and remains the identity promoted by the communist/nationalist opposition. Hence, Russian leaders were reluctant to take this anti-Western, neo-imperialist path that would severely damage Russia's relations with the West (Williams and Neumann 2000: 378).

The second foreign policy option in response to NATO identity claims was the Gorbachevian argument about Europe being Russia's natural home. However, it became ever more difficult to represent Russia as being part of Europe (also because Europe refused to recognize Russia as natural part of its civilization) and, at the same time, oppose NATO enlargement and advocate for a security structure outside NATO (because NATO's reconstructed identity was not merely a security alliance, but “a communitarian expression of a unified Western civilization”) (loc. cit. 380). In the new conditions, if Russia wanted to be a European country, it needed to equate Europe with NATO and, therefore, accept NATO expansion. Opposing NATO enlargement could only occur at the cost of appearing as a non-European, uncivilized, untrustworthy, and illegitimate state and thus confirming the fears of proponents of NATO expansion (especially in Central and East European states) and be presented as an outside of the new European security community.

As a result of absence of an accepted vision of Russian identity, Russia returned to the language of national interest, with its connotations of Russia as great power and delineation of spheres of interest. As Roberts (2018: 242) puts it,

[t]he struggle to institutionalize the democratic process and the rule of law, in concert with the absence of effective leadership in these areas, left a vacuum in which an identity crisis, of sorts, flourished, and in which competing visions for Russian foreign policy clashed, culminating in a foreign policy based less upon ideology and more upon a pragmatic assertion of Russian national interests.

This view appeared in Russia's new foreign policy concept from 1993, arguing that NATO's military goals remained the same, as it advocated for its increased military presence in the Baltic states and other areas of the former Soviet Union, as well as interventions in Bosnia and other parts of the former Yugoslavia (Williams and Neumann 2000: 381). Pursuing its national interest, Russia opposed NATO's expansion and, to balance NATO's institutional dominance, sought to foreground Russia's role in the OSCE, the only European organization of which Russia was a full member and which facilitated Russia's role as a great power.

However, this policy choice was fraught with difficulties, too. To construct Russia's national interest in terms of great power politics and delineation of

spheres of interest contradicted the symbolically and discursively dominant vision in Europe, uniting NATO and the applicant countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Such a definition of national interest was inevitably vulnerable to the charge that Russia was returning to its imperial past and constituted a dangerously unchanged state within a changed Europe (Williams and Neumann 2000: 382). Since NATO reconstructed its identity as an alliance not standing in contradiction to the OSCE, but as an institution inherently analogous to it, Russian appeals to the OSCE as a forum alternative to NATO for making traditional great power arguments were doomed to be unsuccessful. In such a situation, those in Russia who did not want to support the opponents of reform through opposition to NATO enlargement, were left with one real option: “to accept it but on the best *national interest* terms possible, and within terms defined by the democratic community argument” (loc. cit. 383). As a result, owing to the political situation and debates within Russia, Russia’s attitude to NATO enlargement has been ambivalent: on the one hand, Russia explicitly opposes NATO expansion, but reluctantly accepts it as unavoidable on the other hand for the sake of keeping diplomatic, economic, and strategic cooperation with the West.

In Risse’s (cited in Williams and Neumann 2000: 358) words, “the Western Alliance represents an institutionalization of the transatlantic security community based on common values and a collective identity of liberal democracies”, and NATO’s enlargement is perceived as a natural and inherently progressive extension of NATO’s innate identity as a “democratic security community”. Trenin (2006: 43) argues that it was perceived that, after the Cold War was over, a major step in the formation of Western society was NATO and EU expansion. Consequently, the narrative construction of NATO’s identity provided a basis for the enlargement of the alliance and simultaneously a response to objections that this process would change the dividing lines in Europe or cause a threatening Russian reaction. For Russian leaders, NATO expansion occurred within the context of Russia’s loss of empire, domestic political and economic turmoil, and Russia’s diminished geopolitical status. Out of all criteria of a major global power, Russia only retained its status as a nuclear power. Russia was denied its opposition to NATO expansion, being explained that, as an aspiring democracy, it had nothing to fear from “a non-hostile alliance that could shoulder the burden of European security in an uncertain time. /.../ NATO’s growth in post–Cold War Europe served as a symbol of Western accomplishment and Russian defeat” (Roberts 2018: 239).

There is disagreement about whether promises of nonexpansion were made to Russia, but Russia has been blaming the West for NATO expansion and referring to the West as an unreliable partner. Russia’s opposition to NATO’s intervention in Kosovo showed the deterioration of Russia–NATO relations. NATO’s involvement in the Balkans, particularly in Kosovo, demonstrated NATO’s new European security arrangement, from which Russia was excluded. Russia’s worst fears of NATO expansion were realized in Kosovo: “despite assurances to the contrary, NATO was prepared to take offensive action to

defend against a perceived direct threat to a member state, even if against Russia's wishes, and they would be prepared to do so without a UN Security Council mandate" (Lynch 2016: 108; cited in Roberts 2018: 244).

The structural choices for viable foreign policy responses that NATO's identity claims determined for Russia, as well as foreign policy debates within Russia, have played their role in the development of Russia's relations with the U.S., NATO's quintessential member. It, therefore, had an important impact on U.S.–Russian relations during Obama's and Medvedev's presidencies between 2009 and 2012.

4.3. Russia and the U.S.

The relationship with the U.S. greatly influenced Russian thinking about its place in the world and in the former Soviet space (Roberts 2018: 239). After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the idea of a Russian–American alliance emerged (Trenin 2006: 312). Within the framework of this alliance, Russia and the U.S. could potentially sign a mutual security treaty on an equal basis. In such an alliance, Russia would have the status of a major non-NATO ally (Trenin 2006: 313). In terms of identity logics, this was an option that remained for Russia after NATO's identity reconstruction: to develop some kind of partnership with NATO in which Russia would be treated differently than other nonmembers to whom partnership with NATO is offered. As a result, there is a NATO–Russian charter and NATO–Russian Joint Political Council, the effectiveness of which depend on the general tendencies in Russia–West relations (Williams and Neumann 2000: 383). However, the U.S. treated post-Soviet Russia with wariness: while Russia was no longer an enemy, it was still not part of *us*, either (Trenin 2006: 314). There is also a popular idea of a strategic but nonbinding partnership between Russia and the U.S., which is less than an alliance, but more than routine cooperation (*ibid*). The topic of this partnership was revitalized in connection with the formation of an antiterrorist coalition after 9/11, when Putin claimed that, in the fight against international terrorism, Russia and the U.S. are united. That was a historically unique situation, in which neither the U.S. nor Russia regarded each other as a potential adversary (Trenin 2006: 316). In that situation, for instance, Chechen separatists in Russia were articulated in the chain of equivalence with Islamic terrorists, fighting against the civilized world (Snetkov 2012). However, antiterrorist perceptions of the U.S. and Russia diverged with respect to Georgia. Russia's European partners continued to distinguish between Chechen rebels and al-Qaeda and sought to negotiate with Chechen representatives (Snetkov 2012: 530).

Russia's relations with the U.S. played a significant role in Russia's domestic policy debates during the first presidential term of Yeltsin. Clinton and Yeltsin sought to maintain an open and cooperative dialog between the U.S. and Russia, but each encountered domestic political opposition to this initiative (Roberts 2018: 239). On the one hand, Russia's elites converged around Russia's primary

role in the former Soviet space; on the other hand, Clinton drove NATO expansion, regardless of Russia's opposition. Americans who wanted to support political transition in Russia were skeptical whether Russia could become democratic in actuality and feared that Russia might return to its imperial past. Mistrust of Russia was reflected in the policies of the Clinton administration, such as NATO expansion, negotiation of various missile defense plans, and ignoring Russia during the Balkan conflicts. Thus, it can be said that relations between the two countries were "motivated less by common values and more by power calculations" (Roberts 2018: 242).

Nevertheless, in 1993, the U.S.–Russia Joint Commission on Economic and Technical Cooperation (also known as the Gore–Chernomyrdin Commission) was formed to deal with some of the most complicated issues: energy, joint space exploration, and environment. Gore and Chernomyrdin sought to "institutionalize the concept of partnership by convening a high-level mechanism of communication" (Roberts 2018: 242). This bilateral commission was revitalized under Presidents Obama and Medvedev within the framework of reset, in the form of the Russia–U.S. Bilateral Presidential Commission (*ibid.*).

Furthermore, following the Soviet breakup, Russia retained its huge nuclear arsenal. As a result, U.S.–Russia nuclear relations are still based on mutual containment and mutual assured destruction. This situation persists due to the needs of Russian political and military leaders and the conservatism of the U.S. military establishment. Since the beginning of the 1990s, Russia's military leadership has seen nuclear arms as a compensation for Russia's weakness in conventional arms (Trenin 2006: 317). In turn, the U.S.'s nuclear strategy lists Russia as one of multiple potential nuclear threats to the U.S. In order to achieve formal parallel abandonment of mutual assured destruction, a higher level of trust between the U.S. and Russia is necessary (*loc. cit.* 318). Arms control initiatives were in the post-Soviet Russia's interests "in part because its nuclear arsenal has guaranteed it an enduring seat at the table during a time in which its voice has otherwise been muted" (Roberts 2018: 241). Yeltsin and George H. W. Bush signed the START II Treaty, which was ratified only in 2000; in exchange for signing the treaty, Russian leaders demanded for a halt of NATO expansion and abandonment of the U.S.'s ballistic missile defense program, proposed by George W. Bush, which envisioned placing U.S.'s missiles close to Russian borders. Since NATO continued its enlargement closer to Russian territory, missile defense has continued to constitute a threat to Russia's national security under Putin and, later, Medvedev.

During the first two terms of his presidency, Putin strengthened the vertical power structure and assertively sought to restore Russia's status as a world power. During U.S.–Russian antiterrorism cooperation, the U.S. withdrew from the ABM Treaty and integrated the Baltic states into NATO. Although Putin hoped that, with this, NATO expansion was complete, color revolutions in Russia's spheres of influence, Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004), resulted in pro-Western leaders in both countries. Russia reacted to the revolutions with a military intervention in Georgia in 2008, which led to deterioration in U.S.–

Russian relations that lasted until 2009. Russia's actions in Georgia caused the White House to suspend U.S.'s working level relations with Russia, call back the agreement on peaceful nuclear energy cooperation, and put the NATO–Russia Council to a halt (Roberts 2018: 244). The downturn in U.S.–Russian relations was best expressed in Putin's speech at the 2007 Munich Security Conference, where he blamed the U.S. for unilateralism, inciting global instability, and selective application of international law (ibid.). The speech was perceived as the advent of a “new Cold War” (Roberts 2018: 245).

However, as Barack Obama assumed the U.S. presidency in 2008, he committed to the reset, or renewal of U.S.–Russian relations and cooperation with the new Russian president Dmitry Medvedev on missile defense, arms control, and re-establishing the U.S.–Russian bilateral presidential commission. The reset gave Russia the respect it sought: Obama recognized it as a key player on the world arena, whose role in helping the U.S. to achieve its national security interests and priorities is significant. Consequently, the renewed cooperation was beneficial for both the U.S. and Russia. The U.S.–Russian Bilateral Presidential Commission aimed at delineating areas of cooperation, implementing joint projects and actions that would increase strategic stability, global economy and security, and strengthen ties between Russian and American people. Presidents chaired the commission that included Secretary Clinton and Minister Lavrov. The commission contained working groups in 15 policy areas: “Policy Steering Group; Nuclear Energy and Nuclear Security; Arms Control and International Security; Terrorism; Drug Trafficking; Business Development and Economic Relations; Energy; Environment; Agriculture, Science and Technology; Space Cooperation; Health; Cooperation in Prevention and Handling of Emergency Situations; Civil Society; Educational, Sport and Cultural Exchanges; and Military Cooperation” (Roberts 2018: 246). In 2014, in the aftermath of Russia's actions in Crimea, Obama suspended the commission.

Since Putin withdrew from START II in 2002 in the aftermath of Bush's withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, the Obama administration proposed the New START Treaty, which aimed to reduce strategic offensive nuclear weapons by half and introduce new verification mechanisms. The treaty was signed and ratified by both sides in 2010. Opponents of the New START in the U.S. were worried that the treaty does not sufficiently restrict Russia's creation of new weapons technologies, while Russia hoped that the treaty would restrict deployment of missile defense capabilities, but it did not. Still, the treaty facilitated the Russia–U.S. arms control dialog and contributed to the nonproliferation regime (Roberts 2018: 246). Obama also sought to negotiate the plans of the continental missile defense in cooperation with Russia through the NATO–Russia Council. In this regard, Medvedev's attendance at the Lisbon NATO summit was seen as a positive breakthrough. However, Russia (and especially Putin) remained suspicious of the real motivations behind missile defense. Medvedev, too, in response to Obama's assurances that missile defense would not be directed against Russia, threatened with “Russian withdrawal from the New

START and potential counter-deployment of Russian missiles in Kaliningrad” (ibid.).

The reset allowed for dialog between the two countries, but it was insufficient to resolve the issues dividing them. “Ultimately, the reset is probably best understood as a relic of the Medvedev presidency, quickly reversed upon Putin’s return to the Kremlin” (loc. cit. 247). Russia’s annexation of Crimea in 2014 was the turning point in U.S.–Russian relations, which further deteriorated due to the WikiLeaks scandal, the Sergei Magnitsky Act and Russia’s response to it, U.S.–Russian opposition in/over Syria, and accusation of Russia’s meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential elections. It can be said that “Russia, treated as an enemy, eventually became one; the Crimea crisis can be viewed as the culmination of 20 years of exclusion and neglect” (Roberts 2018: 250). On Russia’s part, to counter the narrative that Russia lost the Cold War, Russian leaders sought to restore Russia’s international prestige. At the same time, both Putin and Medvedev were apprehensive of the emergence of U.S. hegemony and constructed it as a challenge to Russia’s interests. As a result, Russia–U.S. relations have been continuously influenced by Cold War residues; the latter has had an impact on each presidential era and keeps animating the relationship (loc. cit. 239).

The above tensions have been analyzed by linguists as well. Paul Chilton (1996), for instance, examines conceptual metaphors in the Cold War language from George Kennan’s “X Article” in *Foreign Affairs* (1947) and Paul Nitze’s NSC #68 to Mikhail Gorbachev’s *common European house* of the late 1980s and George Bush’s *new world order* of 1990. Chilton demonstrates how competing perceptions of Europe and its security can be expressed metaphorically: there was a discursive struggle between conceptualizing European security in terms of *house* metaphors (“design of a European house”, proposed by Gorbachev and presupposing Russian participation) and *architecture* metaphors (“all-European security architecture”, proposed by Bush). Such a discursive struggle shows the competition between the U.S. and Russia for the empty signifier *Europe*.

Drulák and Kratochvíl (2007) analyzed metaphorical expressions from the speeches of Russian and American political leaders based on the already formulated sets of conceptual metaphors, including *enemy*, *rival*, *partner*, and *friend*, which shape discourses. The authors assess the dynamics of U.S.–Russian bilateral relations from 1990–2005 and show graphically that U.S.–Russian relations “experienced boom and bust” several times during these years. Drulák and Kratochvíl demonstrate how, for instance, Russia was more optimistic about the relationship in 2003; how the U.S. consistently defined itself as superior and the Russian side opposed this; how Kosovo was the most painful conflict for Russia since the Cold War; how there was a(n) (as)symmetry in perceptions (both saw each other in terms of the same metaphor or different metaphors); etc. This analysis reflects the process of state identity re-/construction of both Russia and the U.S. in course of their relationship as well as the re-/production of existing discourses/structures of U.S.–Russian relations.

In Laclau and Mouffe's terms, the social is contingent (or could have been different at all times), but there is continuity as well: a huge area of objectivity exists at all times, which conditions the fact that social structures can be reshaped based only on earlier structures (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002: 38). One prominent structure in U.S.–Russian relations is that of antagonism: “[e]ver since Alexis de Tocqueville famously predicted the eventual global dominance of the two continental powers of the U.S. and Russia, bilateral relations between the two nations have been tense, suspicious, and characterized by an abiding absence of mutual trust and confidence” (Singh 2012). It can be said that, structurally, Russia, as a synecdoche of the Soviet Union, represented the constitutive Other, the pure anti-community for the U.S. during the Cold War. David Campbell (1998), in his analysis of U.S. foreign policy in the early Cold War, argued that the major goal of foreign policy then was to constitute threats to the state while producing *discourses of danger* in order to inscribe and reproduce state identity. This was typically achieved through metaphors that translate Self/Other differences into terms familiar to the people; e.g., gender, sexuality, and illness. These are organized into binary divisions, like male/female, natural/unnatural, and healthy/sick, in which one attribute is identified as positive and associated with the Self, while the other as negative and associated with the Other (Hurst 2005: 143). During the Cold War, communism was represented as illness in the West, whereas anti-communism was associated with all positive aspects of the binary oppositions. Hence, U.S. foreign policy transcribed the U.S./USSR differences onto the differences taken for granted in U.S. culture, thus naturalizing these differences and demonizing the Soviet Other (ibid.).

The U.S. officials considered their country's values as incommensurably superior to the Soviet ones and the U.S.'s interests as more legitimate than the Soviet ones. U.S.'s identity as a free state, as well as the identity of the U.S.-led free world, was re-/produced in relation to the Soviet Other. While the U.S. was the country of freedom and law, the USSR was an oppressive, evil empire, using force to dominate its neighbors (Tsygankov 2017: 20). Consequently, the U.S. reproduced the European tradition of viewing Russia as a mirror image of the West: ever since the 19th century, the U.S. elites have seen Russia as the U.S.'s “dark double” – “disrespectful of religious freedoms and property rights and an object of ideological transformation” – the image, which the 1917 revolution and, later, the Cold War served to reinforce (ibid.).

In the 1980s and 1990s, both communist and Cold War discourses experienced dislocation: the former could not explain and integrate the failure of its economic and political system; the latter could not represent the collapse of the Soviet Union (Casula 2007: 4). As a result, “both the West and the East faced an open-ended, slow shift in hegemony, the crippling of an old hegemony and the outbreak of hegemonic struggles – in order to establish a new hegemony and hence restore social stability” (ibid.). In Russia, with its new territorial borders, the crisis primarily concerned national identity and was *projected*

inward. In the U.S., the crisis concerned the role of the U.S. in the world and was *projected outward* (Casula 2007: 4).

According to Nabers (2009: 193), international crises are vital in processes of social and identity change, since they produce “a void of meaning”, which needs to be filled, and “indeterminacy of articulations”, which needs to be made meaningful again. “If the structure is dislocated and thus incomplete, an intervention by a subject is needed to re-suture it” (Norval 2004: 142). In the same vein, Edkins (1999: 2) distinguishes between *politics* and *the political*, the former referring to an area of the institutionalized functioning of the government and the latter to a radical uncertainty in which a new social and political order is shaped to further reinstate politics. As the subject makes a hegemonic decision in a situation of radical undecidability to suture the structure, the hegemonic discourse becomes a nexus between crisis and the social structure, allowing for construction of identity (Nabers 2009).

4.3.1. The U.S.

After the Cold War, deprived of an enemy through which to define itself, the U.S. needed to rearticulate its identity as the sole superpower and reformulate its mission in the world. In the state of unipolarity, “[t]here is not a single superpower, there is none. The United States was deprived of the role that provided its mission and self-justification” (Pfaff 1991: 34; cited in Casula 2007: 13). It was generally felt that *remoralization* of the U.S. at home was still grounded on *remoralization* of foreign policy (Kristol & Kagan 1996: 31; cited in Casula 2007: 18). Haass’s (1999: 37) question, “We are number one – now what?” expressed that pervasive mood. Still, the hegemonic belief in the U.S. was that it had won the Cold War. This belief was “both widely shared and lobbied for in the country’s media” and legitimized in George H. W. Bush’s 1992 State of the Union Address (Tsygankov 2017: 22). The U.S.’s victory in the Cold War constituted the perspective from which the U.S. media started to cover the world (*ibid.*).

G. W. Bush was a proponent of neoconservative discourse, which views the world as a source of potential threats to the U.S. During G. W. Bush’s presidency, the terrorist attacks of 9/11 dislocated the structure of U.S. politics and created a state of radical uncertainty. Eventually, U.S. foreign policy firmly pronounced its objectives: fighting against terrorism; defending the homeland and Western values of freedom (Casula 2007: 10). Although deep insecurity was experienced with respect to WMDs and rogue states where WMDs were likely to proliferate, it was realized that, in such a *war on terror* for the very *way of life, inside and outside* were clearly defined and, finally, the U.S. seemed to have found a new foe as replacement for the Soviet Union. The discourse was now pretty similar to Reagan’s “Evil Empire” (Casula 2007: 21–22).

Peker (2006) shows in a detailed analysis that, in his speeches following the attacks, G. W. Bush, by hegemonic intervention, attempted to rearticulate U.S.

social identity in terms of neoconservative discursive formation. In Bush's speeches, the American nation was constructed as "at war", "under God", and "of capitalist/liberal democratic values" (ibid.). Fusing the military, religious, and democratic discourses, Bush attempted to legitimize the war on terror. One of Bush's major tenets was expressed in the phrase "if you're not with me, then you're my enemy" (Peker 2006). Such a unique situation, as Morozov (2009) argues, allowed for Russia, for a short time, to structurally become an equal companion to the U.S. in the war against global terrorism. However, U.S.–Russian relations soon worsened. After the U.S. military activities in Iraq and the plan to locate U.S. antiballistic missiles in Poland and the Czech Republic, as well as after the Russian–Georgian conflict of August 2008, U.S.–Russian bilateral relations "appeared set on an inexorable path toward an adversarial Cold War-style relationship" (Singh 2012).

Toward the end of G. W. Bush's presidency, in 2008, the *war on terror* discourse experienced dislocation and a social crisis emerged. The chains of equivalence constructed against *terrorists* disintegrated, as more and more states refused to support Bush's interventionist policies and the U.S.'s reputation in the world was tarnished. Moreover, a deep economic crisis broke out in the U.S., and the American people needed rearticulation of their social identity, so that it would integrate these changes and provide for a new horizon for actions. When Barack Obama became the U.S. president in 2008, it was, to a great extent, the moment of the political: the newly elected president faced the necessity to rearticulate U.S. identity and restore the U.S. position in the world. Obama managed to partially fix U.S. social identity under his slogan "change we can believe in", constructing Bush's politics as a locus of temporal antagonism.

Like after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the Cold War foreign policy discourse was still dominant in U.S. foreign policy. Edwards and Valenzano (2007) argue that Bill Clinton was the first U.S. president to articulate a real post–Cold War American foreign policy discourse. Based on extensive analysis of Clinton's speeches, the authors delineate three major themes of his foreign policy narrative: the U.S.'s continuing commitment to global leadership, defining threats and interests broadly as pluralistic and transnational, and proclaiming democracy promotion as the U.S. mission for the post–Cold War world. In Clinton's discourse, states, including Russia, are seen as partners, indispensable for ensuring global peace and security (Edwards and Valenzano 2007). However, Clinton implicitly constructed partners as placed under the American leadership (ibid.). Therefore, it can be said that, structurally, in 2008, it was possible for Obama to take over Clinton's multilateral foreign policy discourse, which stated that the U.S. needed partners to live in peace. In actuality, Clinton's rhetorical patterns can be traced regularly throughout Obama's first term foreign policy rhetoric; e.g., "political cooperation", "common threats", "common future", "shared humanity", "common challenges", "working together", "building toward the future", etc.

Nevertheless, for the U.S., security and prosperity are in direct relation with the scope of the spread of liberal and democratic values in the world. The Index of Freedom in the World, annually published by the NGO Freedom House, and other ratings of countries regarding their democratic development serve as an important indication for the U.S. in its construction of these countries in terms of the Self–Other relation (Trenin 2006: 38). The U.S.’s policies regarding the expediency and possibility of Russia’s institutional integration into the West shifted from George H. W. Bush’s restraint to Bill Clinton’s enthusiasm and pragmatic antiterrorist coalition of George W. Bush. From the U.S.’s perspective, Russia could become an ally of a new type in the struggle against international terrorism, spread of WMDs, and regional instability. However, such cooperation, contrary to the expectations of Russia’s government, would not remove from the agenda the issue of the character of Russian political regime and economic system (Trenin 2006: 71). This has to do with freedom being the nodal point of the U.S.’s self-identification.

Based on his study of editorials of the leading U.S. newspapers from 2008–2014, Tsygankov (2017: 31) concludes that the mainstream U.S. media represent Russia as “an autocratic, abusive, and revisionist power”, focusing on Russia’s “corruption, selective use of law, and low tolerance for opposition” and, on most occasions, ignoring more neutral and positive frames emphasizing Russia’s relative progress or challenges during the transition. This neo-Soviet autocratic Russia narrative excludes areas of Russia’s political development that do not fit this narrative. The autocratic Russia narrative emerged in the 19th century and generally views Russia as “authoritarian at heart and expansionist by habit” (Safire 1994; cited in Tsygankov 2017: 23). The autocratic Russia narrative did not change even during Obama and Medvedev’s active cooperation, and no distinction between Medvedev’s presidency and Putin’s return was made. Through muting difference, such binary presentation facilitates maintaining moral and psychological confidence by the national Self or, in this case, confirming the U.S.’s identity as a free state domestically and the leader of the free world abroad. Negative views of Russia reflect the U.S.’s fear of autocratic political systems, which constitute a mirror image of the American political system:

[t]he narrative assists the media in engaging with the U.S. public, in part, because older Cold War views have not entirely disappeared from the public imagination, nor have they been replaced by a different understanding of new circumstances. The presentation of Russia as an abusive autocracy is a way to promote a particular image of democracy within a global competition over the power to shape information and generate ideas. (Tsygankov 2017: 31)

In its attempts to make sense of the Russian transition from the Soviet Union, as well as of the modern Russian political system, Western media often relied, and continues to rely on, the Soviet analogy. Transition in Russia was assessed by the U.S. media not proceeding from how different Russia became from the Soviet Union, but rather how similar it remained to a Soviet-like one-party

system, KGB mentality, propaganda, Cold War rhetoric, and suppression of internal opposition (loc. cit. 20). The autocratic Russia narrative consists of three major components: the image of inferior or backward Russia, superior America, and the moral grounds for the imposition of the Self's values on the Other. Russia is represented as a country that ignores the rights of its citizens and minorities as well as hinders the U.S.'s democratic values and policies around the world. As a result, Russia is constructed as a threat to the international democratic community that needs to be tackled by the West (Tsygankov 2017: 23).

The end of the Cold War temporarily stopped the dominance of the autocratic Russia narrative, which presents Russia as a major threat to the U.S.'s values and interests. Hence, for a short period of time, it seemed that the two countries would reconstruct themselves as partners, facing threats of terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and regional instability together (loc. cit. 20). However, the autocratic Russia narrative was revitalized in the 2000s, as Putin's international assertiveness after the color revolutions and Russia's 2008 intervention in Georgia. The election of pro-Western Dmitry Medvedev did not substantially change the coverage of Russia by the mainstream U.S. media. After Putin's return and his subsequent policies (including the seizure of Crimea and support for Eastern Ukraine separatists) triggered the reinforcement of the autocratic Russia narrative:

[n]ow, it is increasingly clear that U.S. elites are failing the test of inventing a new national identity free of negative comparisons with the former enemy. By reading American media and statements from mainstream members of the U.S. political class, it is hard to not have the impression that the American national identity remains dependent on Russia for confirming the exceptionalism of American values and showcasing its way of governing around the globe through economic incentives and political persuasion. (Tsygankov 2017: 20)

There is, however, also differing coverage of Russia in the U.S.; for example, constructions of Russia as the U.S.'s partner. Van Efferink (2012), for instance, analyzes how two major U.S. think tanks, the Brookings Institution (liberal) and the Heritage Foundation (neoconservative) represent Russia's territorial claim in the Arctic in 2001 (UN 2001). Both think tanks influence U.S. foreign policy. Van Efferink (2012) concludes that the Heritage Foundation represents Russia as *non-Western* (geographical othering) and as a threat because of its *aggressiveness* (labeling) and greed. In the discourse of the Heritage Foundation, Cold War analogies are used and Russia is generally represented as a semi-civilized and unfriendly country. The Brookings Institution, which conceptualizes the world as partners of the U.S., represents Russia as a *normal* (nonexotic) Arctic country and downplays the risk of its militarization of the Arctic region.

As a result, although Russia as an antagonist continued to play an important role in the U.S.'s identity re-/construction processes, this did not prevent Obama from promoting the narrative of Russia as a partner in areas of mutual interest (at least until 2011). This discourse was compatible with Russia's foreign policy

discourse focused on Russia's national interests. It may also be assumed that Obama reproduced the structure of the U.S. and Russia as partners united against global terrorism. It may be suggested that the very existence of this structure can explain Singh's (2012) idea that resetting relations with Russia, as a strategy of restoring the U.S.'s reputation in the world, appeared more achievable than, for instance, "strategic partnership with China or making substantial progress in the Israel–Palestinian conflict and the broader Middle East – that could also potentially provide a useful demonstration effect to other states wavering in their attitude to Washington".

4.3.2. Russia

Already during perestroika, it became clear that, in the postindustrial space, resources of Russia's exceptionalism (centralized, undivided government, economy based on natural and human resources, and closed, unstructured society) were completely exhausted (Trenin 2006: 18). Thus, the major political slogan of liberals and democrats at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s was that of Russia's integration with the West on its way of capitalist development. However, the hardships of the post-Communist transformation and complicated experience of the relations with the West resulted, toward the beginning of the 2000s, in the political slogan of Russia's distinctiveness, sovereignty, and independence (loc. cit. 19). In its foreign policy, Russia sought to prove its status as a great power, self-sufficient in its relations with the U.S., EU, and China and the sole dominating center of power in the former Soviet space. Suspicions of the West as Russia's perpetual adversary arose anew. When Putin became Russia's president, the Russian government started to ignore the protests of the U.S. and the EU against Russia's internal policies. Russian democrats and liberals, trying to appeal to the West, were accused of unpatriotic behavior, or of acting to Russia's disadvantage (Trenin 2006: 103). At that time, Russia was concerned with West's expanding role in international affairs. Hence, Russia's image of the enemy (*obraz varaga*) extended to include any domestic or foreign actor that questioned the direction Putin had chosen for Russia (Snetkov 2015).

In Russia, it was only with Putin's presidency in 2000, and the relative hegemony of his discourse of *sovereign democracy*, that stabilized its identity after the Soviet disintegration (Casula 2007: 1). The notion of *sovereign democracy* that was promoted stresses the right of every nation to provide its own interpretation of universal values. Sovereign democracy formed the ideological horizon of post-Soviet Russia (Morozov 2008: 152). Democracy played a crucial role during Putin's first presidency, since it was articulated with signifiers like *modernity*, *freedom*, and *development*, as well as with nationalist demands that were Putin's agenda from the outset. Hence, Russian democracy was constructed as "independent, home-grown, and special" (Casula 2007: 6). As a result, sovereign democracy implied distinctive features that were not open to international

comparison or criticism. This allowed Russia to establish a link with “apparently universal norms and [with] a whole tradition of thought, firmly placing Russia, if not within Western political thought in general, then at least within the *European intellectual heritage*” (ibid.). This is how the multi-functional project of sovereign democracy stabilized Russian social identity after the severe political, economic, and moral crisis of the 1990s.

Casula (2013a: 4) argues that sovereign democracy can be considered a shortcut, summarizing the discursive stabilization that began under Putin. This stabilization was characterized by restriction of counterhegemonic discourses, as well as of NGOs and the media. Putin’s administration largely adhered to the principle of nonintervention and strongly opposed regime change processes.²⁸ Regime change, e.g., in Syria, was presented as “descending into chaos, with the threat of the regime falling into the hands of Islamic terrorists and/or the West, which inter alia sends a powerful message to any Russian opposition movement” (Casula 2013b: 7). Strong associations between unrest and Western influence in official propaganda resulted in Russian crackdown on NGOs. Although “dead as a term”, sovereign democracy is as alive as certain practices and ideas (Casula 2013a: 4).

In identity construction, Putin sought to articulate Russia as a strong state. When Putin came to power in 2000, his political project conceptualized Russia as a weak state and aimed to fight against terrorism. However, the way in which terrorist threats were conceptualized radically changed after what was constructed in the official Russian discourse as the rebuilding of Russia and the rising of Russia as a “strong state” (Snetkov 2012: 523). Putin’s project of strong Russia was successful in unifying most of the social demands:

[w]hether it is Russian cultural uniqueness, Russian independence and sovereignty in international relations, the concept of multipolarity, the defense of Russian national interests, Russian economic prosperity, or Russian influence in the post-Soviet states – all of those come together in a chain of equivalence arranged around the nodal point of a strong Russia to constitute a myth (Müller 2009: 208).

The promotion of this myth involved suppression of articulations of the post-Soviet weak Russia, which *haunted* the discourse of strong Russia because Russia’s identity was structured around a constitutive lack or split that engendered this fundamental ambiguity (Müller 2009: v). Müller (2009: 54) argues that “threat and exclusion are recurrent motifs in articulations of Russian geopolitical identity”. Two major sources of threat are the rise of China and NATO’s eastward expansion, both of which can potentially diminish Russia’s influence in world politics. The alienation of post-Soviet states adds the motif of exclusion to the motif of threat; firstly, because Russia’s influence in the post-Soviet area diminishes, and, secondly, because Russia’s division with the West

²⁸ The 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine was considered a regime change by Russia as well.

sharpens as post-Soviet states (seek to) join the latter, rather than the former. The U.S. hegemony marginalizes Russia in world politics, while Europe excludes Russia by accepting post-Soviet states antagonistic to Russia. Exclusion consists in constructing the everyday Other (or the West, whose promises Russia considers deceitful) and can be experienced as a lack of being considered an equal partner (Müller 2009: 201).

The West, as the Other, is experienced by Russia as preventing its identity from completeness. Russia is seeking to realize its identity as a great power, but the West blocks this realization from completeness: “The West wants to keep Russia weak and is acting against it. The West ignores Russia as a subject of world politics and brushes its concerns aside” (Müller 2009: 202). As a response to dislocation, Russia creates antagonism in which agency is attributed to the West, and pro-Western post-Soviet states are represented as mere puppets. Regarding pro-Western post-Soviet states, like Georgia or Ukraine, it can be argued that Russia shows “high subjective investment in the discursive structures”, as anti-Russian verbal attacks are met with anger or disappointment (Müller 2009: 208). Russian resentment at color revolutions may be interpreted as a loss of a brother nation, rather than as expressions of imperialism from a Russian perspective (ibid.). The influential myth of a strong Russia naturalizes this position of Russia; in this context, returning Russian influence into post-Soviet states is considered as a natural duty because Russia has so many ethnic, cultural, and historical ties with those countries (Müller 2002: 208).

According to Müller (2009: 218), Russia’s behavior is not conditioned by a positive identity, often described in the terms of *imperialism*, *power politics*, or *aggressive confrontation* but by the articulations of a potentially weak Russia. Therefore, “through actions directed at containing Russia, Western states possibly contribute to the emergence of the very assertive behavior they seek to discourage” (ibid.). Müller (2009: 219) believes that “the more the West seeks to contain Russia, the more Russia will fall back on a geopolitical identity as a great power”. Russian agency in world politics is thus predicated on the Western Other. Reinforcing the antagonism of “Western threat to Russian strength” prompts the formation of a strong chain of equivalence in which “strong Russia faces the Western opponent” (ibid.), which is in line with Russia’s statist ideology identified by Tsygankov (2010). Müller (2009: 219) argues that the best option is to treat Russia as an equal partner in a multipolar world (as Obama did during his first presidency), which contributes to “recognition of legitimate differences in world politics”.

In the same vein, to explain different types of Russian foreign policy, including assertiveness, in relation to the West, Tsygankov (2012) conceptualizes Russia’s relationship with the West over past 200 years in terms of the concept of honor. The Russian myth of honor is rooted in Eastern Christianity and associated with the concept of spiritual freedom and the idea of a strong and socially supportive state. According to Tsygankov, post-Soviet Russia is in the processes of producing a new ideological framework, which contains Russian civilization, a strong Russian state, and support for Russian and pro-Russian

communities (Tsygankov 2012: 34). Tsygankov identifies three characteristic patterns of Russia's behavior toward the West proceeding from the idea of honor: cooperation, defensive reaction, and assertiveness. In each case, the foreign policy choice is motivated by a combination of Western non-/recognition of Russian interests, honor, and Russia's perceived internal strength. Thus, when the West recognizes Russian interests, Russia reacts with honor and cooperative behavior. When, however, the West fails to recognize Russia's interests, Russia assumes defensive foreign policy, similarly driven by the sense of honor. Russia's assertive foreign policy tends to be predicated on the combination of perceived internal strength, a sense of humiliation from the West's attitude, and a determination to recover or defend Russian honor (Tsygankov 2012).

As seen from the discussion above, Russia's state identity and, hence, its various domestic and foreign policy choices are structurally predetermined by the West. Morozov (2015) explains this situation by referring to Russia as a subaltern empire. In postcolonial theory, *subalterns* are individuals and groups whose political voice is silenced due to their exclusion from socioeconomic institutions and who, hence, have no representation in the hegemonized social order. "Russia has internalized the Eurocentric outlook to the point where it became totally dominant. All alternatives boil down to aggressive anti-Westernism devoid of any positive agenda" (Morozov 2015: 167). The boundary between Russia and Europe is ideological, political, and economic as well. Global capitalism developed unevenly, leaving Russia at the periphery. Like many states, Russia constituted a European colony, but, in contrast to other states, Russia "was colonized by its own sovereign state" (*ibid.*). This created a situation in which Russian economy and social structure was colonial at the background of Russian imperial identity and ideology. Russian nationalism has a subaltern element, and its voice is not heard. The only ones who are heard on behalf of Russia are Europeanized elites who construct Russians by using orientalist clichés: as a noble savage waiting to become civilized (Morozov 2015: 167).

In the same vein, Hopf (2012: 274) refers to Russia as "a semi-peripheral country", "a position that allows it to simultaneously exploit its own periphery, while itself being exploited as a raw material appendage by the capitalist core". However, Hopf sees the roots of Russia's long-term semi-peripheral status not in terms of structural determinacy, but in the relative backwardness of Russia's common sense that obstructs the aspirations of an elite neoliberal discourse of Russia becoming part of Western hegemony, or the core of the world capitalist economy, by joining the world market economy, endorsing domestically neoliberal economic market principles, and developing into a Western-style democracy. Currently, in terms of economy, Russia is firmly located in the semi-periphery, between the developed capitalist core (Europe and the West), and Russia's own underdeveloped post-Soviet periphery.

In Hopf's view, a typical semi-peripheral country needs to participate in the institutional arrangements that promote the core's ideology and power, contributing to the reproduction of the core's hegemony. Russia contributes to the

core's material reproduction by exporting raw materials and energy and constituting a peripheral site for foreign investment, but, institutionally, Russia is less connected to Western hegemony and, therefore, less reproductive of its ideology than typical semi-peripheral states. Russia is relatively isolated from Western hegemony and unconnected to the rest of the world in its communications. In Hopf's terms, counterhegemonic mass common sense prevailing in Russia is content with Russia's material semi-peripherality and relative isolation and expresses Russia's neo-Soviet identity, which is reluctant to participate in the democratic neoliberal project. Russian mass common sense is not particularly critical of daily corruption and criminality. Although critical of the Soviet Union, it praises more aspects of Soviet life than the elite discourse. Russian common sense praises Western material accomplishments, just like the elite discourse, but it is reluctant to achieve them through adopting the neoliberal practices that the elite discourse promotes. As a result, although there is no effective electoral system in Russia that would translate citizens' preferences into platforms of political practices, policy outcomes in Russia look like they have been influenced as much by mass common sense as they have by elite preferences (Hopf 2012: 279).

The same idea is reflected in Tsygankov's (2015) book *The Strong State in Russia: Development and Crisis*, which maintains that autocracy is not just imposed, but its evolution is an understandable and logical response to the circumstances in the country. Tsygankov argues that Russians today are complacent with the concept of a managed democracy, and many agree with Putin's perception of state-directed progress.

However, Trenin (2006: 72) still believes that Russia's economic and social processes are in a relative stagnation precisely due to Russia's autocratic political system. He argues that Russia's political system got stuck somewhere in 1913: although capitalism is rapidly developing in Russia, its government remains autocratic. Hence, Russia's political system needs to be further liberalized, guided by the principles of constitutionalism, rule of law, and protection of property rights. Strengthening the principles of freedom and responsibility will lead to the deepening of economic and social processes and, consequently, to the increase in Russia's international integration. Furthermore, the work of Sanina (2012) shows that, in Russia, as a result of information technologies, global values, norms, and outlooks, a new kind of *invisible* state identity is emerging that can be conceptualized as "Russia as a community of citizens" (Sanina 2012: 126). This signals that not all Russians are content with isolation. The new and stable *invisible* state identity is not always loyal to the government institutions: "people more and more often treat critically the myths and concepts at the level of social daily routine" (Sanina 2012: 146). This identity has developed under alternative institutional logic which is not determined by the actions of the state, but is also influenced by cultural, social, and cognitive processes in real, and even more so in virtual, communication spaces.

The above discussion shows that post-Soviet Russian national and state identity has been in the process of continual formation. Since there are significant

challenges and turbulences in Russia's identity re-/construction processes, instabilities and uncertainties are likely to emerge in the close examination of the excerpts of Medvedev's and Obama's presidential messages, as are identity tensions between Russia on the one hand and the U.S., NATO, and the West on the other hand.

CHAPTER 5:

Empirical analysis of Barack Obama's first term messages referring to Russia

5.1. Overall corpus description

The core corpus of Barack Obama's presidential rhetoric for this thesis contains 149 texts (including addresses, interviews, press conferences, and statements) from the years 2009–2012 that mentioned Russia and were published on the official website of the White House. The material was downloaded to ensure a full corpus and stored as documents in the Microsoft Word file format. This corpus covers the period of Obama's active cooperation with Medvedev within the framework of reset and makes it possible to analyze the representation of Medvedev's Russia and the U.S.'s relations with Russia in Obama's first term discourse. The texts were analyzed through close reading to identify excerpts concerning Russia. One text could contain several excerpts mentioning Russia. All excerpts containing the keyword *Russia* were then grouped into broader contexts.

The delineation of contexts was corpus-driven and thematic. In each context, excerpts reflecting the general trends of the context were identified to be further analyzed with respect to assumptions, indexicality, implications, as well as operational concepts from Laclau and Mouffe's theory (such as articulation, elements, moments, empty signifier, nodal point, chains of equivalence/difference, constitutive Other, constitutive outside, dislocation, decision, interpellation, structural closure, and hegemony / hegemonic move).

This chapter discusses five contexts, each containing six excerpts, which are analyzed linguistically. Merely six excerpts from each context could be chosen for a detailed analysis of linguistic choices in view of the space constraints of the thesis. The analysis of each context begins with a short introduction and ends with a discussion. Three contexts in this analysis concern what Obama often referred to as "top priority issues" in his foreign policy, among other things, in U.S.–Russian relations. The three contexts concerning the major agenda points in U.S.–Russian relations from 2009–2012 are the promotion of nuclear nonproliferation, signing and ratification of the New START Treaty, and Russia's accession into the World Trade Organization. These topics were significant enough to be elaborated on in the State of the Union Addresses (Obama stressed different areas of cooperation with Russia in each of his State of the Union Address from 2010–2012) and in several weekly addresses.

Another important context concerns a European ABM system and NATO–Russian relations, a major bone of contention in U.S.–Russian relations. Yet another context contains all of Obama's articulations of the U.S.–Russian reset and focuses on Obama's uses of the concept and its discursive meaning. The topics of missile defense and reset are interrelated, since the discussions of missile defense determined the process of reset on the Russian part.

Other contexts in Obama's first term rhetoric not covered in the thesis include sanctions on Iran and North Korea, space exploration, Afghanistan and Pakistan, Cold War, or old ideologies. Obama also referred to Russia when he spoke about democracy and values, corruption, issues of transparency, accountability, freedom of speech, etc. On the annual World Press Freedom Day, for instance, Obama sometimes mentioned violations of the freedom of speech in Russia, and sometimes he did not. Another context is the shared interests of, and differences between, the U.S. and Russia. The principal idea of the excerpts in that context, as well as the overall strategy of Obama's first term foreign policy, was formulated in his 5 April 2009 speech in Prague: "When nations and peoples allow themselves to be defined by their differences, the gulf between them widens. When we fail to pursue peace, then it stays forever beyond our grasp." Obama stressed the importance of focusing on shared interests rather than differences, constructing and defining both the shared interests of, and differences between, the U.S. and Russia. Yet another context, U.S.–Russian relations in general, contains excerpts that do not fit into other contexts. A detailed analysis of these contexts would be a fruitful subject for further research, but they will not be addressed in the present thesis.

In what follows, each of the five contexts chosen for empirical analysis is discussed, and six excerpts from each context are analyzed using the method described in the methodological part of the thesis. Many analyzed textual excerpts originate from Obama's press conferences and interviews and not from official addresses and statements. There are important differences between these text types: above all, the fact that, in press conferences and interviews, the comments come as answers to questions. However, they have been included in the analysis because interviews and press conferences are vital means of political communication, providing politicians with an opportunity to reiterate and explain important points of their agenda in the language they deem convincing. This allows us to trace the iterative articulation of hegemony (Macqilchrist 2011: 10). Precisely because, in press conferences and interviews, politicians constantly reiterate their hegemonic articulations, "gaps and fissures are opened up as the constitutive instabilities in such constructions" (Butler 1993: 10; cited in Macqilchrist 2011: 10). Detecting such gaps and fissures is vital for the following empirical analysis. Therefore, in this analysis, excerpts from press conferences and interviews are equated with those from full speeches. In analyzing Obama's answer to a question, the question itself and its possible implications are also briefly commented upon. Furthermore, different excerpts from the same interviews and press conferences were in some cases selected for the empirical analysis, since they contain important constitutive instabilities. The choice of excerpts was governed by the wish to include the entire range of articulations employed. According to Hansen (2006: 47), "while a foreign policy discourse is identified as the construction of identity, policy, and the link between them, it is not necessarily the case that all texts explicitly articulate both identities and policy". The textual excerpts selected for the analysis that follows can be characterized as articulating constructions of the

U.S.'s identity and, on most occasions, the U.S.'s policies with respect to Russia.

5.2. Context 1: Global nuclear nonproliferation

Global nuclear nonproliferation was one of the most important issues of Obama's first term foreign policy. Obama announced his agenda of the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons in his 5 April 2009 speech in Prague. This agenda included a promotion of the Nonproliferation Treaty. One means of achieving this aim was to present Russia, a major nuclear power, as a co-leader in the project. Thus, confronting nuclear proliferation was directly connected with another top priority of Obama's first-term foreign policy: restoring the U.S.'s leadership in the 21st century. In Obama's rhetoric, the necessity of the U.S.'s international leadership was assumed and asserted as self-evident. Obama tended to stress that the U.S. was a co-leader, or a peer leader, with other countries. Generally, the notion of leadership per se was constructed as positive and necessary throughout Obama's first-term rhetoric. He complimented most countries on their leadership as he made his official visits throughout the world (for instance, in Poland²⁹, South Korea, India, the UK, etc.). For Obama, serving as a good example was a way of making real changes in the world; hence, he urged the U.S. as well as other nations to be an example which others could follow. During his first term in office, Obama promoted responsibility by fulfilling obligations under the international agreements signed. As a result, Obama's nodal point of "nuclear nonproliferation" became fixed with "leadership" and "responsibility".

After his active promotion of the nonproliferation agenda internationally in 2009, Obama started to reiterate the results of his efforts in the second half of 2010. He constructed the U.S. and Russia as having strengthened the global nonproliferation regime and meeting their obligations under the Nonproliferation Treaty, holding other countries accountable if they do not. Obama referred to this situation as normalized and unproblematic, to the rules as working and stable, and the U.S.'s and Russia's leadership as unquestioned. This is the way in which, in Laclau and Mouffe's terms, political processes are undergoing sedimentation: what was earlier an area of political struggle is currently viewed as an objective state of affairs. After the ratification of the New START, further cooperation with Russia on securing nuclear materials was constructed as unproblematic and natural. In contrast, the excerpts analyzed below concern Obama's initial political efforts to create the international situation on which he would further rely.

In what follows, six excerpts from Obama's political messages will be analyzed. Four excerpts were taken from Obama's addresses to national and

²⁹ Among other things, it was because Poland held presidency of the EU from July–December 2011.

international audiences, two from Obama's addresses to the Russian audience, and remarks in the presence of Medvedev.

The first excerpt originates from one of the first domestic press conferences of the newly inaugurated president on 9 February 2009. The issues addressed mostly concerned economic recovery, healthcare, and bi-/partisanship. Foreign policy questions included Iran and Afghanistan. The latter, along with Pakistan, were referred to as "safe heavens" for terrorists, while the Iranian nuclear program was described as increasing the danger of nuclear arms race in the Middle East and the overall threat of nuclear terrorism. In that connection, the president mentioned his nuclear nonproliferation agenda and cooperation with Russia on this issue that he initiated. Obama himself raised the topic of Russia, and no further comments or questions followed on that topic from the journalists:

[a]nd one of my goals is to prevent nuclear proliferation generally. I think that it's important for the United States, in concert with Russia, to lead the way on this. And, you know, I've mentioned this in conversations with the Russian President, Mr. Medvedev, to let him know that it is important for us to restart the conversations about how we can start reducing our nuclear arsenals in an effective way so that – so that we then have the standing to go to other countries and start stitching back together the nonproliferation treaties that, frankly, have been weakened over the last several years. (Obama 2009a)³⁰

Obama's particular goal (triggered by "my") is promoted as a universal goal, constructed to benefit other countries as well. This is an attempt at a hegemonic move, where the empty signifier "security" is articulated with the nodal point of nuclear nonproliferation and in opposition to nuclear proliferation and weakened nonproliferation treaties, implicitly articulated with the absence of security. The propositional assumption is that nuclear proliferation can be prevented. The existential assumption is that there is one definitive way (triggered by the definite article "the") for doing this. In "I think, it's important /.../", Obama constructs himself at the deictic center and, with a high level of deontic commitment (triggered by "important"), articulates the U.S. and Russia in the chain of equivalence around the leadership on nonproliferation. Therefore, security, through nonproliferation, is articulated with leadership. The propositional assumption is that, to prevent nuclear proliferation generally, it is necessary for somebody to lead others. The value assumption is that the U.S.'s and Russia's leadership on this is desirable (triggered by "it is important").

To promote his hegemonic move, Obama seeks to create common ground, assuming that Russia, represented by Medvedev, agrees with it. Russia's agreement is implied by the propositional assumption that conversations on nuclear arms reduction have occurred before (triggered by "restart"). Medvedev's

³⁰ In the references, the messages excerpted for analysis are listed separately for each context and presented in the order in which they are analyzed. If a message is analyzed in more than one context, they are listed in the bibliography under both. This applies to all contexts for both Obama and Medvedev.

differential content is dismissed, as his stance on the matter remains implicit. In other words, to enhance common ground, Medvedev and Russia, along with Obama and the U.S., are included in the deictic center “we”, the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right, in “it is important for us”, “we can start /.../”, and “we then have the standing”. The U.S. and Russia, along with Obama and Medvedev, are constructed as very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis, while other countries are implicitly distanced from the two on the spatial axis (triggered by “other”). Constructing the U.S. and Russia at the deictic center, Obama constructs a new Self including both countries.

Still, the secondary role of Russia in Obama’s hegemonic move can be inferred from Obama’s phrase “I /.../ let him know” (the propositional assumption being that “Medvedev knows now”), in which Obama (“I”) distances Medvedev on the spatial axis as “him”. Hence, Obama implicitly constructs himself in the position of the agenda-setter, interpellating Medvedev into supporting his agenda. Yet another propositional assumption Obama makes is that there is “an effective way” to reduce Russia’s and the U.S.’s nuclear arsenals. This effective way is articulated with strengthening weakened nonproliferation treaties. The importance of the latter is implicitly stressed by blaming G. W. Bush for his policies in “frankly, have been weakened over the last several years”. Hence, on the temporal axis, G. W. Bush’s presidency is implicitly constructed as a locus of temporal antagonism: “over the past several years” signals that there is a change between the past and the present U.S. foreign policy, which is moving from “weakening” to “strengthening” of nonproliferation treaties. In “frankly”, Obama seeks to achieve trust and, hence, common ground with his audience, by stressing that he is being honest with his audience.

In this excerpt, Russia is articulated with its nuclear arsenal, and Russia’s identity as a nuclear power is emphasized (like generally in this context), suppressing other articulations of Russia. In this role Russia needs “to lead” “in concert” with the U.S. Here, leadership is articulated with responsibility: “to go to other countries” is articulated with “reducing our own arsenals”, and vice versa: reduction of “our” arsenals is sought, among other things, in order to go to other countries. Thus, in this excerpt, promotion of global nuclear nonproliferation is the hegemonic move to partially fix security with Obama’s and the U.S.’s leadership and to articulate identities of the U.S. and Russia with responsibility and leadership.

The second excerpt comes from President Obama’s remarks after a meeting with four former Republican U.S. defense leaders who actively supported nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation and stressed that the U.S. needed to take leadership in the face of future security challenges. In this excerpt, Obama emphasizes that cooperation with the Russians is just one specific step among other measures:

[t]his is particularly true at a time when countries like North Korea and Iran are in the process of developing nuclear weapons capacity, at a time when we see a country like Pakistan with a large nuclear arsenal on the other side of a long-

running conflict in the subcontinent with India, at a time when terrorist organizations like al-Qaeda are trying to seek fissile material. It is absolutely imperative that America takes leadership, working with not just our Russian counterparts but countries all around the world, to reduce and ultimately eliminate the dangers that are posed by nuclear weapons. (Obama 2009b)

The Self is constituted by the chain of equivalence consisting of the U.S., Russia, and other countries around the world who are opposed to the constitutive Other. The latter is constituted by the empty signifier *danger* (articulated with nuclear weapons) around which the chain of equivalence containing North Korea, Iran, Pakistan, al-Qaeda, and terrorist organizations similar to al-Qaeda is constructed. Since the constitutive Other is fixed with danger, security is, in turn, fixed with the chain of equivalence containing the U.S. and its partners. Notably, essentially different activities like developing nuclear weapons capacity (Iran and North Korea), owning a large nuclear arsenal and being in a military conflict (Pakistan), seeking fissile material (al-Qaeda and terrorist organizations similar to it) are all articulated in the chain of equivalence around the articulation of nuclear weapons with the empty signifier of deadly danger. Hence, the empty signifier can be defined on the basis of these articulations.

Through threefold repetition of “at a time when”, Obama constructs the danger close to the Self on the temporal axis. The deictic center in “when we see” contains Obama and his immediate interlocutors, but also includes the U.S. as a whole and other cooperating countries. The self-evident nature of danger is emphasized by strong epistemic modality as expressed in “this is particularly true”, where the precise source of the viewpoint remains implicit, making it appear as an objective fact. Accentuating danger allows Obama to underscore the indispensable character of the U.S.’s leadership for security, as expressed in a very strong deontic commitment “it is absolutely imperative” for the U.S. to lead (the viewpoint is constructed as an objective fact). Thus, constructed as a part of the chain of equivalence, the U.S. is at the same time differentiated within it as primary leader. In “our”, the deictic center exclusively contains the U.S.; therefore, in this excerpt, the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right is implicitly the U.S.

Accentuating danger strengthens Obama’s hegemonic claim: presenting his desired goal (the propositional assumption that the dangers of nuclear weapons can be eliminated) as a universal good (articulating the elimination of nuclear dangers with international cooperation and universal benefit) and promoting the essential nature of the U.S.’s leadership in achieving the constructed universal aim (articulating the U.S.’s leadership with international cooperation on nonproliferation). Russia is positioned so as to crystallize the claim. On the one hand, Russia is treated as equivalent with “countries all around the world”, as its agreement with the nonproliferation project is implied when “Russian counterparts” are constructed as being close to the U.S. on the spatial axis (triggered by “our”) and on the modal axis when the propositional assumption is made that the U.S. and Russia will be “working” together on the issue.

On the other hand, however, in “with not just our Russian counterparts”, Russia is treated as a very special partner and is, thus, differentiated within the chain of equivalence consisting of all other cooperating countries. “Countries all around the world” are constructed as more distant from the U.S. on the spatial axis than Russia. These countries are not named, which implies that Russia is the U.S.’s major counterpart in the issue at the moment of speaking. The implicit assumption is that Russia is, at least for the time being, important for promoting and establishing the U.S.’s leadership on international nonproliferation (considering the fact that Obama is speaking to his domestic audience). Such interplay of difference and equivalence serves as an effective means of creating common ground on the one hand and promoting the U.S.’s leadership on the other hand.

The third excerpt is from one of Obama’s most prominent addresses on the topic, as he announced his agenda of the world without nuclear weapons in Prague on 5 April 2009:

Now, understand, this matters to people everywhere. One nuclear weapon exploded in one city – be it New York or Moscow, Islamabad or Mumbai, Tokyo or Tel Aviv, Paris or Prague – could kill hundreds of thousands of people. And no matter where it happens, there is no end to what the consequences might be – for our global safety, our security, our society, our economy, to our ultimate survival.

And as nuclear power – as a nuclear power, as the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon, the United States has a moral responsibility to act. We cannot succeed in this endeavor alone, but we can lead it, we can start it.

Al-Qaeda has said it seeks a bomb and that it would have no problem with using it. And we know that there is unsecured nuclear material across the globe. To protect our people, we must act with a sense of purpose without delay. So today I am announcing a new international effort to secure all vulnerable nuclear material around the world within four years. We will set new standards, expand our cooperation with Russia, pursue new partnerships to lock down these sensitive materials. (Obama 2009c)

In this excerpt, the hegemonic move to partially fix security with global nuclear nonproliferation is realized through arguments appealing to shared humanity (“this matters to people everywhere”) – it is asserted that any city on Earth can become a victim of nuclear terrorism (constitutive Other). Still, the first pair in the chain of equivalence of possible victims is New York and Moscow. The fact that a major U.S. city and the Russian capital are articulated together and foregrounded in the chain of equivalence implies a special status and cooperation of the U.S. and Russia on the issue of nonproliferation. These and other cities (and the countries they represent), articulated in the chain of equivalence and forming the Self, are interpellated by the hegemonic move as potential victims and, therefore, supporters of Obama’s nonproliferation policies. The deictic center in “our global safety, our security, our economy, /.../our ultimate survival”

includes all the countries in favor of the hegemonic move. They are constructed close to each other on the spatial axis (triggered by “our”, “we know”, “our people”, “we must act”). The common ground they share on nonproliferation is implied, as it is articulated with safety, security, society, economy (all being empty signifiers, open to contestation and rearticulation by various discourses), and ultimate survival, whereas nuclear weapon is fixed with deadly consequences.

In Obama’s hegemonic move, nonproliferation tends to be articulated with the U.S.’s leadership. In this excerpt, Obama makes yet another moral justification of the U.S.’s leadership in global nuclear nonproliferation – the argument that the U.S. was the first and the only country to launch nuclear weapons. The U.S. is constructed to know from the experience the deadly consequences of nuclear weapons and, therefore, “has a moral responsibility to act”. Here, being able to realize the deadly consequences is articulated with moral responsibility: having used a nuclear weapon, the U.S. is forever interpellated into leading the nonproliferation effort because of the moral responsibility. In “we cannot succeed in this endeavor alone, but we can lead it, we can start it”, the deictic center contains the U.S. only, implying that the U.S. is the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right. However, “we cannot succeed in this endeavor alone” implies other countries have to join the U.S.-led endeavor and implicitly rearticulates the U.S.’s identity from unilateralism to multilateralism.

Al-Qaeda, fixed with the constitutive Other, is constructed as having “no problem with using [nuclear bomb]”, the propositional assumption being that it is devoid of moral responsibility. Thus, both the U.S. and al-Qaeda are articulated with the empty signifier of danger, fixed with deadly consequences of nuclear weapons, but the former in a positive sense, through moral responsibility, and the latter in a negative sense, through its absence.

A sense of urgency is created as the constitutive Other is constructed as moving closer to the Self along the temporal axis: if al-Qaeda acquires the nuclear bomb it “seeks”, it will use it. To emphasize the deadly danger, Obama brings

al-Qaeda’s voice into the utterance, stating that al-Qaeda “has said” that itself. Therefore, the Self must act “without delay” (“must act” expresses the highest level of deontic modality); so, already “today”, a particular international effort is announced to “secure all vulnerable nuclear material”. Obama constructs himself at the deictic center in “I am announcing a new international effort”, stressing his crucial role. Here, the effort is implicitly constructed as universally beneficial, or hegemonic, effort.

The effort includes three steps: setting new standards, expanding cooperation with Russia, and pursuing new partnerships. The deictic center “we” and “our” contains the U.S. only. The existential assumption is that there is cooperation with Russia, although maybe not with other countries. The propositional assumption is that cooperation with Russia needs to be, and will be, expanded. This draws Russia close to the U.S. on the spatial axis. The U.S. is active in this effort and is “pursuing new partnerships” and “setting new standards” (the propositional assumption being that new standards can be set old ones replaced).

Russia remains passive, and it is the U.S. who expands cooperation with Russia, not vice versa. Thus, it is implicitly assumed that the primary leadership on issue of nonproliferation and the prerogative of setting the standards belongs to the U.S.

The fourth excerpt originates from Obama's 2009 interview with ITAR-TASS / Rossiya TV. Obama is talking to the Russian media before his first meeting with Medvedev in Russia. The questions generally concern Obama's vision of the role that Russia plays in the world and the major points on Obama's foreign policy agenda. Obama speaks favorably of Russia, communicating "America's respect for Russia" and that the U.S. "want[s] to deal as equals", that "Russia is a great country", and that U.S.–Russian relations need to be strengthened. On nonproliferation, Obama says:

[t]here are other issues that I want to make sure that we discuss that have to do with our mutual security. As I said before, I think the issue of nuclear proliferation remains very important and we need to create a strong nonproliferation framework in the international community. Having Russia as a leader on that is going to be critical. I think counterterrorism activities, ways we can cooperate together, that will be very important.

But given the unique position the United States and Russia has when it comes to nuclear power, for us to send a strong signal that we want to reduce our stockpiles I think would help us internationally, to give people a sense that we're moving into a new era and we want to get beyond the Cold War. (Obama 2009d)

In this excerpt, Obama is at the deictic center of the "I"-clauses: "I want to make sure", "[a]s I said before", "I think" (on three occasions). With this, Obama reiterates his hegemonic move to partially fix security with nonproliferation. The level of epistemic and deontic modality in these phrases is average. In "we discuss" Obama and Medvedev are at the deictic center, but it is Obama who makes sure that nonproliferation is being discussed and Medvedev's wishes remain implicit. In "we need to create a strong nonproliferation framework", the deictic center contains the U.S., Russia and other members. Other "we"-clauses in this excerpt refer to the U.S. and Russia, constructing them very close to each other on the spatial axis: "our mutual security", "we can cooperate together", "for us to send a strong signal", "we want to reduce our stockpiles", "would help us internationally", "we're moving into a new era", "we want to get beyond the Cold War". In "I think" on the last two occasions, Obama speaks on behalf of the deictic center consisting of the U.S. and Russia and, thus, on behalf of both countries.

This way, the existence of the common ground presented and promoted by Obama appears unquestionable. Nonproliferation seems to be, first of all, Obama's priority and Russia's consent is presupposed. "As I said before" triggers the propositional assumption that Obama repeatedly reiterates the importance of nonproliferation, while "I want to make sure that we discuss /.../" implies that it is very important for Obama to discuss the issue also in this particular case. To

justify the importance of the repeated discussion of the topic, Obama articulates “nuclear proliferation” with “mutual security”.

The role of both the U.S. and Russia in the agenda of nonproliferation is considered crucial. Russia is constructed as “a leader” on nonproliferation, whose participation in the agenda is “critical”. This way Obama implicitly articulates Russia in the chain of equivalence of leaders around the nodal point of nuclear nonproliferation (the indefinite article “a” triggers the propositional assumption that there can be several leaders). However, since Russia’s role in the agenda is constructed as critical, while other leaders, apart from the U.S., remain implicit, Russia is still made different within the chain of equivalence. Russia’s critical role in the agenda of nonproliferation consists in the fact that Russia’s cooperation can help create “strong framework”, send a “strong signal”, and is in itself “very important” – the value assumption being that Russia’s presence in the project is strongly desirable.

In this excerpt, the U.S. and Russia are articulated with nuclear power through a “unique position” (while “when it comes to” triggers the propositional assumption that, in other issues, the U.S. and Russia do not have a unique position) due to their extensive nuclear arsenals. The latter are articulated with the Cold War. Although the U.S. and Russia are countries which have earlier contributed to the articulation of nuclear power with the guarantee of security and international respect, now, it is precisely the “reduction of nuclear stockpiles” that Obama seeks to articulate with “security” and, through that, with “a new era”, while the Cold War is implicitly articulated with increasing nuclear arsenals and an old era. Hence, on the temporal axis, the Cold War is constructed as the locus of temporal antagonism, and the newly constructed Self, uniting the U.S. and Russia, is moving from the old era to the new. “We want to reduce our stockpiles” and “we want to get beyond the Cold War” signal quite strong common ground and deontic commitment. Reducing nuclear stockpiles is articulated with changing the mindset of the international community (“internationally, to give people a sense that /.../”) through “going beyond the Cold War” and its attitude to the role and status of nuclear weapons. Obama creates common ground with Russia that, for both the U.S. and Russia, “giving people a sense /.../” internationally is important.

In this excerpt, going beyond the Cold War is articulated with international nonproliferation effort rather than the overall improvement in U.S.–Russian relations. However, in “we’re moving into a new era and we want to get beyond the Cold War”, the propositional assumption is that the U.S. and Russia are not there yet. Hence, the articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with the Cold War, suppressed by Obama’s hegemonic articulation of the U.S. and Russia with leadership on nonproliferation, still strikes back and haunts Obama’s hegemonic articulation.

The fifth excerpt comes from President Obama’s press conference after the G8 summit in L’Aquila, Italy. He was asked whether working on the New START Treaty with Russia might persuade Iran and North Korea to abandon their nuclear ambitions:

[w]ell, I don't think it matters so much necessarily that they will listen to the United States or Russia individually. But it gives us the capacity, as the two nuclear superpowers, to make appeals to the broader world community in a consistent way about the dangers of nuclear proliferation and the need to reduce that danger and hopefully at some point in time eliminate it.

So there are countries that have decided not to pursue nuclear weapons. Brazil, South Africa, Libya have all made a decision not to pursue nuclear weapons. Now, part of the concept behind the Nonproliferation Treaty was countries could develop peaceful nuclear energy, they would not pursue nuclear weapons if they were signatories to the treaty, and in turn the United States and Russia would also significantly reduce their nuclear stockpiles. (Obama 2009e)

In the first sentence of the excerpt, the propositional assumption is that Iran and North Korea can listen to the U.S. or Russia individually. Obama downplays this argument, explicitly expressing his own (triggered by "I") opinion in "I don't think it matters so much necessarily". Since Obama constructs himself at the deictic center, or the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right, the implication is that the individual influence of the U.S. or Russia on Iran and North Korea is not significant but "so much" triggers the propositional assumption that it still matters. Notably, in "I don't think /.../ necessarily", the level of epistemic modality is rather average, implying that Obama is careful about making this point. In "gives us the capacity, as the two nuclear superpowers, to make appeals to the broader world community in a consistent way" the propositional assumption is that, unless the U.S. and Russia act together, there is neither "the capacity" nor "consistent way" of convincing the world of the danger of nuclear weapons and the need to eliminate them. Elimination of the dangers of nuclear proliferation is constructed as a goal toward which the world should move; hence, in achieving this goal, appealing to the "broader world community" is constructed as more important than the individual influence of one country (the U.S. or Russia) on another (North Korea or Iran). Using words like "superpower" and "capacity" in the same sentence, Obama emphasizes the propositional assumption that, together, the U.S. and Russia can be really powerful.

Obama constructs the U.S. and Russia as "the two nuclear superpowers". In "us", Obama constructs Russia and the U.S. at the deictic center and very close to each other on the spatial axis. This way, Russia is implicitly interpellated into supporting Obama's claims. Being the two nuclear superpowers is articulated with making "appeals to the broader world community" (as opposed to remaining self-sufficient) and in opposition to nuclear proliferation, fixed with danger. As a result, the U.S. and Russia are fixed with global security by being articulated with nonproliferation. The existential assumption here is that there is a consistent way the U.S. and Russia can appeal to the world community. Since Obama speaks on behalf of the deictic center, the implication is that this way is defined by the U.S.

To support his claim, Obama says that “so there are countries that have decided not to pursue nuclear weapons”. The propositional assumption is that not all countries have done this. “So” implies that the countries that made the decision (Brazil, South Africa, and Libya) did this because of the U.S.’s nonproliferation efforts (possibly accompanied with Russia’s). Not pursuing nuclear weapons is articulated with developing peaceful nuclear energy by signing the Nonproliferation Treaty. The U.S. and Russia are differentiated among the signatories, assuming implicitly that, for other signatories (all articulated within the chain of equivalence around the treaty), the effort of not pursuing nuclear weapons is proportional to the effort of the U.S. and Russia.

On the temporal axis, “some point of time” is constructed when dangers of nuclear weapons will hopefully be eliminated and the Self (or the chain of equivalence containing, first and foremost, the U.S. and Russia and also other countries in support of nonproliferation) is constructed as moving in that direction, urged by the U.S. and Russia. However, “significantly reduce” triggers the propositional assumption that the U.S. and Russia do not intend “at some point in time” to eliminate their nuclear stockpiles altogether. Thus, the implication is that nuclear stockpiles are necessary; hence, the suppressed articulation of nuclear arsenal with security haunts Obama’s utterance. Among other things, nuclear stockpiles are articulated with the U.S.’s and Russia’s unique position which allows them to address the broader community (the value assumption being that such position is desirable); hence, the implication is that nuclear arsenals are necessary for the U.S. and Russia.

The sixth excerpt comes from Obama’s prominent address on 8 April 2010 at the New START Treaty Signing Ceremony in Prague. This day was crucial in terms of both Obama’s nonproliferation agenda and U.S.–Russian relations. Hard work on elaborating the New START created the hope that trust would develop between the U.S. and Russia:

Finally, this day demonstrates the determination of the United States and Russia – the two nations that hold over 90 percent of the world’s nuclear weapons – to pursue responsible global leadership. Together, we are keeping our commitments under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which must be the foundation for global nonproliferation.

While the New START treaty is an important first step forward, it is just one step on a longer journey. As I said last year in Prague, this treaty will set the stage for further cuts. And going forward, we hope to pursue discussions with Russia on reducing both our strategic and tactical weapons, including non-deployed weapons.

But nuclear weapons are not simply an issue for the United States and Russia – they threaten the common security of all nations. A nuclear weapon in the hands of a terrorist is a danger to people everywhere – from Moscow to New York; from the cities of Europe to South Asia. So next week, 47 nations will come together in Washington to discuss concrete steps that can be taken to secure all vulnerable nuclear materials around the world in four years.

So I'm actually optimistic that having completed this treaty, which signals our strong commitment to a reduction in overall nuclear weapons, and that I believe is going to strengthen the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty regime, that sends a signal around the world that the United States and Russia are prepared to once again take leadership in moving in the direction of reducing reliance on nuclear weapons and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, as well as nuclear materials, that we will have built the kind of trust not only between Presidents but also between governments and between peoples that allows us to move forward in a constructive way. (Obama 2010f)

In the first paragraph of the excerpt, the U.S. and Russia are articulated with the nodal point of Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and, through this, with responsible global leadership. Hence, the nodal point of nonproliferation is fixed with "responsibility" and "global leadership". The U.S. and Russia are articulated with their large nuclear stockpiles on the one hand and with the determination to pursue nonproliferation on the other hand. This is assumed to be a sufficient incentive for other countries to follow the U.S.'s and Russia's example (resulting in "the foundation for global nonproliferation"). The implication is, therefore, that since all other countries have significantly smaller amounts of nuclear weapons, they should follow the example of countries with larger arsenals. Hence, the suppressed articulation of nuclear weapons with power and international influence haunts Obama's articulation of nonproliferation with global leadership.

The U.S.'s and Russia's "determination" also implies their strong common ground in values. The U.S. and Russia are united at the deictic center "we" in "[t]ogether, we are keeping our commitments under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty" and constructed as being very close to each other on the spatial and modal axes. Such strong cooperation legitimizes the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which, in turn, "must be the foundation for global nonproliferation", the propositional assumption being that the Nonproliferation Treaty is not yet as strong a foundation for global nuclear nonproliferation as it needs to be; however, Obama's deontic commitment to this is very strong (triggered by "must").

The second paragraph starts with the existential assumption that there is a "longer journey" of which the New START is "an important first step forward". Hence, on the spatial axis, Obama constructs a continuum (a long journey of reducing the U.S.'s and Russia's nuclear stockpiles), with Russia and the U.S. currently being at the point of the New START (having made the first important step) and about to move forward (step by step).

In "as I said last year in Prague", Obama constructs himself at the deictic center and emphasizes the importance of what he said the year before (implying that the things are still topical). So, on the temporal axis, Obama constructs continuity of his policies with his landmark address of the previous year and with his future policy intentions. In "we hope to pursue discussions with Russia", the deictic center contains Obama and the U.S.; since Obama is speaking on behalf of the deictic center, the implication is that the U.S. is doing what Obama had

said previously. In “we hope”, the level of epistemic modality is rather average, implying that Obama and the U.S. are more enthusiastic than Russia about further cuts. The propositional assumption is that the U.S. is “going forward” to pursue further discussions with Russia. Thus, Russia is distanced from the U.S. on the spatial axis, as it is implicitly constructed as a passive party which is addressed by the U.S., although in “our”, Obama constructs the U.S. and Russia at the deictic center. Russia’s secondary role is implied at the background of the U.S.’s assumed primacy. The word “forward” is used on two occasions in this paragraph, stressing Obama’s desire for further action.

In the third paragraph, to fix nuclear weapons with the empty signifier of threat, Obama is appealing to shared humanity, claiming that nuclear weapons are a threat to the security of all nations. Obama constructs the worst danger, or constitutive Other: “a nuclear weapon in the hands of a terrorist”, “terrorist” being an empty signifier articulated with abstract deadly danger. The U.S. and Russia are articulated in the chain of equivalence with all nations in opposition to the constitutive Other. Obama makes a propositional assumption that nuclear terrorism can be tackled by international cooperation (“47 nations will come together in Washington”). Another propositional assumption is that “concrete steps” can be taken to diminish or eliminate the danger of nuclear weapons in four years. The implication is that the more countries participate in taking those steps, the more effective they are.

In appealing to shared humanity, Obama distinguishes the U.S. and Russia within the chain of equivalence made of all nations by saying that “nuclear weapons are not simply an issue for the United States and Russia”. The propositional assumption is that, for the U.S. and Russia, nuclear weapons are an important issue, “simply” implying that nuclear weapons might indeed be articulated with the U.S. and Russia rather than with nuclear terrorism. Obama seeks to suppress this articulation; however, this it strikes back as Obama foregrounds “Moscow” and “New York” within the chain of equivalence formed by all cities in the world that can suffer from nuclear terrorism. Hence, in all issues concerning nuclear weapons and power, the U.S. and Russia are implicitly constructed as having a special role.

In the fourth paragraph, the New START is articulated with Russia’s and the U.S.’s “strong commitment” to reducing nuclear weapons, strengthening the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty regime, leadership in “reducing reliance on nuclear weapons” and preventing their spread, and also with building trust between presidents, governments, and peoples of the U.S. and Russia. Hence, the New START is articulated both with nonproliferation and development of U.S.–Russian relations, the implication being that once the interpellation of Russia into Obama’s hegemonic move to partially fix security with nonproliferation has proved successful, trust in U.S.–Russian relations can further be built. Here, the Nonproliferation Treaty is constructed as a “regime”, implying that it is rather strict. However, “is going to strengthen” triggers the propositional assumption that this regime is not yet sufficiently strong. In “I believe”, Obama constructs himself at the deictic center, implying that strengthening of the

Nonproliferation Treaty regime is important to him personally. “Our strong commitment” expresses a high level of deontic modality in the U.S.’s and Russia’s attitude to reduction in overall nuclear weapons. In “our strong commitment”, the U.S. and Russia are constructed at the deictic center and very close to each other on the spatial and modal axes. The common ground between the U.S. and Russia in this matter is constructed as absolute.

“Once again” triggers the propositional assumption that it is not the first time the U.S. and Russia take leadership in moving toward reducing nuclear weapons and preventing their spread, but implying that, in the past, they hit obstacles. “Are prepared” triggers the propositional assumption that, earlier, the U.S. and Russia were not prepared to take leadership on nonproliferation, while “sends a signal around the world” triggers the propositional assumption that the world needs a signal to understand that the U.S. and Russia are prepared to lead on nonproliferation.

In “the kind of trust /.../ that allows us to move forward in a constructive way”, the propositional assumption is that there can be different kinds of trust. The New START is articulated with the kind of trust that allows the U.S. and Russia to move forward in a constructive way, the propositional assumption being that the two are intertwined. In “I’m actually optimistic”, Obama constructs himself at the deictic center and expresses his personal optimism. In turn, Russia and the U.S. are constructed at the deictic center in “we will have built” and “allows us to move forward”, and close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. However, the existential assumption is that there is trust between Presidents Obama and Medvedev, but not between the U.S. and Russian governments and peoples (triggered by “not only /.../ but”). This, in turn, enhances the distance between the U.S. and Russia on the spatial axis and dislocates the newly constructed Self uniting Russia and the U.S.

5.2.1. Discussion

Aiming to promote his hegemonic move of partially fixing security with nonproliferation, Obama established global nuclear nonproliferation as one of the nodal points in his international agenda. Obama sought to unite all countries in the chain of equivalence around this nodal point, thus constructing what he referred to as the international community. Countries that disagreed with the agenda, like Iran and North Korea, were constructed as outside of this community. In some cases, they were articulated in the chain of equivalence with al-Qaeda and terrorist organizations, which were the constitutive Other of the international community and formed the chain of equivalence around the empty signifier of deadly dangers of nuclear weapons.

In Obama’s hegemonic move, the nodal point of nuclear nonproliferation was fixed with “responsibility” and “leadership”. To recover the U.S.’s international credibility, Obama promoted responsible leadership, meaning that the U.S. was no longer going to breach its obligations. This also meant the

rearticulation of the U.S.'s identity from unilateralism to multilateralism. Promoting "leading by example", Obama demanded responsibility from all other nations of the international community that he was constructing. Obama sought to rearticulate "security" and "respect" with nonproliferation and suppress the older, Cold War-style articulation of "security" and "respect" with the possession of nuclear weapons. On the temporal axis, Obama constructed the U.S.'s unilateralism as well as the Cold War as loci of temporal antagonism, from which the U.S.'s foreign policy under Obama distanced itself. As for his nonproliferation agenda, Obama stressed continuity between his words and deeds in the past and in the present, projecting this continuity into future as well.

Russia, articulated with its huge nuclear arsenal, was constructed as an important player on global nuclear nonproliferation. Russia's cooperation in the framework of the hegemonic move gave the latter legitimacy. While addressing Russian media or speaking in the presence of Medvedev, Obama tended to articulate Russia as an equal power, leader, and player in the agenda of nonproliferation and in general. Russia's cooperation was defined as critical, very important, and crucial. However, while addressing the U.S. or international audiences, Obama tended to stress that cooperation with Russia was as important as cooperation with any other country. Cooperation with Russia was just one of the possible steps to achieve the final goal of global nuclear nonproliferation and, through this, restore the U.S.'s global leadership.

Although the need for all countries, especially Russia, to participate and lead on his hegemonic move was stressed, Obama's hegemonic power to define the nodal point of global nuclear nonproliferation can be seen, as "setting the new standards", "expanding" existing collaborations, and "pursuing new partnerships" were implicitly constructed as the prerogative of the U.S. Furthermore, Obama's hegemonic power was evident, as he implicitly spoke on behalf of Russia, assuming its full consent. Russia's voice was mute in most utterances – there were neither direct nor indirect quotations of what Russia's leaders had said. From the very beginning, Obama was reiterating that it was his initiative that he was encouraging other countries to join. In Obama's excerpts in this context, the U.S. (in some cases together with Russia) was articulated as equivalent with other legitimate members of the international community (or Nonproliferation Treaty signatories), but, at the same time, the U.S. (sometimes, with Russia) was made distinct in the expanding chain of equivalence. This interplay of difference and equivalence served as a powerful mechanism of hegemony: constructing the U.S. or/and Russia as equivalent but still different allowed legitimizing the U.S.'s (or Russia's) special position, actually impregnated with power.

In this context, it was not particularly challenging for Obama to construct the U.S. and Russia either as part of the Self that includes all countries around in the world that support nonproliferation or of the newly constructed Self that unites Russia and the U.S. This new Self was only dislocated when, at the level of assumptions and implications, it turned out that there was no trust between the governments and people of the U.S. and Russia.

5.3. Context 2: Elaboration and ratification of the New START Treaty

The New START Treaty was a part of Obama's broader strategy of global non-proliferation. However, the U.S. Republican senators were reluctant to ratify it. Therefore, Obama wanted to time the vote on the New START during the lame-duck session of the 2008 Senate, as only 10 Republican votes were required for ratification of the treaty³¹. Obama was content with the hard work and progress in the New START negotiations with Russia, complimenting Medvedev for being an effective partner.

To demonstrate some decisions Obama employed to persuade national and international audiences to support the New START (since failure to ratify the New START would otherwise dislocate Obama's nonproliferation discourse), this part of the analysis looks at six excerpts pertaining to the ratification of the treaty. Two of them were taken from Obama's remarks and press conference after NATO summit in Lisbon, one from Obama's remarks during the ceremony of the signing of the New START in Prague (in the presence of Medvedev), another from Obama's interview with the Russian media. The fifth excerpt is from Obama's press conference in Poland, and the sixth excerpt addressed the U.S. audience just before the Senate vote on the New START and stressed it as an "urgent national priority". Obama resorted to different articulations of the New START and Russia depending on the context of speaking.

The first excerpt comes from the press conference of the president after NATO summit in Lisbon. Obama is answering the question about what message the summit sends to the Republican senators who are against the New START. Consequently, in his answer, Obama emphasized security alerts prior to any benefits of cooperation with Russia:

[a]nd I think you've seen the comments of a wide range of European partners on this issue, including those who live right next to Russia, who used to live behind the Iron Curtain, who have the most cause for concern with respect to Russian intentions and who have uniformly said that they will feel safer and more secure if this treaty gets ratified – in part, because right now we have no verification mechanism on the ground with respect to Russian arsenals. And Ronald Reagan said, trust but verify – we can't verify right now. (Obama 2010a)

In this polyphonic utterance, Obama constructs himself as relying on the comments of the European partners (the propositional assumption in "I think you've seen the comments" is that European partners were commenting on the issue). In "I think", Obama constructs himself at the deictic center and speaks on behalf his European partners, creating a common ground (triggered by "have uniformly said"). "A wide range of European partners" stresses the consensual

³¹ Within the newly elected 2010 Senate, Democrats had 51 seats and Obama needed 16 Republican votes for treaty ratification.

nature of the position. The common ground consists in the support of the ratification of the New START. The voices of the European partners that Obama is referring to articulate the New START with their “safety” and “security”. “In part”, these voices also articulate the need to ratify the New START with the current lack of verification of Russian nuclear arsenal. “In part” triggers the propositional assumption that other aspects of the New START contribute to the security of the European partners. Hence, ratifying the New START is implicitly constructed as the U.S.’s contribution to the European security, while Russia is implicitly articulated with threat and constructed as Europe’s Other. In “right now we have no”, the deictic center includes the U.S. as well as all European partners supporting the treaty. However, Obama still distances the European partners on the spatial axis as “them” in “they feel safer and more secure”.

In this excerpt, Russia’s identity is articulated with the Cold War through “Iron Curtain” and nuclear “arsenals”; imperialism (through the existential assumption that Russia has “intentions” that cause concern in Russia’s neighbor states, while the propositional assumption triggered by “the most cause for concern with respect to /.../” is that other countries (who are not Russia’s neighbors) are also concerned about Russian intentions) and, therefore, with the need for verification. Verification is articulated with the New START Treaty; hence, those [Republicans] who oppose the New START are implicitly constructed as opposing the verification of Russia’s nuclear activities. To strengthen his articulation, Obama articulates this verification process with Ronald Reagan by using his famous quote, thus creating an indirect articulation of the New START with Reagan. Obama, a Democrat, implicitly makes Reagan, a Republican famous for his militaristic stance against the Soviet Union, support his position to gain Republican support. In “trust but verify”, the propositional assumption is that lack of verification means unconditional trust. The value assumption is that this is undesirable. Hence, by opposing the verification of Russia’s nuclear arsenals under the New START Treaty, the Republican senators who are against the ratification are implicitly constructed as trusting Russia unconditionally. The implicit value assumption is, therefore, that trusting Russia unconditionally is undesirable.

A distinction is made between European partners in general and “those who live right next to Russia”, having “the most cause for concern with respect to Russian intentions” (suggesting that for these European partners, Russia is the constitutive Other). Otherwise, all European partners are constructed in the chain of equivalence in opposition to the Russian threat. In “who live right next to Russia”, Russia is implicitly constructed as a threat which is close to some European partners on the spatial axis, while “partner” implies an entity that is close on the spatial-modal axis to the U.S. In “right now [we have no verification]” and “we can’t verify right now”, “right now” implies direct presence of the Russian threat close to the deictic center “we” on the temporal axis. Hence, “unverified” Russia, especially where Russia is somebody’s constitutive Other, constitutes a threat to Europe and a major reason to ratify the New START.

The second excerpt comes from the same press conference. Obama is answering a sensitive question whether the failure to ratify the New START would weaken his position on the world stage and provides reasons for voting on the New START without delay:

[n]ow, I happen to think that President Medvedev is – has made every effort to move Russia in the right direction. And so if you agree with me on that front, then it's also important that we don't leave a partner hanging after having negotiated an agreement like this that's good for both countries. (ibid.)

In this excerpt, an existential assumption is that there is “the right direction” (triggered by the definite article) for Russia, an implicit assumption being that the “wrong” direction also exists, and that the distinction can be determined objectively. The value assumption is that it is desirable for Russia to move in the right direction. Obama makes a propositional assumption that it requires “effort” to move Russia in the right direction, while the propositional assumption in “every effort” is that this effort is multifaceted. Obama constructs himself at the deictic center in “I happen to think /.../” and Medvedev as having made all possible efforts to move Russia in the right direction; therefore, Medvedev is articulated with the right direction for Russia. On the temporal axis, Obama constructs the beginning of Medvedev’s presidency as the turning point when Russia’s movement into the right direction began and stresses the need to maintain this movement in the present and future.

Medvedev is defined as “a partner”, close to the U.S. on the spatial axis. In “if you agree with me on that front”, Obama appeals for the audience’s consent; however, being at the deictic center, or the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right, Obama implicitly creates a common ground regarding Medvedev’s achievements. Acknowledging Medvedev’s efforts is articulated with helping him to secure his political position. Thus, all those who acknowledge Medvedev’s efforts are interpellated into helping Medvedev keep his political power. The latter is articulated with the fact that Medvedev should not be abandoned or “left hanging” after the negotiations of the New START (which implies the potentially shaky political position of Medvedev). “It is important” implies a rather high level of deontic commitment by Obama and by those who agree on Medvedev’s efforts in moving Russia into the right direction.

Obama implicitly constructs a difference between Medvedev’s Russia and anti-Western Russia. Therefore, it is with the “right” Russia and the proven “partner” that Obama has negotiated the agreement, whereas the “wrong” Russia may be the imminent result of the U.S.’s failure to ratify the New START and to support the right partner (Medvedev). Hence, the failure to ratify the New START is articulated with Medvedev’s loss of political power. Obama is making the propositional assumption that something can be “good for both countries” (like the New START), the value assumption being that this is desirable. Therefore, here, Russia is positioned close to the U.S. along the spatial axis. Consequently, Russia is not constructed as a unified Other, and there is no

zero-sum relationship between the U.S. and Russia; rather, there is a real Russia, with a potential to become a member of the Western family of nations, once it is moving in the right direction.

The third excerpt is taken from Obama's remarks in Prague on the signing of the New START Treaty on 8 April 2010. In his remarks, Obama reiterates his global nonproliferation agenda and compliments Medvedev on his leadership and effective cooperation. Obama states that the rapport between the presidents benefited U.S.–Russian relations:

Together, we've stopped that drift, and proven the benefits of cooperation. Today is an important milestone for nuclear security and nonproliferation, and for U.S.–Russia relations. It fulfills our common objective to negotiate a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. It includes significant reductions in the nuclear weapons that we will deploy. It cuts our delivery vehicles by roughly half. It includes a comprehensive verification regime, which allows us to further build trust. It enables both sides the flexibility to protect our security, as well as America's unwavering commitment to the security of our European allies. And I look forward to working with the United States Senate to achieve ratification for this important treaty later this year. (Obama 2010b)

In this excerpt, the first deictic center “we” is formed by Obama and Medvedev. The closeness of the presidents on the spatial-modal axis is emphasized by “together”. In “together, we stopped that drift, and proved the benefits of cooperation”, drift is articulated with the absence of cooperation. The existential assumption is, therefore, that there was a drift in U.S.–Russian relations (triggered by “that”), while the propositional assumption is that cooperation is possible. Although the value assumption in “benefits” and “cooperation” is that both are desirable, they needed to be proven. “Prove” triggers the propositional assumption that it took Medvedev and Obama effort to make the U.S. and Russia cooperate. Hence, the implicit assumption is that, earlier, the reasons for the drift outweighed the benefits of cooperation, which, in turn, implies that Russia and the U.S. mutually constructed each other as the Other. Thus, by proving the benefits of cooperation, Medvedev and Obama made an effort at mutual rearticulation of the U.S. and Russia from the Other to a partner, suppressing previous articulation. “Drift” implicitly constructs the U.S. and Russia as moving away from each other along the spatial-modal axis; however, in “we've stopped that drift”, the propositional assumption is that the drift can be stopped, and this, in turn, implicitly constructs the U.S. and Russia as closer to each other on the spatial-modal axis. Thus, Russia and the U.S. are implicitly constructed as simultaneously moving apart from each other as well as toward each other along the spatial-modal axis.

In “today is an important milestone for nuclear security and nonproliferation, and for U.S.–Russia relations”, Obama constructs nuclear security and nonproliferation as well as U.S.–Russian relations as a path on which signing of the New START is an important milestone. The propositional assumption is that U.S.–Russian relations do not boil down to cooperation on nuclear security and

nonproliferation. “Today” constructs the signing of the New START as an important turning point on the temporal axis, which is going to define future relations and policies. In “[i]t fulfills our common objective to negotiate a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty”, the U.S. and Russia are at the deictic center, and “our common objective” places them close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. “Important milestone” is articulated with “fulfilled common objective” through the New START. The propositional assumption is that fulfilled common objectives (like the New START) become important milestones not only in U.S.–Russian relations, but also generally.

Obama articulates the New START with “significant reductions in the nuclear weapons that we [the U.S. and Russia] will deploy”, “cuts [in] our [the U.S. and Russia’s] delivery vehicles by roughly half”, “a comprehensive verification regime, which allows us [the U.S. and Russia] to further build trust”, “the flexibility to protect our [the U.S. and Russia’s] security, as well as America’s unwavering commitment to the security of our [the U.S.’s] European allies”. Since the New START was previously articulated with an important milestone, the underlying value assumption is that all of the elements of the chain of equivalence constructed around the New START are desirable. Since Russia and the U.S. are constructed at the deictic center (except in “the security of our European allies”, where only the U.S. forms the deictic center), Obama speaks on behalf of the deictic center, mutes Russia’s voice and successfully constructs the common ground. However, in “I look forward to working with the United States Senate to achieve ratification”, Obama constructs difference between himself and the U.S. Senate. Additionally, “to achieve” triggers the propositional assumption that Obama and the U.S. Senate may have diverging opinions, so that ratification needs to be achieved despite the fact that the treaty is constructed as important. Therefore, Obama cannot mute the implicit voices of the opposing camp in this utterance.

Although, in the framework of the New START, nuclear weapons will be reduced significantly, trust between the U.S. and Russia is still articulated with “a comprehensive verification regime”. There is uncertainty within the deictic center formed by the U.S. and Russia, implied by the existence of “a comprehensive verification regime /.../ to further build trust”. The propositional assumption is that trust is built (triggered by “further”), but the level of further trust will always depend on the quality of verification (since “trust” is fixed with “verification” under the New START). This way, the U.S. and Russia are simultaneously close and distant from each other along the spatial-modal axis. Articulating Russia with “trust but verify” places Russia on the margins of the U.S.’s Self (as Russia is neither completely trusted nor completely distrusted by the U.S.).

The issue of the absence of full trust within the newly constructed Self uniting the U.S. and Russia is evident as Obama emphasizes that the New START “enables both sides the flexibility to protect our security”. “Both sides” triggers the propositional assumption that “our security” is two separate, perhaps even unrelated, matters, so that a difference is constructed between the

U.S.'s and Russia's security. "Enables" triggers the value assumption that "flexibility" in protecting "our security" is desirable. This, in turn, implies that, without flexibility, security interests of the U.S. and Russia contradict each other, which implicitly distances the two countries along the spatial-modal axis and constructs them as the Other in relation to one another. However, the presence of flexibility in the framework of the New START constructs Russia and the U.S. closer to each other on the spatial-modal axis. Still, since it is implicitly assumed that the U.S. and Russia ultimately have diverging security interests, Russia is a constitutive outside for the U.S.: it is, on the one hand, important for the U.S.'s security within the framework of the New START, but, on the other hand, the U.S. still needs to protect its security without Russia's participation.

In this excerpt, Obama is trying to articulate the New START with the U.S.'s commitment to the security of its European allies. The propositional assumption is that the New START enables the U.S. to ensure the protection of its European allies. On the one hand, Obama excludes Russia from European security ("America's commitment"; the U.S. being alone at the deictic center in "our European allies"), implying that the security interests of Russia and the U.S.'s European allies diverge; on the other hand, however, by articulating the New START with building trust in U.S.–Russian relations, Obama implicitly articulates the New START with building trust in European–Russian relations. Still, the voice of European states for which Russia is the constitutive Other is implicitly heard in this utterance and undermines Obama's articulation: although Obama claims that the New START is important, the U.S.'s commitment to the "security of our European allies" has much more deontic capacity, being constructed as "unwavering".

The fourth excerpt is from Obama's interview with the Russian media. Sergey Brilev of the channel Rossiya asks the president about the chances of the ratification of the New START by the U.S. Senate. As can be expected, Obama's answer did not contain articulations of Russia with danger or reveal any problems with ratification:

Well, I'd like to see it happen before the election. Obviously it's technical and I think it's appropriate for the Senate to examine it, but we're going to be putting forward the text of the treaty, the annexes, all the necessary materials before the Senate in short order. And our hope is, is that they will be able to review it quickly and recognize that this is an important step in the efforts of both the United States and Russia to meet our obligations under the Nonproliferation Treaty to lower our stockpiles, at the same time as we work together to hold other countries accountable on obligations regarding the Nonproliferation Treaty. (Obama 2010c)

In "well, I'd like to see it happen before the election", the deontic commitment is quite average. "I'd like to see it happen" triggers the value assumption that the ratification of the New START is desirable and the propositional assumption that it will happen either before or after the election. In "it's appropriate for the

Senate to examine it”, the propositional assumption is that Obama respects the formal procedure. Hence, Obama is constructing no urgency on the temporal axis to stress the importance of timing. However, in “but”, Obama creates an opposition. In “we’re going to be putting forward /.../ in short order” and in “they will be able to review it quickly”, the implicit assumption is that ratification of the New START before the election is urgent. “Our hope is /.../” triggers the value assumption that quick review of the New START by the U.S. Senate is strongly desirable.

On the one hand, Obama constructs the potential ratification of the New START as unproblematic: “our hope is, is that they will review it quickly” triggers the propositional assumption that the treaty can be reviewed quickly as long as its text, annexes and all other necessary materials are introduced to the Senate. Thus, the fact that the Senate still cannot vote for the treaty is constructed as a technical matter (in “obviously it’s technical”, the level epistemic modality is very high). On the other hand, however, “they will be able to recognize” triggers the propositional assumption that some members of the Senate do not yet acknowledge that the New START is important.

In this utterance, the New START is articulated with the nodal point of the Nonproliferation Treaty, which is constructed as a road, on which the New START is “an important step” (“an” triggers the propositional assumption that this is one step out of many).

Here, Obama reiterates his security-related hegemonic move and articulates the New START with the Nonproliferation Treaty through Russia’s and the U.S.’s obligations under this treaty. Hence, influencing other countries by the U.S. and Russia is fixed with reducing their own stockpiles (the New START being “an important step” therein). Articulations of the New START do not include a comprehensive verification regime or the U.S.’s commitment to the security of its European allies. The U.S. and Russia are constructed as equal leaders on nonproliferation (triggered by “efforts of both the U.S. and Russia”). In “to meet our obligations”, “to lower our stockpiles”, “as we work together”, the U.S. and Russia are constructed at the deictic center: they are very close to each other on the spatial and deontic axes and are equivalent and equal to each other. Hence, here, the newly constructed Self uniting the U.S. and Russia is not experiencing any dislocations.

In Obama’s security-related hegemonic move, the Nonproliferation Treaty (or nonproliferation in general) is a nodal point of a temporary fixation of meaning with responsibility. Other elements of discourse gain meaning from their relation to the Nonproliferation Treaty: the U.S. and Russia are articulated in the chain of equivalence made of the countries which have obligations under the treaty. Hence, in this utterance, the U.S. Senate (as a part of the U.S.) is interpellated into voting for the New START in order to fulfill the U.S.’s obligations under the Nonproliferation Treaty. Obama “hopes” that the Senate will “recognize” that the New START is an important step in the nonproliferation agenda, the propositional assumption being that this is what the New START actually is (triggered by “recognize”). As a result, the approval of the

New START by the U.S. Senate is constructed as merely a technical procedure with an inevitably positive outcome. “Obviously” conveys the highest degree of certainty, implying structural closure: through this enforced common ground, all other possible articulations of the New START by the U.S. Senate (pertaining to ideological and partisan tensions, security issues, etc.) are implicitly suppressed.

The fifth excerpt is from the president’s press conference in Poland. Obama is answering a question whether Republicans gave him any “assurances” that they would consider the New START during the lame-duck session of Congress. Considering the context of speaking, Obama is stressing the importance of Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) in the U.S. decision-making, and assures that, specifically with their support, the New START will be ratified as quickly as possible:

With respect to START, I feel confident that, when you’ve got previous secretaries of state, defense, basically the entire national security apparatus of previous Democratic and Republican administrations, our closest allies who are most impacted by relations with Russia, and as President Komorowski indicated, have a thousand years of uneasy relations with Russia, saying that the New START treaty is important, that we are going to be able to get it through the Senate (Obama 2010d).

“I feel confident” indicates a rather high level of epistemic modality. Confidence is articulated with the confirmation of the importance of the New START Treaty by the majority of defense officials from previous Democratic and Republican administrations and closest allies (here meaning the CEECs) of the U.S. Thus, these people and countries are articulated in the chain of equivalence around the New START, fixing the latter with security (the implicit assumption being that secretaries of state and defense, and the national security apparatus of the U.S. are competent in the issues of security. Since the U.S.’s relations with Russia were previously strained, the officials Obama is referring to dealt with Russia when in office and played their role in ensuring the U.S.’s security).

In “previous Democratic and Republican administrations”, Obama constructs bipartisanship with respect to the New START, to achieve bipartisanship in the present Senate. Since the ratification of the New START is articulated with support of the U.S.’s Eastern European allies, the latter are constructed as “our closest allies”, who are, however, closest to, but not part of, the deictic center in “our” (the U.S.). Since the U.S.’s closest allies have been dealing with Russia for a thousand years and are “most impacted by relations with Russia” (constructed as “uneasy”), Russia is constructed on the other extreme of the spatial axis from the CEECs countries and, thus, from the deictic center (the U.S.), since the CEECs are closest to the deictic center. Russia is, therefore, constructed as danger and the major driving force for the ratification of the New START. The implication is that the New START helps diminish Russian threat.

To strengthen his point, Obama makes his utterance polyphonic, including numerous voices, equivocally “saying that the New START treaty is important”.

On the one hand, this is the voice of bipartisanship constructed by Obama; on the other hand, the voice of the Eastern European allies, constructed as “closest” to the U.S. Komorowski’s voice is made audible through Obama’s indirect quotation (what Komorowski “indicated”). The propositional assumption is that, for Senators, the voice of CEECs is important in their decision-making, as is the voice of the officials of previous U.S. administrations. This assumption adds to Obama confidence about his ability to push the New START through the Senate (“I feel confident that /.../ we are going to be able to get it through the Senate”). However, “get it through” triggers the propositional assumption that this activity will require effort.

The “uneasy relations” of the CEECs with Russia imply that they articulate Russia with threat. The temporal aspect of these relations (“a thousand years”) adds weight to Komorowski’s voice. At the same time, on the temporal axis, the New START is constructed as a turning point that can change the situation that has lasted for a thousand years. Since the CEECs are spatially and modally the closest to the deictic center, the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right, the implication is that the reason of “uneasy relations” lies in Russia, not in the CEECs. For Obama, the latter are “most impacted by relations with Russia”, where “most” triggers the propositional assumption that other countries are also to various degrees impacted by Russia. Still, the propositional assumption is that the direct impact (either positive or negative) is first felt by the CEE allies and only then by the deictic center. Hence, Obama places the U.S.’s closest allies next to the source of danger on the spatial axis, implying that their security is an urgent matter. As a result, in this excerpt, Russia is constructed as a threat to the CEECs and, implicitly, to the U.S. due to the U.S.’s closeness to its CEE allies on the spatial and modal axes. Furthermore, the support of the New START by previous members of the U.S.’s administrations, some of whom were in office when Russia was the U.S.’s constitutive Other, implicitly constructs Russia as a threat to the U.S.’s security. Thus, the New START is implicitly fixed with tackling Russian threat and protecting security of many countries, including the U.S.

The sixth excerpt comes from Obama’s weekly address on 20 November 2010. Pushing the Senate to vote on the New START in December 2010, Obama stressed that ratifying the treaty was crucial to the U.S. national security: to keep nuclear inspectors in Russia, an international coalition on Iran, transit routes through Russia to Afghanistan, to strengthen the U.S.’s leadership and bipartisanship on the issue of nuclear security. Obama emphasized that, after 18 hearings, it was time for the Senate to act:

Without ratification this year, the United States will have no inspectors on the ground, and no ability to verify Russian nuclear activities. So those who would block this treaty are breaking President Reagan’s rule – they want to trust, but not verify.

Without ratification, we put at risk the coalition that we have built to put pressure on Iran, and the transit route through Russia that we use to equip our troops in Afghanistan. And without ratification, we risk undoing decades of American leadership on nuclear security, and decades of bipartisanship on this issue. Our security and our position in the world are at stake. (Obama 2010e)

In this excerpt, to strengthen his claim, Obama articulates the New START with “President Reagan’s rule” and, implicitly, with his authority: Reagan was the Republican president of the U.S. who laid the framework for arms reduction treaties with the Soviet Union. Therefore, the implication here is that “breaking President Reagan’s rule” is a wrong for a Republican senator and that failing to ratify the New START would result in neglecting Reagan’s authority. Thus, Obama implicitly constructs the New START as a bipartisan matter.

In “the United States will have no inspectors on the ground”, the propositional assumption is that, at the moment of speaking, the U.S. had them. Having inspectors on the ground in Russia is articulated with the ability to verify Russian nuclear activities and “no ability” triggers the value assumption that the verification is strongly desirable and the propositional assumption that “Russia’s nuclear activities” might be dangerous. Hence, Russia is implicitly constructed as a danger and is distanced from the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis. The implicit assumption is that trusting Russia without verification is not acceptable. “Want” triggers the value assumption that those opposing the treaty want to trust Russia (without verification). Hence, when Obama says “they want to trust, but not verify”, his decision is to interpellate the Republican senators who oppose the treaty (and who apparently consider Russia as a threat to the U.S. security) into “trusting” Russia unconditionally, or acting in an unacceptable manner (by endangering the U.S. security). In contrast, the New START is fixed with both trust and verification; “the ability to verify” implies that verification removes danger, and, as a result, Russia is implicitly constructed closer the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis. Hence, by fixing the New START with the trust-and-verify approach, Obama can effectively counter his opponents and at the same time keep U.S.–Russian relations intact.

The U.S. (“we” here means all people of the U.S. regardless of party affiliation) is at the deictic center in “we put at risk the coalition that we have built /.../”, “the transit route through Russia that we use to equip our troops”, “we risk undoing decades of American leadership /.../”, “our security and our position in the world are at stake”. “We put at risk”, “we risk”, and “are at stake” triggers the propositional assumption that the coalition on Iran, transit route to Afghanistan through Russia, American leadership on nuclear security and bipartisanship on the issue as well as the U.S.’s security and its position in the world are vitally important. All of these factors are articulated in the chain of equivalence around the New START, hence fixing it with vital importance for the U.S. While emphasizing the risk, Obama creates urgency by implying danger to the deictic center on the spatial axis as well as on the temporal axis. This is also achieved through threefold anaphoric repetition of “without

ratification”. Therefore, on the temporal axis, “this year” is constructed as critical for ratification. The twofold repetition of “decades of /.../” assumes that what is at stake is the continuity and unity in the U.S. politics.

As a result, this excerpt contains two kinds of argumentation relying on two discourses. The first contains Ronald Reagan’s post–Cold War articulation of Russia as potential danger that needs to be controlled. The second indicates Russia’s essential role in Obama’s nonproliferation discourse. In the second part of the excerpt, Russia is constructed as the U.S.’s essential partner. However, without the verification, the U.S.’s relations with Russia can be ruined (triggered by “risking” cooperation on Iran and Afghanistan). The propositional assumption is that the U.S. cannot cooperate with Russia without the New START. When the latter is ratified, Russia is no longer constructed as dangerous, but as necessary to the U.S.’s security and leadership. Therefore, without ratification of the New START by the U.S. Senate, Obama’s whole security-related hegemonic move is at risk.

5.3.1. Discussion

The general trend in the excerpts of the context devoted to the ratification of the New START Treaty was to construct a difference between the “verified” and “unverified” Russia and to articulate verified Russia with the New START and security, and unverified Russia with threat and danger. Obama argued that the assumed Russian threat experienced by CEE allies could be eliminated by ratifying the New START. By articulating the U.S.’s European allies in the chain of equivalence around the New START and in opposition to “unverified Russia”, Obama articulated the New START with safety and security. Therefore, “verified” Russia under the New START could be trusted, but without ratification (and, therefore, verification), Russia was to be considered in the terms of Cold War, and no cooperation with Russia, as Other, was possible. As a result, through the ratification of the New START, Russia was moved from the periphery toward the deictic center (constituted by the U.S.) along the spatial axis. However, after the ratification of the New START, Russia was to continue to be subjected to the “trust but verify” rule; therefore, even if constructed within the new Self together with the U.S., this Self was prone to dislocation. Thus, under the New START, being constructed between trust and distrust, inclusion and exclusion, Russia was subjected to the position of the constitutive outside of the U.S. and Obama’s constructed international community.

Constructing a difference between the “right” Russia and the “wrong” Russia, Obama stressed the importance of supporting the former and avoiding the latter as a solution to the problem of Russian threat. Speaking to the Russian media, Obama suppressed all articulations of the potential Russian threat, fixing the New START with the U.S.’s and Russia’s obligations under the Nonproliferation Treaty and interpellating the U.S. Senate into supporting the New START as a

vital step under the Nonproliferation Treaty. For the U.S. audience, Obama articulated bipartisanship on the New START with reference to the previous U.S. defense officials from both parties in order to prompt a bipartisan decision from the present Senate. Since timing was important for the ratification of the New START, Obama tended to construct various kinds of danger on the temporal axis close to the deictic center formed by the U.S.: dangerous unverified Russian nuclear activities, loss of continuity in terms of decades of the U.S. world leadership and bipartisanship in nuclear issues, immediate impact of negative relations with Russia on CEE allies, etc.

All in all, it was pivotal for Obama to have the New START ratified. The failure to ratify the New START would have dislocated Obama's hegemonic move to partially fix the empty signifier of security with the nodal point of nuclear nonproliferation. The New START served as the U.S.'s primary obligation under the Nonproliferation Treaty and, through that, enhanced the U.S. leadership based on responsibility, which provided the U.S. with the moral authority to pressure Iran and North Korea to cease their nuclear programs. Obama's definition of the international community and its rules was based on the fulfilling of the obligations under the Nonproliferation Treaty. Thus, failure to ratify the New START would mean that other key moments of the nonproliferation discourse fixed with the New START within the chain of equivalence around global nuclear nonproliferation would become uncertain, undermining the entire Obama's security-related hegemonic move.

5.4. Context 3: Missile defense and NATO–Russian relations

The potential location of the U.S. missile shield in Poland and the Czech Republic was a major bone of contention in U.S.–Russian relations from 2009–2012, because Russia viewed the plan as a direct threat to its national security. The issue was crucial to the progress of the New START and reset in general because Russia promised to break with its obligations if the missile defense system was to be significantly expanded. As indicated earlier, the New START was crucial to Obama's security-related hegemonic move during his first term in office. Therefore, as missile defense was the major source of potential dislocation of Obama's nonproliferation discourse, he was trying to eliminate dislocation.

Generally, Obama tended to try to avoid the topic of missile defense or at least not bring it up unless pushed to do so either by Medvedev or the Russian media (expecting Obama to say that he intended to abolish the plan), or by the U.S.'s CEE allies (expecting Obama to say that he intended to implement the plan). In Obama's remarks, the issue of missile defense was mostly brought up "finally", constituting the "last but not least" topic of discussion. In Obama's excerpts concerning missile defense, conjunctions "but" and "on the other hand" were prevalent, usually balancing the two contrasting perspectives, as Obama could not stick to merely one perspective in any context of speaking, given that

Russia was necessary for keeping his nonproliferation discourse stable, but was also problematic, being CEE allies' Other.

Obama stressed that he understood that missile defense was “a point of deep concern and sensitivity to the Russian government”, and he assured the Russian side that the issue could be resolved. In 2012, there was even an embarrassing situation during the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, as microphones switched on when Obama was asking Medvedev to wait with the solution on missile defense until Obama's re-election. All in all, discussions of missile defense shield tended to be full of suspicions: even at the beginning of his first term in 2009, Obama needed to stress that what he wrote in his official letter to Russia corresponded to what he intended to claim publicly later on.

Since the issue is very context-sensitive, the analysis below includes Obama's remarks in various contexts of speaking. One was taken from Obama's dispute with NATO Secretary General Rasmussen in the U.S., another from Obama's remarks during his meeting with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown in the UK, the third from the New START Treaty signing ceremony in Prague. Two other excerpts were taken from joint press conference of Obama and Medvedev during Obama's first visit to Moscow, and one from Obama's interview for the Russian media. The excerpts are presented in the chronological order.

The first excerpt comes from Obama's remarks after meeting with Gordon Brown. Obama addresses a journalist's question about the official letter Obama sent to the Russian government on the missile defense shield. During the press conference, Obama was available for two questions, and both concerned Russia: “[W]hy sort of a quid pro quo seemed like the smartest approach?” and “[What] response have you received from Russia?” It is evident from the response to the second question that Russia meets the U.S.'s cooperative initiative gladly and it is ready to collaborate under the so-called “quid pro quo” conditions:

And what I said in the letter was that, obviously, to the extent that we are lessening Iran's commitment to nuclear weapons, then that reduces the pressure for, or the need for a missile defense system.

In no way does that in any—does that diminish my commitment to making sure that Poland, the Czech Republic and other NATO members are fully enjoying the partnership of the Alliance and U.S. support with respect to their security.

So the way it got characterized I think was as some sort of quid pro quo. It was simply a statement of fact that I've made previously, which is, is that the missile defense program, to the extent that it is deployed, is designed to deal with not a Russian threat, but a Iranian threat. (Obama 2009a)

In this utterance, the missile defense system is articulated with Iran's commitment to nuclear weapons: as the latter is reduced, the need for the former is also reduced. The propositional assumption in “we are lessening” is that Iran's commitment to nuclear weapons, something considered undesirable (triggered by “lessening”, marking a value assumption) can be lessened. The value

assumption in “the pressure for” and “the need for” is that missile defense system is desirable. The deontic commitment expressed in these phrases is very high. Therefore, the propositional assumption is that the reason for missile defense is the danger posed by Iran’s nuclear program. “Obviously” expresses the maximum level of epistemic modality and implies structural closure by implicitly suppressing all other articulations of missile defense. At the deictic center in “we are lessening /.../” are the U.S., Russia, and European countries who were part of the effort, all of them being constructed close to each other on the spatial axis. However, since Obama speaks on behalf of the deictic center (having previously placed himself at the deictic center with “I”) and, in doing so, expresses structural closure, Russia is interpellated into consenting with Obama’s articulation, and absolute common ground is achieved.

In a parallel articulation, which is implicitly closely connected with the first, but does not explicitly contain the concept of missile defense, Obama assumes that a threat exists to the security of the U.S.’s allies. Here, concerns of Poland, the Czech Republic, and other NATO members, for whom Russia is the constitutive Other, are heard. The real “pressure for missile defense” originates from here (the existential assumption being that the “pressure” for missile defense exists (triggered by “reduce”). In “my commitment”, Obama is at the deictic center. The propositional assumption in “does that diminish my commitment” is that Obama’s commitment to the security of Poland, Czech Republic and other NATO members can be diminished. However, “in no way” and “making sure” express the maximum level of epistemic modality and imply structural closure. Therefore, Obama is implicitly suppressing the articulation of the reduced need for missile defense with Obama’s and, therefore, the U.S.’s diminished commitment to the security of its allies. The underlying articulation is of the missile defense system with security of NATO CEE allies. Obama is implicitly suppressing this articulation by dissociating its elements: Obama is making the propositional assumption that even as the need for missile defense system is reduced, the security of all NATO members is ensured by Obama’s commitment. The implication is that Obama can employ different means to protect NATO allies from the implied Russian threat.

In “are fully enjoying the partnership of the Alliance and U.S. support with respect to their security”, Obama creates a difference between NATO alliance and the U.S. in ensuring the security of NATO members. On the spatial axis, “their” security implicitly distances the U.S. from NATO members who are constructed as facing a security threat. Thus, the implication is that the U.S. does not experience the implicitly assumed Russian threat. In this excerpt, the existential assumption is that the Russian threat exists (triggered by “not”) along with an Iranian threat. Since the Iranian threat is constructed as lessened by the U.S.–Russian cooperation, the remaining threat is the Russian one. Hence, Russian threat to NATO members (not to the U.S.) is presupposed. In “are fully enjoying /.../”, “fully” implies structural closure and expresses Obama’s strong deontic commitment to the security of the NATO members concerned with the presupposed Russian threat. The propositional assumption triggered by “fully”

is that partnership within NATO can be enjoyed to various extents. The implication is that it is missile defense that allows NATO members to enjoy partnership “fully”, although Obama stresses that their security is guaranteed anyway.

In “I think”, “some sort of”, “simply a statement of fact”, Obama is trying to construct the issue as simple: missile defense is fixed with the Iranian threat, while the Russian threat is dealt with without resorting to missile defense. “Some sort of [quid pro quo]” suggests a very clear advantage for Russia: resolving the Russian threat does not require missile defense; the clear advantage for the U.S. lies in strategic partnership with Russia on Iran, an important aspect in Obama’s nonproliferation discourse. The implication is that the benefits of the strategic partnership with Russia are very important for the U.S. In the phrase of the highest level of epistemic modality “[i]t was simply a statement of fact that I’ve made previously”, Obama is attempting at structural closure, implying that the issue of missile defense is not problematic and that Russia should not be concerned. However, the propositional assumption triggered by “I’ve made previously” is that Obama needs to reiterate this simple statement; therefore, the implication is that it is not self-evident for Russia. On the temporal axis, Obama is trying to construct continuity with what he said earlier. However, the suppressed articulation of missile defense with a threat to Russia’s security haunts Obama’s utterance.

The same is happening as Obama makes the propositional assumption in “to the extent that it is deployed” that missile defense will be deployed anyway and even if Iran’s threat, with which Obama articulates missile defense, is eliminated. The propositional assumption triggered by “designed” is that a concrete design of the missile defense system exists. Thus, Russia’s advantage in the quid pro quo remains uncertain.

The second excerpt is taken from the joint press conference of Obama and Medvedev during Obama’s first visit to Moscow. Obama is answering the question about divisions between the countries on missile defense and an (im)possible compromise, potentially affecting the negotiations on the New START. Obama is as subtle in his wording as possible:

[a]nd so, in that sense, we have not thought that it is appropriate to link discussions of a missile defense system designed to deal with an entirely different threat unrelated to the kinds of robust capabilities that Russia possesses. /.../ I think we can arrive at those kinds of understandings, but it’s going to take some hard work because it requires breaking down longstanding suspicions. (Obama 2009b)

In “we have not thought that it is appropriate /.../”, the deictic center is formed by the U.S. The level of deontic modality is average. “Discussions” trigger the propositional assumption that missile defense is currently being discussed. “Appropriate” implies that this is a neutral issue, on which appropriate as well as inappropriate solutions exist. The propositional assumption is that for someone linking the discussions of missile defense and Russian nuclear arsenal

is appropriate but since the deictic center is the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right, the implication is that this is inappropriate. “Designed to deal with an entirely different threat” implies that a missile defense system was designed proceeding from a particular threat but another design would be necessary to deal with Russia’s capabilities.

Obama articulates the missile defense system with “an entirely different threat”, seeking to suppress the articulation of missile defense with Russia’s “robust capabilities”. In “entirely different” threat, the level of epistemic modality is the highest. In “unrelated to the kinds of robust capabilities that Russia possesses”, “possess” implies that Russia solely possesses these, but they are not constructed as a threat. The propositional assumption triggered by “the kinds of” is that there are different kinds of capabilities, some of which are related to a threat but not those that Russia possesses. So, by assuming that the Russian threat does not exist, Obama effectively disarticulates missile defense from the Russian threat.

In “I think we can arrive”, the deictic center includes the U.S. and Russia, and Obama is speaking on behalf of the deictic center. The level of epistemic modality here is, again, rather average. Obama articulates arriving at “those kinds of understandings” with hard work and breaking of suspicions. The value assumption is that such understandings are desirable. Obama is trying to create common ground with Russia on the basis of the kinds of understandings at which both countries can and should arrive. Still, “can arrive” triggers the propositional assumption that the kinds of understandings Obama is promoting have not yet developed. “Requires” triggers the propositional assumption that longstanding suspicions still exist, which dislocate the newly constructed Self which includes both Russia and the U.S.

Thus, the U.S. and Russia are distanced from each other on the spatial-modal axis due mutual suspicions. The implied distance is made even bigger, as its temporal aspect is emphasized in “longstanding”. It is implied that “longstanding suspicions” are harder to overcome, as longstanding suspicions are articulated with hard work. Thus, Russia’s membership within the deictic center is uneasy, as Russia is extremely distanced from the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis. However, “break down” triggers the propositional assumption that longstanding suspicions can be actually overcome through hard work. Hence, the U.S. and Russia are implicitly constructed closer to each other on the spatial-modal axis, as the obstacle existing between them can be removed (triggered by “I think we can arrive /.../”). On the temporal axis, Obama is constructing a turning point in the future when longstanding suspicions are eliminated and new kinds of understandings begin to be applied.

The third excerpt is from Obama’s long answer to the same question in which he proposes different articulations of missile defense and persuades his audience to accept them:

With respect to this particular configuration that was proposed several years ago, as you know, we're undergoing a thorough review of whether it works or not, what has been proposed. That review should be completed by the end of the summer and I indicated to President Medvedev that as soon as that review is complete, we will provide the Russian government our assessment of how we think we should proceed, and that will be the subject of extensive negotiations.

So, ultimately, I think the more progress we make on some of the issues that I discussed earlier – nonproliferation, being able to track ballistic missiles coming from other sources – to the extent that we are building deeper cooperation on those fronts, I think the more effectively we're going to be able to resolve this issue. I believe that over time we will end up seeing that the U.S.–Russian positions on these issues can be reconciled and that in fact we have a mutual interest in protecting both of our populations from the kinds of dangers that weapons proliferations is posing today. (ibid.)

In “we're undergoing a thorough review”, the deictic center is formed by Obama, his administration and the U.S. “A thorough review” implies that the deictic center is making an effort. “Several years ago” implies that the configuration may be outdated. In “as you know”, Obama is creating a common ground with his audience, the implication being that the audience supports the review. In “was proposed” and “has been proposed”, Obama's use of the passive voice allows him to implicitly distance himself from the plan. Still, on the one hand, “whether it works or not” implies that the configuration can also be working and, hence, may remain the same. On the other hand, however, the implied aim of the review is to improve the configuration, not to abolish it, so that the implicit propositional assumption is that the missile defense configuration will continue to exist. Obama constructs the result of the review as “subject of extensive negotiations” with Russia, which implies that it will not be easy for Russia to accept.

In “I indicated to President Medvedev”, Obama constructs himself at the deictic center, with Medvedev as a passive participant. Medvedev's agreement with Obama is implicitly presupposed. In “we will provide the Russian government our assessment /.../”, the Russian government is constructed as passive. Still, a difference is created between Medvedev–Obama cooperation and cooperation between Russian and the U.S.'s administrations. Obama communicates to Medvedev what the U.S. administration will later communicate to the Russian government. Even though the U.S.'s role in the matter of missile defense is constructed as decisive, Obama is constructing Russia as an important participant in the discussion. He constructs the result of the review as “our assessment” (as opposed to final decision) of “how we should proceed” (as opposed to how we will proceed). In “we should proceed”, the level of deontic modality is not high, while the deictic center probably includes Russia. Russia's role is emphasized in negotiating the final decision, stressing that the U.S. engages in extensive negotiations before taking the final decision. This way, Obama suppresses the articulation of the U.S. with unilateralism.

Obama articulates missile defense with nonproliferation. The more progress is made on nonproliferation and tracking ballistic missiles, the deeper cooperation is on these fronts, the more effectively missile defense issue can be resolved. The propositional assumption is that the effective resolving of the missile defense issue is possible and that the U.S.–Russian positions on these issues can be reconciled. Since global nuclear nonproliferation is Obama’s security-related hegemonic move, he is constructing himself at the deictic center (in “I think”, “I discussed earlier”, “I think”, “I believe”) as the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right. Therefore, it is Obama who can determine the necessary extent of cooperation and the sufficient degree of progress. The propositional assumption is that the progress made so far is not sufficient to resolve the missile defense issue. Thus, although Russian concerns about missile defense are heard, Russia can do nothing to solve the issue. What Russia is expected to do is, rather, to cooperate on nonproliferation issues in order to build deeper cooperation, so that “over time the U.S.–Russian positions on [missile defense] can be reconciled”.

In “the more progress we make”, “we are building deeper cooperation”, “we’re going to be able to resolve”, “we will end up seeing”, “we have a mutual interest”, “protecting both of our populations”, the deictic center contains both the U.S. and Russia, constructed close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. In “we have a mutual interest in protecting both of our populations”, Obama is creating a common ground by suggesting that the U.S.’s and Russia’s populations can be protected in the same way and articulates the U.S. and Russia in the chain of equivalence against “dangers of weapons proliferations”. This way, Obama constructs an unproblematic unity of the U.S. and Russia within the deictic center “we” and within the newly constructed Self which contains the U.S. and Russia.

In “ultimately” and “over time”, the propositional assumption is that time is necessary to resolve the issue. It is already during the period of review that Obama hopes to achieve deeper cooperation with Russia on nonproliferation, so that, over time, the diverging positions of the U.S. and Russia on missile defense would be reconciled. To win more time, Obama refers to the review as thorough and consequent negotiations of the new project with Russia as extensive, implying that both constitute a time-consuming procedure. This way, along the temporal axis, Obama constructs the U.S. and Russia at an intermediate position: the situation valid several years ago might no longer be the case, whereas a possible full reconciliation can be expected over time. Currently, however, the propositional assumption in “we will end up seeing that the U.S.–Russian positions on these issues can be reconciled” is that the U.S. and Russia are not yet seeing that their positions on missile defense can be reconciled, which moves them far apart from each other on the spatial axis, makes their unity at the deictic center uneasy and dislocates the newly constructed Self which unites them.

The fourth excerpt is taken from President Obama’s remarks after meeting with NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen in the U.S. Obama

complimented Rasmussen on being “interested in reforming and renewing the NATO Alliance”, commented on the NATO mission in Afghanistan, and claimed that the new missile defense configuration proposed was “one that ultimately [would] serve the interests of not only the United States, but also NATO Alliance members most effectively”. Obama then commented on how this new configuration would affect the U.S. and NATO cooperation with Russia:

[w]e also agree that it is important for us to reach out to Russia and explore ways in which the missile defense configurations that we envision could potentially lead to further collaboration with Russia on this front; and that we want to improve generally not only U.S.–Russian relations, but also NATO–Russian relations, while making absolutely clear that our commitments to all of our allies in NATO is sacrosanct and that our commitment to Article 5 continues (Obama 2009c).

In “we agree that it is important”, the deictic center consists of Obama and Rasmussen and includes the U.S. and NATO. Here, Obama creates common ground on behalf of the U.S. and NATO and articulates missile defense with collaboration with Russia. “It is important” expresses a high level of deontic commitment on further collaboration with Russia. Here, Russia is close to the deictic center on the spatial-modal axis through “collaboration” (the propositional assumption that collaboration has been taking place is triggered by “further”) – the prospect of “important” collaboration with Russia as well as “improvement” of NATO and U.S. relations with Russia is constructed as desirable, “wanted”, “potential”.

Still, in “missile defense configurations that we envision”, Obama creates common ground between the U.S. and NATO (excluding Russia). This implies that there are no contradictions between the U.S. and NATO on the issue. Thus, missile defense is no longer the U.S.’s unilateral decision, but a unilateral decision of the previous administration. The implication is that the U.S. and NATO decide upon missile defense configurations; only when they achieve common ground, do they “reach out to Russia and explore ways”. Thus, on the spatial as well as modal axes, Obama constructs Russia as distanced from the deictic center since Russia has to be reached out to. “Explore ways” triggers the propositional assumption that there are ways how missile defense can be compatible with collaboration with Russia, but these need to be explored, implying effort. Still, these ways “could potentially lead” to further collaboration with Russia (the level of epistemic modality here is rather low), implying that no ways would certainly lead to such cooperation. Hence, Obama’s articulation of missile defense with collaboration with Russia is challenged.

Obama creates common ground and expresses it on behalf of the U.S. and NATO that “we want to improve generally not only U.S.–Russian relations, but also NATO–Russian relations”. However, Obama articulates these relations in the chain of difference, creating a difference between the U.S. and NATO on their relations with Russia, although on the matter of missile defense and commitment to NATO allies the U.S. and NATO are articulated in the chain of

equivalence. “Generally” implies that U.S.–Russian as well as NATO–Russian relations do not boil down to the matter of missile defense.

However, Obama implicitly constructs commitment to Article 5³² as a limit to progress in the U.S.–Russian as well as NATO–Russian relations. “Absolutely clear”, “our commitments to all of our allies” (“all” is emphasized), “sacrosanct” express maximal degree of deontic commitment. While seeking further collaboration with Russia, Obama needs to “make it absolutely clear” that the U.S.’s and NATO’s “commitment to Article 5 continues”, which implies the existence of a Russian threat to NATO members. Thus, Obama seeks to articulate collaboration with Russia with the continuity of the commitment to Article 5. Still, the fact that Obama needs to stress this emphatically implies that some allies have doubts. Hence, the suppressed articulation of collaboration with Russia with the discontinuity of the commitment to Article 5 strikes back and haunts Obama’s utterance. As a result, in this excerpt, all prospects of the U.S.’s and NATO’s collaboration with Russia are implicitly fixed with the commitment to Article 5: the more realizable collaboration with Russia is, the more “sacrosanct” Article 5 becomes. Consequently, concerns of the NATO allies for whom Russia is a threat will always haunt any potential collaboration of the U.S. and NATO with Russia.

The fifth excerpt is from Obama’s remarks in response to Medvedev’s concerns with respect to missile defense during the New START Treaty signing ceremony on 8 April 2010. Both presidents are, however, optimistic about the prospects of the U.S.–Russian cooperation on missile defense after their productive work on the New START:

I’ve repeatedly said that we will not do anything that endangers or limits my ability as Commander-in-Chief to protect the American people. And we think that missile defense can be an important component of that. But we also want to make clear that the approach that we’ve taken in no way is intended to change the strategic balance between the United States and Russia. And I’m actually confident that, moving forward, as we have these discussions, it will be part of a broader set of discussions about, for example, how we can take tactical nuclear weapons out of theater, the possibilities of us making more significant cuts not only in deployed but also non-deployed missiles. There are a whole range of issues that I think that we can make significant progress on. I’m confident that this is an important first step in that direction. (Obama 2010a)

Obama is stressing that he is Commander-in-Chief (something he did not do often during his term in office), fixing himself firmly with protecting American people. With this, he attempts at structural closure. In “we will not do anything that endangers /.../”, the deictic center includes Obama and his administration. “I’ve repeatedly said” implies the necessity of reiteration, implying that Obama and his administration are doing something that limits Obama’s ability to

³² According to Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, an attack against a NATO member is considered as an attack against all members (NATO 2019).

protect the American people as the Commander-in-Chief. Hence, the articulation of Obama with the protection of the American people is challenged. In “missile defense can be an important component of that”, the level of epistemic modality is very low; however, Obama is still articulating missile defense with the security of the American people. As missile defense is a component in the U.S.’s security, it is constructed as an important one.

Obama seeks to suppress the articulation of missile defense with a possible future change in the strategic balance between the U.S. and Russia (the existential assumption being that this balance exists). In “in no way is intended to change /.../”, the level of epistemic modality is very high and attempt at structural closure is made. However, in “we also want to make clear” (the deictic center here includes Obama and his administration), “want” triggers the propositional assumption that this is not yet clear and the implication is that someone, apparently in Russia, articulates missile defense with possible future change in the strategic balance to Russia’s disadvantage. Thus, this articulation strikes back and challenges Obama’s utterance. In turn, Obama seeks to suppress this articulation by articulating missile defense with further discussions between the U.S. and Russia.

Obama constructs himself at the deictic center in “and I’m actually confident” and expresses a high level of epistemic modality on the progress of the U.S. and Russia on these topics. In “moving forward, as we have these discussions”, Obama constructs himself and his administration at the deictic center together with Russia, bringing them close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. Obama constructs the “direction” along the spatial and modal axes in which the U.S. and Russia should make “steps” and “move forward” to make “significant progress”. Since the New START was a significant first step, Obama feels confident that further progress is possible. The implication is that as a result of moving in the right direction, Russia’s concern about the deployment of missile defense will gradually become redundant.

In this excerpt, moving forward and progress (both trigger the value assumption that this is desirable) in the U.S.–Russian discussions are related to nuclear matters. Regardless of the progress, missile defense will still be part of U.S.–Russian discussions, since its very existence and articulation with the U.S.’s security is not questioned. Obama refers to missile defense as “the approach that we’ve taken”, where the deictic center includes Obama, his administration and the U.S. as a whole, while Russia is excluded from the deictic center and, hence, from the decision-making in this matter. This results in Russia’s suspicions which haunt his utterance and in dislocation of the newly created U.S.–Russian Self.

The sixth excerpt comes from President Obama’s interview with Sergey Brilev of the channel Rossiya in the U.S. on 6 May 2010. Brilev argues that the New START and several other issues within the reset framework led to a better understanding between the U.S. and Russia. He asks Obama how this understanding can be “converted into something of a substance” in the area of

European security. NATO is a solution for its members; so, Brilev asks what solution there could be for “self-sufficient countries like Russia”:

Well, President Medvedev has put forward some ideas about a new security architecture in Europe. We’re examining them. I take them very seriously. But I think that the most important thing at this point is to work with the institutions we have to see if we can rebuild the trust that for some time had been lost.

My sense is, is that all the parties in Europe, all the members of the NATO Alliance, want to have a strong, cooperative relationship with Russia. There are certain core principles that we think have to be observed within that cooperative framework: a respect for territorial integrity of internationally recognized borders; a belief that a country’s core sovereignty includes its ability to choose how it allies itself; a rejection of the notion of spheres of influence, whether it’s U.S. spheres or European spheres or Russian spheres. (Obama 2010b)

In “President Medvedev has put forward some ideas”, Medvedev’s project of a new security architecture in Europe is constructed as “some ideas”. This expresses very low deontic commitment to Medvedev’s project. Yet, in “we’re examining them. I take them very seriously”, Obama stresses his commitment to these ideas in contrast to his other colleagues (the deictic center “we” in this case includes Obama, his administration and the U.S., Europe, and NATO). Obama articulates Medvedev’s new security architecture in Europe with trust between institutions. The deontic commitment in “the most important thing” is high. In “to work with institutions we have to see if we can rebuild the trust /.../”, the deictic center includes the U.S.’s and Russia’s administrations and the U.S. and Russia as a whole. Hence, on the one hand, the U.S. and Russia are close to each other on the spatial-modal axis through potential cooperation; on the other hand, however, the U.S. and Russia are remote from each other due to absence of trust. In “to see if we can rebuild the trust /.../”, the level of epistemic modality is low. However, “rebuild” and “had been lost” triggers the propositional assumption that there used to be trust between institutions. “For some time” stresses the temporal aspect and implies that the period during which trust has been lost is significant and its re-establishment would take time.

In “my sense is”, Obama constructs himself at the deictic center and creates a common ground on behalf of “all the parties in Europe” and “all the members of the NATO Alliance”, thus articulating them in the chain of equivalence around a strong, cooperative relationship with Russia. However, in “want to have a strong, cooperative relationship with Russia”, the propositional assumption is that no such relationship exists now. The cooperative framework with Russia is articulated with “a respect for territorial integrity of internationally recognized borders”, “a belief that a country’s core sovereignty includes its ability to choose how it allies itself”, and “a rejection of the notion of spheres of influence”. The propositional assumption in “there are certain core principles that we think have to be observed” is that they are not always observed. In “core principles” and “have to be observed”, the level of deontic commitment is very high. The

deictic center in “we think” includes Obama, the U.S., all the parties in Europe, all the members of the NATO Alliance and excludes Russia. Obama creates common ground for the deictic center and articulates certain core principles of cooperation between it and Russia, but, notably, they only include foreign policy aspects.

Since the deictic center is the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right, the implication is that the members of the deictic center observe the core principles. Therefore, if these principles are not always observed, this is done by Russia, which is excluded from the deictic center. Thus, implicitly, the absence of a strong, cooperative relationship with Russia is constructed as Russia’s fault. Obama implicitly differentiates between Russia which observes these core principles and thus has a strong cooperative relationship with all parties in Europe and NATO members and Russia which does not.

Failing to observe the constructed core principles implies that Russia does not respect the territorial integrity of countries, imposes its opinion on sovereign countries and has spheres of influence (the existential assumption in “Russian spheres” is that such spheres exist). All of this implicitly concerns Eastern Europe, Russia’s influence in the post-Soviet countries, and Russia’s opposition to NATO enlargement. Thus, Obama implicitly articulates rebuilding of trust and cooperative between Russia on one hand and all partners in Europe and all NATO members on the other hand with NATO enlargement and Russia’s noninterference with the post-Soviet states. Making this implicit articulation on behalf of European and NATO allies, Obama is trying to very mildly explain in what direction Russia should be moving so that Medvedev’s ideas on the new European security architecture could be taken seriously not only by Obama, but also by other parties.

The fact that Medvedev proposes a new security architecture in Europe implies that Russia believes it can participate in European security. “We’re examining them. I take them very seriously” implies that Obama and the U.S. are superior to Medvedev and Russia in these matters, since it is implied that Medvedev has to wait for the approval of his ideas. To soften his claim, Obama introduces equality into his third core principle. The existential assumption is that the notion of “sphere of influence” objectively exists (triggered by “rejection”) for all parties. A difference between the U.S., Europe, and Russia is created through the propositional assumption that the U.S., Europe, and Russia have spheres of influence that do not overlap. It is assumed that all three need to follow the core principle to abolish this notion, not only Russia (as tacitly presupposed with respect of the two other core principles). As a result, Europe and NATO want to cooperate with Russia, but it is the latter who needs to observe the core principles articulated by Obama to make this cooperation possible. Observing core principles implies Russia’s full reconciliation in the major points of tension: “a respect for territorial integrity /.../” implies Russian–Georgian conflict of 2008, “ability to choose how /a sovereign country/ allies itself” implies Russia’s opposition to NATO expansion, assuming that the choice of allying is between NATO or Russia which mutually other each other, and

“rejection of the notion of spheres of influence” implies Russia’s desire to exert control over the post-Soviet states.

5.4.1. Discussion

As the issue of missile defense threatened the progress of U.S.–Russian relations, especially cooperation on the New START and nonproliferation in general, including sanctions against Iran and North Korea, Obama searched for ways to assure Russia about the missile defense shield. In other words, to keep his security-related hegemonic move stable, Obama was seeking decisions to achieve structural closure and eliminate dislocation caused by missile defense. In doing so, Obama’s major challenge was to suppress the articulation of missile defense with a threat to Russia’s security on the one hand and the articulation of the reduced need for missile defense with the U.S.’s weakened commitment to protect its NATO allies on the other hand.

One possibility was to articulate missile defense with cooperation on non-proliferation, uniting Russia and the U.S. against mutual nuclear threats. Another decision was to articulate missile defense with trust built during the elaboration of the New START and further (the more trust, the less fear of missile defense). The “quid pro quo scheme” attempted to fix missile defense with Iranian nuclear threat: holding Iran accountable and stopping its illegal nuclear program would ultimately abolish the need for missile defense. Obama also weighted the possibility of including Russia into the project of missile defense, thus creating a bridge between NATO and Russia (the so-called NATO–Russian reset). That bridge, however, was permanently contested due to the absence of trust between Russian institutions on the one hand and the U.S., EU, and NATO institutions on the other hand. While Russia wanted its involvement to be more encompassing, the most concerned NATO members demanded NATO to control the missile defense shield fully.

The context-sensitive analysis of Obama’s utterances in this context indicated that while Obama sought to construct collaboration with Russia on missile defense as important for the audience of NATO member states (not the Russian audience), it was always necessary for him, at the highest levels of epistemic and deontic modality, to reiterate the commitment to the security of all NATO allies in response to the concerns with Russian threat of some of these allies. When, in turn, speaking to the predominantly Russian audience, Obama needed, at the same highest levels of epistemic and deontic modality, to relate missile defense to threats other than Russian. Generally, in all utterances in this context, Obama could not mute the voices (concerns) of the parties involved, and constructing Russia as a partner was haunted by the implicit assumptions of either Russian threat or Russian suspicions.

All in all, utterances in this context reflected the general trend of Obama’s balancing between the two perspectives. His decisions to eliminate dislocation in both discourses can be described as asking his partners to take a leap of faith.

For the Russian side, Obama sought to fix missile defense with U.S.–Russian cooperation on nonproliferation, articulated with the building of trust and developing of new kinds of understandings. For his NATO allies, Obama tried to articulate their security with his and the U.S.’s commitment, which transcended missile defense and was guaranteed unconditionally. However, decision made in one discourse inevitably produced dislocation in the other discourse. Consequently, any cooperation with Russia was haunted by Obama’s commitment to dealing with the Russian threat to protect security of the U.S.’s NATO allies. This served as a major source of dislocation in Obama’s newly constructed U.S.–Russian Self.

5.5. Context 4: Russia’s accession into the World Trade Organization

To overcome the consequences of financial crisis which Obama faced as he assumed office in 2009, one of Obama’s economic priorities during his first term was to increase the level of the U.S. exports. For instance, in his State of the Union Address on 27 January 2010, Obama set the goal to double the U.S. exports within the next five years. Hence, Obama was interested, among other things, in the Russian markets to reach that goal. Therefore, having achieved progress with Russia in security issues, Obama set out to expand the U.S.’s economic cooperation with Russia, seeking to open Russian markets for American goods. For Obama, the prerequisite for the advancement of the U.S.–Russian commercial cooperation was Russia’s accession into the World Trade Organization (WTO) to guarantee that the Russian government is held accountable for its trading behavior. After Russia became a WTO member, Obama initiated the repealing of the Jackson–Vanik amendment to the Trade Act of 1974 with respect to Russia. The gist of the amendment, signed into law in 1975, was that several countries, because of their human rights violations, were not considered by the U.S. as “most favored nations”, resulting in trade restrictions³³.

For Medvedev, Russia’s WTO accession was a priority. Encouraged by Medvedev’s stance on Russia’s WTO ascension, Obama sought to solve the issue as rapidly as the New START. Most excerpts in this context date from 2010, when the talks began, and 2011, when the goal was achieved. Three excerpts analyzed below are from Obama’s bilateral talks with Medvedev (remarks upon Medvedev’s visit to the U.S., remarks after a bilateral meeting with Medvedev in Deauville, and remarks after a bilateral meeting with Medvedev in Seoul), and three from Obama’s addresses to the domestic audience (the president’s remarks with his Export Council, statement on the progress of

³³ In December 2012, Jackson–Vanik was replaced by the Magnitsky Act, the aim of which is to sanction Russian officials who were behind the death of the Russian tax accountant Sergei Magnitsky in a Moscow prison in 2009.

Russia's WTO accession talks, and remarks at the Business Roundtable). The excerpts are dealt with in the chronological order.

The first excerpt comes from Obama's remarks during his joint press conference with Medvedev in the U.S. Obama stresses that, during Medvedev's visit, the expansion of trade and commerce between the U.S. and Russia was one of the key issues discussed:

To deepen Russia's integration into the global economy, I reaffirmed our strong commitment to Russia's ascension to the World Trade Organization. Today we've reached an agreement that will allow the United States to begin exporting our poultry products to Russia once again. And I want to thank President Medvedev and his team for resolving this issue, which is of such importance to American business, and which sends an important signal about Russia's seriousness about achieving membership in the WTO. (Obama 2010a)

"To deepen" triggers the propositional assumption that Russia is to some degree integrated into the global economy, but the value assumption is that Russia's deeper integration is desirable. Russia's deeper integration into the global economy is articulated with WTO membership and global economy is implicitly articulated with the WTO. In "I reaffirmed our strong commitment to Russia's ascension to the World Trade Organization", Obama is at the deictic center, speaking on behalf of his administration and inclusively of the U.S. as a whole (constructed in "our"). Being the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right, the deictic center (in this case Obama and the U.S.) knows what is good for Russia (triggered by "to deepen Russia's integration /.../", where Obama and the U.S. are constructed as the active party and Russia as the passive one). Obama is creating common ground, presupposing Russia's desire to be more deeply integrated into the global economy.

In "our strong commitment", the level of deontic modality is high. "Reaffirm" triggers the propositional assumption that the U.S.'s commitment to Russia's WTO accession had been affirmed, but not acted upon and thus needs to be reiterated. Hence, there are obstacles to Russia's WTO accession, and the U.S.'s commitment needs to be reaffirmed in order to overcome them. The propositional assumption in "I reaffirmed our strong commitment" is that the commitment of Obama, his administration, and the U.S. commitment to Russia's WTO accession was strong before. So, on the temporal axis, Obama constructs continuity of his administration's support for Russia's WTO accession. This implicitly constructs the U.S. and Russia close on the spatial axis. The propositional assumption in "sends an important signal about Russia's seriousness" is that Russia is serious about "achieving membership in the WTO", where "achieving" implies making efforts. Resolving of the issue of the U.S. poultry exports to Russia is constructed as such an effort.

In "today we've reached an agreement", the deictic center includes Obama and Medvedev, their administrations, and the U.S. and Russia as a whole. Here, the U.S. and Russia are constructed as being in the same place spatially and modally (by "reaching" the mutual territory, being able to have an "agreement")

as well as temporally (“today”, after the period of interruption). Still, “reach” implies distance on the spatial-modal axis that had to be overcome. In “that will allow the United States to begin exporting our poultry products to Russia once again”, the deictic center is formed by the U.S. alone. “Once again” triggers the propositional assumption that the U.S. used to export its poultry products to Russia. The implication here is that an obstacle appeared, and this implicitly distances the U.S. from Russia on the spatial-modal axis. Medvedev and his team are, in turn, constructed as having eliminated the obstacle (“resolving this issue”).

Export of poultry to Russia is constructed as important to American business and articulated with the seriousness of Russia’s intentions to join the WTO. Thus, the WTO is implicitly articulated with the U.S.’s business. Russia, in contrast, needs to make efforts to enter the WTO (triggered by “achieving”). The latter triggers the propositional assumption that Russia wants to become a WTO member and is ready to make efforts. This implies distance on the spatial axis between Russia on the one hand and the WTO and the U.S. on the other hand. The value assumption in “achieving membership in the WTO” is that WTO membership is desirable. Russia is constructed as the party that needs to be active to reach its goal, and Medvedev as being appropriately active, whereas the WTO is constructed merely as a passive goal. The U.S., articulated in the chain of equivalence with the WTO, is active in support of Medvedev’s efforts.

“Seriousness” and “important signal” imply that Russia’s earlier intentions were not considered serious enough. In this excerpt, on the one hand, Russia wants to enter the WTO and is expected to do so (triggered by “our strong commitment”), but, on the other, its intentions were doubted. Hence, in this excerpt, Russia is constructed as a suspended fence sitter of the WTO, being neither inside nor completely outside the organization.

The second excerpt comes from the president’s remarks at the meeting with his Export Council. Emphasizing that new markets are vital for the U.S. companies, Obama reassured members of the council that those new markets will operate on the basis of fair play:

I also believe that strong economic partnerships can create prosperity at home and advance it around the world. And that’s why we focused on deepening our economic cooperation with Russia on a range of fronts – from aerospace to agriculture, including restarting American poultry exports earlier this year, which was an important victory for many American farmers. I believe that Russia belongs in the WTO and that we should support all efforts to make that happen. I think President Medvedev is doing important work trying to reform and move Russia forward on a whole host of issues, and I told him that the United States would be a partner with him in that effort. Welcoming Russia to the WTO would be good for them; it would also be good for us and good for the global economy. (Obama 2010b)

In “I also believe”, Obama is at the deictic center, and the level of epistemic modality is rather high. Obama defines “strong economic partnerships” as not

only “creating prosperity at home”, but also as “advancing it around the world”. At home, the goal has been achieved by “an important victory for many American farmers” as a result of resuming the U.S. poultry exports to Russia. Advancing prosperity around the world, however, is implicitly articulated with Russia’s WTO membership (“Russia belongs in the WTO”). Therefore, without Russia’s WTO membership, the U.S.–Russian economic partnership is not strong enough to advance prosperity at home or around the world.

Strong economic partnerships are articulated with deepening the U.S.’s economic cooperation with Russia. In “that’s why we focused on deepening our economic cooperation with Russia”, the deictic center includes Obama, his administration, and the U.S. as a whole. “That’s why” suggests that what the deictic center does is a result of Obama’s belief. It presupposes common ground and consent with Obama’s belief by other members of the deictic center. Hence, it is Obama’s beliefs, expressed with high epistemic modality, that drive the U.S.’s deepening of cooperation with Russia.

To achieve strong economic partnership with Russia, U.S.–Russian economic cooperation should be deepened. “Deepen” triggers the propositional assumption that the U.S. and Russia cooperate to some degree, but not deeply enough. “From aerospace to agriculture” implies that the range of cooperation is very wide. Restarting American poultry exports is articulated in the chain of equivalence with these fronts, constructed around deepening of the U.S.–Russian economic cooperation. In its being defined as “an important victory for many American farmers”, “important victory” triggers the value assumption that poultry exports are desirable and the propositional assumption that the U.S.’s cooperation with Russia results in prosperity at home. Here, Obama creates common ground with farmers.

In “I believe that Russia belongs in the WTO and that we should support all efforts to make that happen”, again, Obama’s (“I”) belief, expressed at the high level of epistemic modality, indicates what the deictic center “we” should do (“should” expresses a rather high level of deontic commitment). Obama articulates Russia with the WTO. However, “to make that happen” triggers the propositional assumption that Russia is not in the WTO yet, but such membership is possible, and the U.S. can affect this. “We should support all efforts” triggers the propositional assumption that efforts are made, and not by the U.S. and that, earlier, the U.S. has not supported them.

At the deictic center in “I think” and “I told” is Obama, who makes commitments on behalf of the U.S. He articulates Medvedev with progressive Russia and then with the U.S. Thus, through Medvedev, the U.S. is articulated with progressive Russia. “Doing important work” triggers the value assumption that reforming Russia is desirable. “Move forward” triggers the propositional assumption that Russia is lagging behind. Here, Obama implicitly constructs two Russias: the one that Obama envisions belonging in the WTO and the actual Russia, which needs to make “all efforts” in that direction. That is why Obama supports Medvedev’s efforts. Obama is optimistic about Medvedev’s Russia and believes that strong economic partnership with Russia is possible. In

“the United States would be a partner with him in that effort” triggers the propositional assumption that reforming Russia requires effort and can be facilitated by the partnership with the U.S. The implication is that the U.S. is more progressive than Russia and can help Russia achieve what the U.S. already has. Thus, the U.S. here is implicitly constructed as an example of progress for others to follow.

In “welcoming Russia to the WTO would be good for them; it would also be good for us and good for the global economy”, Russia is again articulated with the WTO. The U.S. and global economy are articulated in the chain of equivalence around Russia’s WTO membership. “Welcoming” and the anaphoric repetition of “good” three times trigger the value assumption that Russia’s WTO membership is strongly desirable. The implication is that Obama knows what is good for Russia, the U.S., and the global economy. However, at the same time Russia is distanced from the U.S. (“us”) on the spatial axis as “them”. Obama articulates Russia (as a potential WTO member), the U.S. (a WTO member), and the global economy in the chain of equivalence around a common interest, stressed by the threefold repetition of “good”. The hegemonic common ground is created that all players in the global economy have a common path to prosperity, and it is fixed with the WTO and its rules.

The third excerpt is from President Obama’s remarks after his bilateral meeting with President Medvedev in Deauville, France, in May 2011. Obama reiterates the positive outcomes of his “outstanding” personal relationship with Medvedev and of the U.S.–Russian reset, which benefited from this relationship:

But our cooperation has extended beyond the security areas, and much of our discussion today revolved around economics. We’re pleased that we’ve established working groups around issues of rule of law and innovation, both of which are key priorities of President Medvedev as he continues to modernize the Russian economy. And our teams have been working intensively around the issue of Russian accession to the WTO.

We think that Russian accession to the WTO will be good for the Russian economy, will be good for the U.S. economy, it will be good for the world economy. And we are confident that we can get this done. And it will be a key building block in expanding trade and commerce that create jobs and benefit both countries. (Obama 2011a)

In “our cooperation”, the deictic center includes Obama, Medvedev, the U.S., and Russia. The U.S. and Russia are constructed very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. “Has extended beyond” triggers the propositional assumption that security areas are the bottom line of the U.S.–Russian cooperation. The implication is that cooperation on security has been successful enough for Obama and Medvedev to proceed with the economic one. In “our discussion”, the deictic center is formed by Obama and Medvedev. “Today” implicitly creates difference between this and previous days (when discussions revolved

around security). The implication is that economics will be discussed with security in the future as well.

In “we’re pleased that we’ve established /.../” and “our teams”, the deictic center is formed by Obama and Medvedev. Obama is speaking on behalf of the deictic center, creating common ground with Medvedev. Obama and Medvedev are constructed very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. “We’re pleased” triggers the value assumption that the establishment of working groups on the issues of rule of law and innovation is desirable. Through the working groups, Obama and Medvedev’s discussion of economics is articulated with rule of law and innovation that are, in turn, articulated with Medvedev (interpellated into defining them as his key priorities) and modernization of the Russian economy.

Since Medvedev’s key priorities in achieving the modernization of the Russian economy are rule of law and innovation, the implication is that rule of law is insufficient in the Russian economy that (mostly) relies on old approaches. “Continues” triggers the propositional assumption that Russia’s economy has not yet been modernized. Another propositional assumption is that Medvedev has made efforts, some of them successful, in that direction. Since no problems with the issues of rule of law or innovation are mentioned with respect to the U.S., the implication is that the working groups are intended to help Russia, proceeding from Medvedev’s key priorities. However, since Obama and Medvedev are both at the deictic center, this means that Obama shares Medvedev’s key priorities. It is implied that Medvedev cannot achieve his key priorities independently. Therefore, Russia is interpellated into needing and accepting support and instructions of the U.S. in modernizing its economy. This implicitly constructs the U.S. as superior economic power.

Obama and Medvedev’s discussion of economy is articulated with Russian accession to the WTO. “Have been working intensively” triggers the propositional assumption that Russia’s WTO accession required and still requires intensive work. Russia is, again, implicitly constructed as in need of help and support. Obama creates a difference between establishment of working groups on the rule of law and innovation (intended to improve Russian economy) and the work of the U.S. and Russian teams intended to bring Russia into the WTO. Therefore, intensive work on Russia’s WTO accession also includes other areas than rule of law and innovation. “Working intensively” implies urgency, repeated in the threefold “will be good”.

In “we think that Russian accession to the WTO /.../”, the deictic center contains both Obama and Medvedev, but Obama is speaking on behalf of the deictic center. No contradiction is implied between Obama and Medvedev. The two are constructed very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. The threefold repetition of “good” strengthens Obama’s (and by default Medvedev’s) articulation of Russia with the WTO. Russia, the U.S., and global economy are constructed in the chain of equivalence around Russia’s WTO membership. The implication is that a country’s WTO membership is good for the economy of this country and others. Therefore, WTO is implicitly articulated with benefit

for all economies. The articulation of Russia with the WTO is strengthened by the fact that it is produced by the deictic center, or the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right. In “we are confident that we can get this done”, with Obama and Medvedev unproblematically at the deictic center, the level of epistemic modality is very high. The propositional assumption here is that Russia’s accession to the WTO is possible and doable for the U.S. and Russia. The implication here is that the intensive work being done by the U.S. and Russia is considered successful by Medvedev and Obama.

Russia’s WTO membership is constructed as “a key building block in expanding trade and commerce that create jobs and benefit both countries”. The value assumption is that such a building block is desirable and the propositional assumption is that it does not exist now. “A” triggers the propositional assumption that there can be other key buildings blocks in the expansion of the U.S.–Russian trade and commerce and that expansion is lacking now. This implicitly distances Russia from the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis. However, since Russia’s WTO membership is constructed as the basis for U.S.–Russian economic relations and Obama’s (and by default Medvedev’s) confidence in achieving this membership is expressed, this brings the U.S. and Russia closer to each other on the spatial-modal axis. “Benefit both countries” implies that Russia’s WTO membership is desired to benefit primarily the economies of Russia and the U.S. and only afterwards the world economy.

The fourth excerpt comes from the statement of President Obama on the progress of Russia’s WTO accession talks. He congratulates President Medvedev and the Russian government on concluding the negotiations on the terms and conditions of accession:

After nearly two decades of negotiations, Russia will now be able to join to the WTO. This is a significant day for U.S.–Russia relations, and for our commitment to a growing, rules-based global economy.

Since the beginning of my Administration, and with increased intensity after President Medvedev and I met in Washington in June 2010, I have supported Russia’s WTO accession. Russia’s membership in the WTO will lower tariffs, improve international access to Russia’s services markets, hold the Russian government accountable to a system of rules governing trade behavior, and provide the means to enforce those rules. /.../

Upon Russia’s accession, the United States will be able to use WTO mechanisms, including dispute settlement, to challenge Russia’s actions that are inconsistent with WTO rules.

All of these benefits also apply to Russia’s other WTO trading partners, including Georgia, which concluded a far-reaching agreement with Russia yesterday for monitoring trade between their two countries. (Obama 2011b)

In “our commitment to a growing, rules-based global economy”, the deictic center includes the U.S. and Russia. Obama speaks on behalf of the deictic

center, creating common ground with Russia. The U.S. and Russia are articulated in the chain of equivalence around growing, rules-based global economy (which is fixed with the WTO). Russia's WTO membership is articulated with U.S.–Russia relations and the U.S.'s and Russia's commitment to rules-based global economy. “A significant day for U.S.–Russia relations” triggers the value assumption that Russia's WTO membership is very desirable for U.S.–Russian relations. The propositional assumption here is that progress in U.S.–Russian relations would be impossible without Russia's WTO accession.

“Nearly two decades of negotiations” implies Russia's persistent desire to become a WTO member. It also implies that, earlier, Russia's commitment was considered insufficient. “Will now be able to join” triggers the propositional assumption that, earlier, Russia was not able to join the WTO. Another implication is that, previously, Russia did not observe the rules of global economy sufficiently (and this implicitly distances Russia from the U.S. on the modal axis), but now it does (and this reduces distance between Russia and the U.S. on the modal axis).

“Rules-based global economy” triggers the existential assumption that there are rules that regulate global economy. “Our commitment to /.../” triggers the value assumption that such rules are desirable. The implication is that global economy should be based on particular and, therefore, hegemonic rules, and, as the global economy is growing, these hegemonic rules should apply to more and more players. Since rules-based economy is fixed with the WTO, the latter is implicitly constructed as the means of hegemonic regulation in global economy. Russia as a WTO newcomer reinforces this hegemonic regulation. This can be one of the reasons why Obama has been supportive of Russia's WTO membership. Although Medvedev intensified Obama's support of Russia's WTO accession, Obama has been supporting it since the beginning of his first term, before his first meeting with Medvedev.

Obama constructs the lowering of tariffs, improvement of access to Russia's services markets, holding the Russian government accountable to a system of rules governing trade behavior, and the means to enforce those rules in the chain of equivalence around Russia's WTO membership. The first two pertain to commercial activity, the remaining two to the accountability of the Russian government. The existential assumption is that there is a “system of rules governing trade behavior”, and the propositional assumption is that, earlier, there were no means “to enforce those rules” on Russia (triggered by “provide”). In contrast, the U.S. government is not constructed as in need of being held accountable to a system of rules. Other propositional assumptions are that, currently, tariffs and international access to Russia's services markets are not good enough and that Russian government should be (and currently it is not) held accountable. The implication is that Russia could not access the WTO because its government could not be held accountable for the violation of rules; as a result, Russia's services markets were not accessible and tariffs were high. It is implied here that Russia does not participate in the creation and development of the rules that govern trade. The WTO system of rules is implicitly

constructed as natural and unproblematically accepted by all WTO members, and, therefore, hegemonic.

In “challenge Russia’s actions that are inconsistent with WTO rules”, the propositional assumption is that Russia can violate WTO rules and that, previously, the U.S. had no mechanisms to challenge Russia. “To challenge” triggers the value assumption that any action inconsistent with WTO rules is undesirable. The discrepancy is that Russia joins the WTO on the basis of its compliance with WTO rules but it is still expected that Russia is going to break them. It is implied, therefore, that Russia’s trade behavior differs from what WTO rules presuppose. The U.S. is not constructed as violating WTO rules and being challenged. In contrast to Russia, the U.S. is articulated with WTO rules and mechanisms. The implication is that, if applied, dispute settlement will support the U.S. rather than Russia. In “the United States will be able to use WTO mechanisms /.../”, the propositional assumption is that, without WTO mechanisms, the U.S.–Russian commercial cooperation is complicated because of Russia’s actions that need to be challenged; this, in turn, implies the absence of trust with respect to Russia. Thus, even while being a WTO member, Russia is different in the chain of equivalence from the U.S. and other WTO members. Hence, Russia as a WTO member is implicitly distanced from the U.S. and other WTO members on the spatial-modal axis, and this implicit absence of trust dislocates Obama’s newly created U.S.–Russian Self.

The propositional assumption in “far-reaching agreement with Russia /.../ for monitoring trade between their two countries” is that trade between Russia and Georgia needs to be monitored. “Far-reaching” triggers the value assumption that this agreement is desirable and will benefit Russia’s WTO trading partners; hence, the implication is that it is primarily Russia’s trade behavior that has to be monitored. In “all of these benefits also apply to Russia’s other WTO trading partners, including Georgia”, Obama articulates the U.S., Georgia and other Russia’s WTO trading partners in the chain of equivalence around his constructed benefits of Russia’s WTO membership. This way, common ground with respect to Russia is created among all WTO members, while Russia is interpellated into proving the above benefits. The benefits for Russia’s WTO trading partners are not constructed as being reciprocally enjoyed by Russia. Hence, Russia is constructed as a suspicious party that should be controlled and monitored.

The fifth excerpt is from President Obama’s remarks at Business Roundtable. Obama argues that, in order for the U.S. economy to keep getting stronger after the recent economic recession, it is vital to create more jobs in the U.S., bring more jobs back to the U.S., make goods in the U.S., and sell them around the world:

I think I’ve shown that I will go anywhere in the world to open new markets for American goods. That’s why we worked so hard to secure Russia’s invitation into the WTO. That’s why I have asked Congress to repeal Jackson–Vanik, to make sure that all your companies and American companies all across the

country can take advantage of it. And that's something that we're going to need some help on.

This is about creating a level, rules-based playing field in the growing Russian market. Because when it comes to competing for the jobs and the industries of tomorrow, no foreign company should have an advantage over American companies. When the playing field is level, American companies will win, American workers will win, and this country will win. (Obama 2012a)

Obama constructs new markets for American goods as a nodal point of his economic discourse. He articulates his and his administration's efforts at Russia's WTO membership and repealing of Jackson–Vanik in the chain of equivalence around the nodal point of new markets for the U.S.'s goods. In “I think I've shown that I will go anywhere /.../”, Obama constructs himself at the deictic center. The level of epistemic modality is maximal here. In “that's why we worked”, the deictic center includes Obama's administration and the U.S. as a whole; “that's why” suggests that what the deictic center does is based on Obama's firm beliefs. Any effort made to achieve the goal of opening new markets is constructed as desirable (triggered here by “I will go anywhere”, the twofold repetition of “that's why”, and by “we worked so hard”). “I will go anywhere in the world” implies that Obama will cooperate with countries that require effort. Russia, in the chain of equivalence with “anywhere in the world”, is implicitly constructed as difficult. The propositional assumption is that new markets can be opened anywhere in the world, but this has not yet happened.

Russia derives its meaning from its relation to the nodal point: a new market for American goods. Therefore, efforts Obama is making to have Russia as a new market are constructed as necessary. The propositional assumption in “that's why we worked so hard /.../” is that, in order to open a new market in Russia, the latter needed the invitation to the WTO. Hard work by the U.S. implies that otherwise Russia would not have received such an invitation. Thus, Obama fixes U.S.–Russian economic cooperation with Russia's WTO membership. Obama articulates the repealing of Jackson–Vanik with benefits for American companies. In “all your companies” and “American companies all across the country”, Obama creates common ground with his immediate audience and all American businesses and unites them in the chain of equivalence around the potential advantages of repeal of Jackson–Vanik. Hence, Jackson–Vanik is implicitly constructed as blocking the U.S. companies from taking advantage of Russia's WTO membership (the result of the hard work by Obama and his administration). “I think I've shown” triggers the propositional assumption that Obama is seeking to prove his authority, implying that the issue Obama is promoting is difficult and requires that Obama stress his previous achievements to sound convincing.

In “we're going to need some help”, Obama makes the propositional assumption that “a level, rules-based playing field in the growing Russian market” has not yet been created. “Help” triggers the value assumption that such a playing field is desirable. “Help” also implies that American companies can create such

a playing field on the Russian market, which is constructed as growing. Thus, Obama implicitly asks American businesses to create the rules for the Russian market (the existential assumption here is that there exists “the growing Russian market”, and the propositional assumption is that “level, rules-based playing field” can be created there). The implication is that if American companies create rules and establish a level playing field in the Russian market, no companies will take advantage of them in the competition for the jobs and industries of tomorrow (“when it comes to competing” triggers the propositional assumption that, in the conditions of level and rules-based Russian market, jobs and industries of tomorrow need to be competed for). Obama articulates American companies with the level playing field: if a foreign company has an advantage over American ones in the Russian market, this is not the fault of the American companies or workers, but the fact that the playing field is not level and rules-based. In “no foreign company should have an advantage over American companies”, Obama creates a difference between the U.S.’s and foreign companies, constructing distance between them on the spatial axis. “Should” expresses a high level of deontic modality. Winning the competition for industries and jobs of tomorrow is fully attributed to the U.S. (its companies, workers, and the country as a whole): the high epistemic modality of the threefold “will win” assumes the U.S.’s victory is unquestionable. Still, the role of creating rules and equality on the playing field of the Russian market is implicitly attributed to the U.S., implying the potential hegemonic role of the U.S. businesses on that market.

The sixth excerpt is taken from Obama’s remarks after his bilateral meeting with Medvedev in Seoul on 26 March 2012 during the second Nuclear Security Summit. Obama and Medvedev discussed the U.S.–Russian cooperation in the areas of security and economy:

Russia’s ascension into the WTO can open up trade and commerce between our two countries that can create jobs and economic growth for both Russians and Americans. And as Dmitry mentioned, we think it’s going to be very important for us to address Jackson–Vanik so that American businesses can fully take advantage of an open and liberalized Russian market. (Obama 2012b)

Here, Russia’s WTO membership is articulated with opening trade and commerce between the U.S. and Russia and with creating jobs and economic growth for Russians and Americans. However, the relatively low epistemic modality of “can open” and “can create” when referring to the results of the U.S.’s cooperation with Russia as a WTO member suggests that there are issues after Russia’s WTO ascension. In the second sentence of the excerpt, the full extent of the U.S.–Russian commercial cooperation (triggered by “can fully take advantage of”) is articulated with repealing Jackson–Vanik in the U.S. Still, “can open up” and “can create” trigger the propositional assumptions that Russia’s accession may not open up trade and that even open trade may not create jobs and economic growth. The implication is that there is still an obstacle to the

development of trade and commerce between the U.S. and Russia. This implicitly distances the U.S. from Russia on the spatial-modal axis.

In contrast, in “our two countries”, the deictic center contains the U.S. and Russia, and they are constructed as close to each other on the spatial axis. In “for both Russians and Americans”, Obama creates common ground with the American and Russian people, implying that all of them want jobs and economic growth. In “as Dmitry mentioned”, Obama uses Medvedev’s voice to express the mutual opinion of the members of the deictic center (in “we think”, the deictic center consists of Medvedev and Obama). This constructs Obama and Medvedev very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. In “very important for us”, the deictic center includes Obama, Medvedev, the U.S., and Russia. In “very important”, the level of deontic modality is very high. Notably, Medvedev is constructed as not only considering it very important that Jackson–Vanik be repealed, but he is also interpellated into wanting American businesses [to] fully take advantage of an open and liberalized Russian market. Medvedev is thus interpellated into making the existential assumption that an open and liberalized Russian market exists. Obama creates common ground with American businesses, which are implicitly constructed as desiring to take full advantage of the Russian market. Hence, here, Medvedev, Obama, American businesses, and Russian market (open and liberalized) are constructed in the chain of equivalence in opposition to Jackson–Vanik, which was later on repealed.

5.5.1. Discussion

The goal of making Russia a new market for American goods was constructed as the major reason for supporting Russia’s WTO accession when Obama spoke to the domestic audience. When, however, Obama spoke in presence of Medvedev, the reason for Russia’s WTO membership was the need to “deepen Russia’s integration into the global economy”. “New markets” was one of the nodal points in Obama’s economy discourse. It was fixed with particular trading rules. With respect to Russia, new market was fixed with the WTO membership, or accepting the hegemonic trading rules established by the WTO. Russia’s accession to the WTO was to reinforce these rules. Generally, in the excerpts of this context, the U.S. was articulated in the chain of equivalence with the WTO. Russia, in contrast, was mostly constructed in the learner position. Even when located at the deictic center with the U.S., Russia was implicitly labeled inferior. Consequently, even as a WTO member, Russia was constructed as, in Neumann’s (1996) terms, a state whose behavior the WTO should sanction, who was trusted to a certain degree, but was still suspicious and whose “inconsistent” trading behavior needed to be “challenged” by the WTO mechanisms.

In addition to being hegemonic, the rules of the WTO were the means to control Russia’s trading behavior, like the “trust, but verify” principle behind the New START. Having Russia in the WTO meant that both the U.S. and

Russia were to play by the rules. However, constructed closer to the source of the rules, the U.S. was assumed to gain greater advantage from them. Thus, in a way, the U.S. gained control of the U.S.–Russian economic relationship through Russia’s WTO membership. Since the progress of the U.S.–Russian economic relations was fixed with Russia’s WTO membership, this meant that the U.S. could control these relations and the rules by which both were playing. Therefore, Obama sought to repeal the Jackson–Vanik, which he believed only prevented the U.S.’s companies from taking full advantage of “an open and liberalized” market in Russia. Obama constructed markets as playing fields, where, if everybody was playing by the rules (like in the case of controlled WTO membership of Russia), the U.S. would inevitably win.

Medvedev was constructed as crucial in the process of Russia’s WTO accession. One of Obama’s moves to accelerate Russia’s WTO accession was to discursively construct two Russias: the Russia of Medvedev, reformed and modernized, a full-fledged member of the WTO and the U.S.’s strong economic partner, and the actual Russia, which needed to make efforts to make that happen. Obama was generally optimistic about Medvedev’s Russia and believed that strong economic partnership with Russia was possible. Since Russia was generally constructed as needing to be active in achieving the WTO membership, Medvedev’s voice was made audible, as he was referred to as being active on issues concerning Russia’s WTO membership. Medvedev (and Medvedev’s Russia) was constructed at the deictic center with Obama (and the U.S.), and, as Obama was speaking on behalf of the deictic center, Medvedev was interpellated into conforming to the rules Obama considered important and letting the U.S. and WTO control the process of trade. Obama assumed the need to hold Russia accountable for inappropriate trading behavior and, tacitly, that no such behavior could be found in the U.S. and other WTO members. Thus, Russia, despite its WTO membership, was differentiated within the chain of equivalence formed by other WTO members.

5.6. Context 5: Discursive definition of reset

This context unites the four previous contexts by discussing the U.S.–Russian cooperation in the framework of reset. The analysis focuses on Obama’s uses of the concept and its discursive meaning. When Obama came to Moscow on 7 July 2009, he promoted the agenda of the U.S.–Russian reset in his meetings with Medvedev and Putin, in his speech in Moscow New School of Economics, at a parallel business summit, and civil society summit. Hence, reset seemed to span multiple areas of the U.S.–Russian cooperation: security, civil society, democracy, rule of law, economy, etc. Talking about reset, Obama announced the U.S.’s respect for Russian leadership and the Russian people, as well as the intentions to treat Russia as an equal partner. After the bilateral meeting with Medvedev in Singapore in 2009, Obama was satisfied with how the reset button had worked. The U.S.–Russian reset supported Obama’s claim that people can

change their fate. However, at home, Obama limited the agenda of the U.S.–Russian reset to dealing with nuclear weapons and extremism.

The excerpts analyzed below date from the years 2009–2011; four of them are from Obama’s addresses in Russia or meetings with Dmitry Medvedev, since, on these occasions, Obama spoke of the U.S.–Russian reset more extensively. One excerpt was taken from Obama’s press conference with Polish Prime Minister Tusk, and one comes from Obama’s announcement of the New START Treaty made for the domestic audience.

The first excerpt is from the joint press conference by the presidents after their first day of work during Obama’s visit to Moscow. Both expressed their satisfaction with the negotiations and were optimistic about the U.S.–Russian cooperation:

We’ve just concluded a very productive meeting. As President Medvedev just indicated, the President and I agreed that the relationship between Russia and the United States has suffered from a sense of drift. We resolved to reset U.S.–Russian relations, so that we can cooperate more effectively in areas of common interest. Today, after less than six months of collaboration, we’ve done exactly that by taking concrete steps forward on a range of issues, while paving the way for more progress in the future. And I think it’s particularly notable that we’ve addressed the top priorities – these are not second-tier issues, they are fundamental to the security and the prosperity of both countries.

First, we’ve taken important steps forward to increase nuclear security and to stop the spread of nuclear weapons. (Obama 2009)

At the deictic center “we” in “we’ve just concluded” are Obama and Medvedev. “The President and I agreed” implies that there are no contradictions within the deictic center, and the presidents are at the same point on the spatial-modal axis. In “we can cooperate in areas of common interest”, the deictic center contains Obama and Medvedev as well as the U.S. and Russia. However, as opposed to the presidents, Russia and the United States, although constructed together at the deictic center, are remote from each other along the spatial-modal axis because of a “drift”. Hence, the newly constructed U.S.–Russian Self is experiencing dislocation. Obama tries to eliminate the dislocation by saying “suffered from a sense of drift”, where “suffered” implies that both the U.S. and Russia became victims of this sense of a drift. The implication is that the sense was caused by an external force, with both the U.S. and Russia merely passive objects of suffering. The value assumption is that this drift is undesirable. Obama uses Medvedev’s voice to create common ground (“as President Medvedev just indicated, the President and I agreed”), which implies that Obama is very careful while speaking about the drift and that this is a sensitive issue in the relations between the U.S. and Russia. This way, Obama expresses his respect for Medvedev.

Another propositional assumption in “has suffered from a sense drift” is that, at some point in the past, the U.S.–Russian relationship was intact, the countries

were closer to each other on spatial and modal axes, and there was a sense of unity, to which the presidents now “resolved” to return in the process of reset. Hence, Obama stresses the fact that the presidents reached an agreement, which is, among other things, the reason why their meeting was “very productive”. Obama and Medvedev are going to make an effort, so that their personal agreement would result in an agreement between their countries, to unproblematically unite them at the deictic center like the two presidents, and newly constructed U.S.–Russian Self would not experience dislocations.

In “we resolved to reset U.S.–Russian relations, so that we can cooperate more effectively in areas of common interest”, the propositional assumption is that there are areas of diverging interest not handled within the framework of reset. Hence, the U.S.–Russian relations are articulated with reset, which is, in turn, articulated with common interest, while the articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with diverging interests is being suppressed. Another propositional assumption here is that reset of U.S.–Russian relations is something that demands effort (triggered by “resolved”), because more effective cooperation in areas of common interest is desirable (“more effectively” triggers the propositional assumption that such cooperation was taking place earlier, too). As a result, it can be implied that the sense of unity, which previously existed between the U.S. and Russia and to the value of which the present U.S.–Russian relationship is being reset, also concerned areas of common interest, not divergences.

The propositional assumption in “after less than six months of collaboration” is that the efforts of Obama and Medvedev require more than six months, stressing that their relationship and meeting are productive. The implication is that a sense of drift in the U.S.–Russian relationship can be overcome rather quickly if leaders of both countries are ready to collaborate. Obama constructs “the way” of progress in U.S.–Russian relations, making the existential assumption that such a way actually exists. So, along the spatial-modal axis, Obama constructs the U.S.–Russian relationship as taking “concrete steps” to leave the point of “drift” and “paving the way for more progress”. In the same way, along the temporal axis, the U.S.–Russian relationship is constructed as quickly moving from the past (“drift”) “after less than six months” to present (“reset”) and steadily into the future (“more progress”).

In “I think it’s particularly notable”, Obama is speaking on behalf of himself, not together with Medvedev. In “we’ve addressed”, the deictic center is again formed by Obama and Medvedev, and common ground is created that the issues Obama considers “particularly notable” are important to Medvedev, too. At this point of the utterance, Obama constructs the “top priorities” within U.S.–Russian relations (existential assumptions being that such priorities as well as “second-tier” issues exist). The propositional assumption is that some issues are “fundamental to the security and the prosperity of both countries” and some are not. “First” and foremost, such a “fundamental” “top priority” is articulated with nuclear security and nuclear nonproliferation. Medvedev is implicitly interpellated into making this articulation as well. However, since it is Obama who defines what issues are top priorities and which are “second-tier issues” within

U.S.–Russian relations (by stressing what is “particularly notable” in the discussion), it is unclear whether, in this imposed common ground, Medvedev actually agrees on what constitutes the former as well as the latter.

In this excerpt, Obama first and foremost seeks to fix U.S.–Russian relations with reset through Obama and Medvedev’s productive cooperation. Therefore, efforts by Presidents Obama and Medvedev are fundamental to reset: when effort is made, reset is possible in “less than six months”. Reset is constructed in opposition to the drift in U.S.–Russian relations. Obama further constructs concrete developments in U.S.–Russian relations as the result of reset. Obama firstly articulates reset with taking “concrete steps forward on a range of issues” and “paving the way for more progress in the future” (the propositional assumption here being that, currently, progress in U.S.–Russian relations is limited). Furthermore, reset is articulated with common interest. “More effective” means that what is now constructed as reset is merely an attempt to improve the essential collaboration in the areas of mutual interest that has been taking place with differing intensity. Obama then articulates reset with top-priority issues which are, in their turn, articulated with “the security and the prosperity of both countries”. The top-priority and, thus, reset is articulated with nuclear non-proliferation. Therefore, yet one more reason why Obama constructs his meeting with Medvedev as productive is because he successfully articulated U.S.–Russian relations with reset and further articulated reset with non-proliferation, the nodal point of his security-related hegemonic move.

The second excerpt is from the same press conference, since Obama’s first visit to Moscow was the crucial initial event for promoting the reset agenda and establishing his major articulations within the reset framework:

President Medvedev and I are committed to leaving behind the suspicion and the rivalry of the past so that we can advance the interests that we hold in common. Today, we’ve made meaningful progress in demonstrating through deeds and words what a more constructive U.S.–Russian relationship can look like in the 21st century. Tomorrow, I look forward to broadening this effort to include business, civil society, and a dialog among the American and Russian people.

I believe that all of us have an interest in forging a future in which the United States and Russia partner effectively on behalf of our security and prosperity. That’s the purpose of resetting our relations, that is the progress we made today /.../. (ibid.)

In this excerpt, on the temporal axis, Obama constructs the U.S.–Russian Self that made an effort to leave suspicions and rivalry in the past and effectively cooperate in the future. While speaking about “the suspicion and the rivalry of the past”, Obama creates common ground with Medvedev (“President Medvedev and I are committed to leaving behind /.../”). The propositional assumption is that the suspicion and the rivalry of the past exist but can be left behind. The suspicion and rivalry of the past are constructed in opposition to the advancement of common interests: the latter is possible only in the absence of

the former (triggered by “so that”). This way Obama articulates U.S.–Russian relations with common interests and seeks to suppress the articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with suspicion and rivalry. However, in “the interests that we hold in common”, the implication is that the U.S. and Russia have diverging interests, too. Obama and Medvedev’s commitment is articulated with the elimination of the suspicion and rivalry of the past by advancing common interests but not with touching upon diverging interests.

In “so that we can advance the interests that we hold in common”, the deictic center unites Obama and Medvedev, close to each other on the spatial-modal axis through their mutual commitment, as well as the U.S. and Russia, which are, on the one hand, implicitly distant from each other on the spatial axis due to the rivalry and suspicions of the past and diverging interests, but, on the other hand, also close since suspicions and rivalry can be left behind. Hence, the articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with suspicion and rivalry keeps striking back and haunt Obama’s reset discourse, making it problematic to construct Russia and the U.S. at the deictic center and dislocating the newly constructed U.S.–Russian Self.

Obama constructs progress made as “meaningful” (the propositional assumption being that there are different kinds of progress) which consists in “demonstrating through deeds and words”. The propositional assumption is that a more constructive U.S.–Russian relationship has to be demonstrated in deeds, implying that words are not enough. By referring to demonstration through deeds and words, Obama creates common ground with his direct audience by implicitly meeting Russia’s concerns that West only makes promises and does not fulfill them. However, “can look like” expresses a rather low level of epistemic modality, implying that there is no guarantee that the U.S.–Russian relationship will become more constructive in the 21st century than it was before.

In “tomorrow, I look forward to broadening this effort”, Obama is at the deictic center alone (as opposed to today’s effort, which is constructed as made together with Medvedev). This implies that Obama has a special role in the broadening of the effort. The propositional assumption is that the effort can be broadened to include business, civil society, and dialog among the American and Russian people. In “the purpose of resetting our relations”, reset is articulated with effective partnership for the security and prosperity of the U.S. and Russia as well as with the progress made. Since business is articulated with broadening, it can be implied that security constituted the initial meaningful progress. Thus, reset is articulated primarily with security issues. Common interests that could not be advanced, however, include security, business, civil society, and a dialog among the American and Russian people.

The deictic center in “I believe /.../” is still formed by Obama alone. In “all of us”, Obama is creating a hegemonic common ground, articulating the universal audience of both the U.S. and Russia (and, perhaps, also other countries) in the chain of equivalence around the nodal point, which consists in a shared interest. Obama is the voice of the deictic center, who defines this interest by

articulating it with effective cooperation between the U.S. and Russia for the security and prosperity of the people of both countries (and, perhaps, also other countries). Saying “on behalf of our security and prosperity”, Obama once again constructs the U.S. and Russia at the deictic center and speaks on behalf of both countries, assuming that there is a common way to make the U.S. and Russia secure and prosperous. Moreover, the propositional assumption in “in forging a future” is that everybody should actively work to realize the common interest. Yet another propositional assumption here is that the United States and Russia do not yet “partner effectively on behalf of mutual security and prosperity”. Thus, effective partnership (or the hegemonic interest) is the future which “all of us” should forge. Effective partnership on “our security and prosperity” does not, at least explicitly, include civil society and “dialog between the American and Russian people”; therefore, these appear as secondary issues.

After Obama made his hegemonic claims, the deictic center is again formed by himself, Medvedev, and includes the U.S. and Russia (“our relations”, “we made”). The hegemonic common interest, around which everybody in the U.S. and Russia (and other countries) are articulated in the chain of equivalence, is constructed as the purpose of reset and “the progress /.../ made today”), the means of achieving the hegemonic common interest. In this excerpt, reset is constructed as a continuing process toward achieving a final goal, as opposed to a one-time action, like pushing the reset button.

The third excerpt comes from the remarks of the president on the announcement of the New START Treaty in the U.S. in 2010. President Obama comments on the U.S.’s cooperation with Russia, efforts of President Medvedev and Obama’s national security team:

Furthermore, since I took office, I’ve been committed to a reset of our relationship with Russia. When the United States and Russia can cooperate effectively, it advances the mutual interests of our two nations, and the security and prosperity of the wider world. We’ve so far already worked together on Afghanistan. We’ve coordinated our economic efforts through the G20. We are working together to pressure Iran to meet its international obligations. And today, we have reached agreement on one of my administration’s top national security priorities – a pivotal new arms control agreement.

In many ways, nuclear weapons represent both the darkest days of the Cold War, and the most troubling threats of our time. Today, we’ve taken another step forward by – in leaving behind the legacy of the 20th century while building a more secure future for our children. We’ve turned words into action. We’ve made progress that is clear and concrete. And we’ve demonstrated the importance of American leadership – and American partnership – on behalf of our own security, and the world’s. (Obama 2010a)

In “since I took office, I’ve been committed”, the level of deontic modality is rather high. On the temporal axis, Obama stresses continuity in his commitments and policies. The U.S.’s relationship with Russia is articulated with reset. Obama

articulates reset with himself and stresses that reset has been his personal commitment as president. In “since I took office, I’ve been committed to a reset of our relationship with Russia”, the deictic center “I” is Obama, but the deictic center in “our” are Obama and the U.S. as a whole. Hence, what the U.S. does in the framework of reset is based on Obama’s commitment and he is indispensable for reset because reset is articulated with his commitment.

Here, reset is also articulated with effective cooperation between the U.S. and Russia, which is, in turn, articulated with the advancement of mutual interests as well as security and prosperity of the world. In “mutual interests of our two nations”, Obama speaks on behalf of the U.S. and Russia, constructing them at the deictic center and very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. However, “when” triggers the propositional assumption that effective cooperation between the U.S. and Russia is not always possible. “Mutual interests” implies that the U.S. and Russia have diverging interests, too. This implicitly distances the U.S. and Russia from each other on the spatial-modal axis.

Speaking on behalf of the deictic center in “mutual interests of our two nations”, Obama creates common ground with Russia and articulates these mutual interests with cooperation on Afghanistan, economic efforts (G20), sanctions on Iran, and the New START. Russia is interpellated into supporting this articulation. In “we’ve /.../ worked together”, “we’ve coordinated our economic efforts”, “we are working together”, “we have reached agreement”, the U.S. and Russia are constructed at the deictic center and very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. In this excerpt, the newly constructed U.S.–Russian Self is not undermined by dislocations. Obama constructs the New START as “one of my administration’s top national security priorities”. In “top priorities” and “pivotal /.../ agreement”, the level of deontic modality is the highest. Hence, what the U.S. and Russia are doing (“we have reached agreement”) is in line with Obama’s priorities. Furthermore, in “we are working together to pressure Iran to meet its international obligations”, the existential assumption is that international obligations exist, while the propositional assumption is that the U.S. and Russia meet them. Hence, the U.S. and Russia are constructed as having the right to pressure other countries (like Iran) to comply with the international obligations (which is in line with Obama’s security-related hegemonic move).

Obama constructs effective cooperation between the U.S. and Russia as the ultimate goal toward which both countries should be moving. Effective cooperation is articulated with advancing the mutual interests of the U.S. and Russia and the security and prosperity of the world (interpellating the world into supporting articulation of its security and prosperity with effective U.S.–Russian cooperation and the advancement of the U.S. and Russia’s mutual interests). Thus, particular mutual interests are constructed as universal: what is beneficial for the U.S. and Russia is constructed as beneficial for the world. Obama constructs himself as having moved toward this ultimate goal since he assumed office.

The propositional assumption in “the security and prosperity of the wider world” is that there is a certain way of making the whole world, including the U.S. and Russia, secure and prosperous. Hence, Obama is making a hegemonic claim, implicitly constructing a universal common ground and the hegemonic way, around which all countries make the chain of equivalence. The U.S. and Russia play an important role in advancing this common way. However, since Obama talks on behalf of Russia and constructs his personal commitment as essential to reset, Russia’s role is implicitly constructed as secondary. As a result, although the U.S. and Russia are part of the chain of equivalence around the common way to global security and prosperity, into which all countries are articulated, the U.S. and Russia are still constructed as different within this chain, with the U.S. being the most prominent entity.

The constructed hegemonic way to global security and prosperity, around which the world is gathered and which is defined by Obama, includes settling the issue of Afghanistan, recovering global economy, making Iran suspend its nuclear program, and elaborating the New START. In advancing those hegemonic goals, the U.S. and Russia are maximally close to each other within the deictic center: “we’ve so far already worked together”, “we’ve coordinated our economic efforts”, “we are working together”, and “we have reached agreement on one of my administration’s top national security priorities”. Here, one of the Obama administration’s “top national security priorities” is constructed as universal, advancing global as well as the U.S.’s security. A “pivotal” new arms control agreement assumes that its importance surpasses that of the national security of a single country.

In this excerpt, reset is articulated with effective cooperation between the U.S. and Russia, mutual interests of both countries, as well as with security and prosperity of the world. Since the latter is articulated with effective cooperation and advancement of mutual interests of the U.S. and Russia, reset becomes a hegemonic move, as it acquires a universal nature. Moreover, since reset is articulated with Obama’s commitment and effort, Obama has the hegemonic power to define its ultimate goal, construct the chain of equivalence around it, identify its means, and assess its progress and results, generally being the voice of reset.

In this utterance, the Cold War (its “darkest days”) and the “threats of our time” (“the most troubling”) are articulated in the chain of equivalence around nuclear weapons, constructing the latter as permanent constitutive Other of the U.S. and Russia (at the deictic center in “our time” is the U.S. and Russia as well as all the people). Leaving behind the legacy of the 20th century is constructed in opposition to the Cold War, whereas building a more secure future is constructed in opposition to the threats of our time. Both of the former are articulated in the chain of equivalence around the New START and, through the latter, with American leadership and partnership. “In many ways” triggers the propositional assumption that there are other articulations of nuclear weapons.

It remains unclear whether the deictic center contains the U.S. alone or the U.S. together with Russia in “we’ve taken another step forward”, “a more

secure future for our children”, “we’ve turned words into action”, “we’ve made progress that is clear and concrete”, “we’ve demonstrated the importance of American leadership – and American partnership – on behalf of our own security, and the world’s”. If the deictic center in these phrases contains the U.S. alone, then the U.S. is articulated with making progress on the elimination of the threat of nuclear weapons and, through this, with demonstrating American leadership and partnership. If, however, the deictic unites the U.S. and Russia, both are articulated with making concrete steps toward the elimination of the threat and, through this, Russia is interpellated into demonstrating American leadership and partnership. “Another step forward” (New START) contains the propositional assumption that steps have also been taken earlier. Hence, through the New START, reset is articulated with American leadership. Russia’s leadership is not evoked and is vaguely alluded to in “American partnership”. So, the world security from nuclear threat is fixed with American leadership and partnership. Any country interested in world’s security is this way interpellated into being the U.S.’s partner and conforming to the U.S.’s leadership. The propositional assumption in “we’ve demonstrated the importance of American leadership – and partnership” is that the demonstration has been successful, making American leadership necessary.

The propositional assumption in “we’ve demonstrated the importance of American leadership – and partnership” is that although American leadership and partnership have always been important, they need to be demonstrated. The implication is that the goal of the restoration of the American international reputation and leadership is reached (through reset and the New START). American leadership and partnership are articulated with “our own security” (in “our”, the deictic center containing either the U.S. alone or the U.S. together with Russia) and the “world’s” security; this way, the U.S. is interpellated into guaranteeing the world’s security by enhancing its own security. Therefore, security of all countries is articulated with American leadership and partnership. The U.S. partnership is fixed with the U.S. leadership; therefore, the goal of an effective partnership between the U.S. and Russia is implicitly articulated with the U.S. leadership in the issues of the world’s security.

The fourth excerpt is from the joint press conference by the presidents during Medvedev’s visit to the U.S. in 2010:

Our two countries continue to disagree on certain issues, such as Georgia, and we addressed those differences candidly. But by moving forward in areas where we do agree, we have been succeeding in resetting our relationship, which benefits regional and global security. This includes, I would note, a change in the attitudes among the Russian people, who today have a far more favorable view of the United States, and that, in turn, creates more space for additional partnership.

Indeed, this has been the real focus of our work today and of President Medvedev’s visit – not simply resetting our relationship, but also broadening it. Because 20 years after the end of the Cold War, the U.S.–Russian relationship has to be

about more than just security and arms control. It has to be about our shared prosperity and what we can build together.

That's why we created the U.S.–Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission during my visit to Moscow last year – to forge new partnerships, not just between governments, but between our businesses, our peoples and our societies. And today we agreed to forge new cooperation across a whole range of areas. (Obama 2010b)

In “we addressed those differences candidly”, the deictic center contains Obama and Medvedev, who are, on the one hand, implicitly constructed as close to each other on the spatial-modal axis and, on the other hand, distanced from each other, since differences between their countries have continued. In “our two countries continue to disagree on certain issues”, Medvedev, Obama, the U.S., and Russia are constructed at the deictic center, close to each other on the spatial axis. “Certain issues” triggers the propositional assumption that, on other issues, the two countries agree. However, “continue to disagree” increases the distance between the U.S. and Russia on the spatial-modal axis, implies a permanent obstacle in U.S.–Russian relations and dislocates the newly constructed U.S.–Russian Self.

In “moving forward in areas where we do agree, we have been succeeding in resetting our relationship”, the deictic center “we” and “our” is formed by the Obama, Medvedev, the U.S., and Russia. The propositional assumption is that reset is limited only to the areas of convergence. The implication is that the reset was not meant to deal with diverging perspectives. Successful reset is articulated with regional and global security. This way, reset is constructed as benefitting global security, implying that it is a part of a broader security-related hegemonic move.

Obama further articulates reset with a favorable view of the U.S. by the Russian people, which is, in turn, articulated with “additional partnership”. This constructs Russia and the U.S. closer to each other on the spatial-modal axis. The propositional assumption is that no additional partnership is possible without such a favorable view. Hence, in this utterance, reset is also articulated with the U.S.’s positive international image. Speaking about the change in the attitudes of the Russian people, Obama constructs himself at the deictic center alone, without Medvedev (“I would note”), implying that this success is more important to him than Medvedev, whose opinion on this matter is not voiced. Russian people are interpellated into having a more favorable view of the United States (the propositional assumption being that, earlier, the Russian people had a far less favorable view of the United States). However, the propositional assumption behind “additional partnership” is that there is primary partnership, too, which occurs regardless of popular perceptions. Obama says nothing about the attitudes of the American people to Russia.

Obama further articulates reset with security and arms control, and shared prosperity with the broadening of the U.S.–Russian relationship. In the case of reset, U.S.–Russian relations revolve around security and arms control. Obama

creates a difference between the reset of the U.S.–Russian relationship and its broadening and, through this, defines what has already been achieved (reset) and what is to be achieved (broadening). Broadening triggers the propositional assumption that reset is narrow. While reset is simple (triggered by “simply”), broadening requires considerably more effort. “Simply” triggers the propositional assumption that the gap between the reset and the broadening has to be overcome and that it is a challenge. So, the “real focus” of Medvedev’s visit is not on narrow issues, but the attempt to achieve an effective partnership. The propositional assumption behind “the real focus” is that there is an expected focus for the leaders.

In “the U.S.–Russian relationship has to be about more than just security and arms control”, the propositional assumption is that “the U.S.–Russian relationship” is about security and arms control (triggered by “has to be”). In “20 years after the end of the Cold War”, the propositional assumption is that something has to change in 20 years, but has not. Therefore, there is an implicit stumbling block in U.S.–Russian relations. In “what we can build together”, the propositional assumption is that the U.S. and Russia can build something together, but have not so far. In “can build”, the deontic commitment is not very strong.

In “we created /.../”, the deictic center contains Obama and Medvedev, who are constructed as seeking to “forge new partnerships”, which triggers the propositional assumption that there are old partnerships, too. Obama creates a difference between partnerships: “between governments”, “between businesses”, “between peoples”, and “between societies”. “Our” unifies the U.S. and Russia, along with their businesses, peoples, and societies within the deictic center. “Not just between” triggers the propositional assumption that the partnership between the governments has already been achieved, but not the others. However, in a year, Obama and Medvedev “agreed to forge new cooperation across a whole range of areas”. This implies that “a whole range of areas” were either not covered the previous year or the cooperation had not given any results.

In “forge new cooperation across a whole range of areas”, this range is restricted to the areas on which both countries agree. Thus, the broadening of the reset will be always already restricted. As a result, the suppressed articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with diverging interests inevitably strikes back and haunts Obama’s articulations of the reset. Consequently, this utterance is penetrated by structural uncertainty: Obama (together with Medvedev) appears to be unsuccessfully struggling to verbally break through the invisible wall in U.S.–Russian relations. The implication is that just like during the Cold War, U.S.–Russian relations still boil down to security. The issues on which the U.S. and Russia continue to disagree are suppressed by Obama’s and Medvedev’s candid communication and progress in the areas of mutual interest; however, they strike back and dislocate Obama’s reset discourse and the new U.S.–Russian Self he is seeking to construct.

The fifth excerpt originates from the press conference of President Obama and Polish Prime Minister Tusk on 28 May 2011. Considering the context of speaking, in his remarks, Obama relegated the issue of the U.S.–Russian reset to

the “last point” after discussing the significance of NATO membership, Poland’s EU presidency, summit on Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus, economy, clean energy, and democracy promotion:

Last point I guess I would make, we discussed our respective relationships with Russia. And I am a strong believer that the reset between the United States and Russia has benefitted this region, as well as the United States and Russia, because it’s reduced tensions and has, I think, facilitated genuine dialog about how each country can move forward.

We very much appreciate Poland’s pragmatic approach to their relationship with Russia. I applaud the Prime Minister for his determination to continue these efforts, even if it is not always the most politically popular thing to do.

We both believe that we cannot compromise on our most cherished principles and ideals, but we should also seek to cooperate where we can – for example, in areas like counterterrorism, counternarcotics, the spread of nuclear weapons and materials, and the support of our joint operations in Afghanistan. (Obama 2011a)

In “we discussed our respective relationships with Russia”, U.S.–Russian and Poland–Russia relations are constructed in the chain of difference, although, in “our”, Obama, Tusk, the U.S. and Poland are constructed at the deictic center. By constructing himself, Tusk, and also the U.S. and Poland at the deictic center, Obama seeks to make their attitudes toward Russia converge at the same point. In “I am a strong believer that the reset between the United States and Russia has benefitted this region as well as the United States and Russia”, Obama constructs himself at the deictic center alone (without Tusk) and with a high level of epistemic and deontic modality articulates U.S.–Russian reset with benefit for Eastern Europe, the U.S. and Russia. Tusk’s perspective on this articulation remains implicit. Obama creates the forced common ground that a common benefit for all the participants is possible, along with the common means of achieving it. Obama articulates “this region” and “the United States and Russia” in the chain of equivalence around that benefit and the means of its achievement (articulated with U.S.–Russian reset). This benefit is, in turn, articulated with reducing tensions and facilitating genuine dialog. The implication is that the U.S., through its relations with Russia in the framework of reset, can reduce tensions in the relations between Eastern Europe and Russia. The value assumption is that reducing tensions and facilitating a dialog is desirable, while the propositional assumption is that, earlier, these tensions were increasing and dialog was problematic. “Can” expresses average deontic modality, implying that it is not obligatory for each country to move forward in the way defined in the dialog. It is implied that each country has its own way of moving forward, and that they are not moving forward together (and this distances them on the spatial-modal axis).

In “we very much appreciate Poland’s pragmatic approach to their relationship with Russia”, “we” includes Obama, his administration, and the U.S. as a

whole. “Very much appreciate” triggers the value assumption that Poland’s pragmatic approach is very desirable, but also implies that the U.S. is in a position to evaluate Poland. The propositional assumption of “pragmatic approach” is that there is a nonpragmatic approach, too. Still, Poland is distanced from the U.S. as “them” in “their relationship with Russia”. Here, once again, a very clear difference is constructed between U.S.–Russian and Polish–Russian relations.

In “I applaud the Prime Minister for his determination to continue these efforts, even if it is not always the most politically popular thing to do”, Obama constructs himself alone at the deictic center, implying that he is not saying this on behalf of the U.S. He constructs Poland’s pragmatic approach to Russia in opposition to the politically most popular thing to do. The implication is that it would be “politically popular” to continue tensions with Russia and “pragmatic” to reduce those tensions by supporting the U.S.–Russian reset. Therefore, supporting the U.S.–Russian reset is not the most politically popular thing to do in Poland. In “his determination to continue these efforts”, the propositional assumption is that much effort is necessary for the pragmatic approach. The implication is that, for Poland, Russia is the constitutive Other, toward whom no pragmatic approach should be taken. By applauding Tusk for doing something politically unpopular, Obama implicitly constructs Poland’s treatment of Russia as constitutive Other as undesirable. Obama is very careful when speaking to his direct audience about Russia. He sounds unwilling to say what he does because of the rather low modal value in “last point I guess I would make”. However, the reason for resolving to low modal value is not that Obama considers his point insignificant, but rather that it may appear controversial to the audience he is addressing. In “last point I guess I would make”, Obama constructs himself at the deictic center, which implies that his point is actually significant for him personally.

In “we both believe that we cannot compromise on our most cherished principles and ideals, but we should also seek to cooperate where we can”, the deictic center includes Obama, Tusk, the U.S., Poland, and other NATO members who share these principles. The modal value here is rather high. All members of the deictic center are constructed as very close to each other on the modal axis and are articulated in the chain of equivalence around the nodal point of the “most cherished principles and ideals”. Cooperation with Russia is implicitly constructed as compromising these principles; hence, Russia is distanced from the deictic center as Other. However, the necessity of cooperation with Russia brings it closer to the deictic center. This way, Russia is constructed as a constitutive outside of the deictic center (and NATO as a whole) by Obama, and he is interpellating Poland into constructing Russia as a constitutive outside, not constitutive Other. “Cooperate where we can” triggers the propositional assumption that the U.S. and Poland (as well as other NATO members) cannot be involved in any cooperation with Russia where any values are compromised. However, Obama mentions safe areas of cooperation with Russia (counterterrorism, counternarcotics, nuclear nonproliferation, and Afghanistan). As a result, the U.S.–

Russian reset in this excerpt is implicitly limited to the issues of security, since, in other areas, cooperation with Russia is constructed as violating the values of the U.S. and Poland (along with other NATO members). In order to promote reset, Obama constructs it as a tool for mediating tensions between Russia on the one hand and Central and Eastern Europe on the other hand.

The sixth excerpt is from President Obama's remarks after his bilateral meeting with Medvedev during APEC Business Summit in Honolulu, Hawaii, on 12 November 2011. The summit took place after Medvedev supported Putin's candidacy for Russian presidency. In his remarks, Obama assesses the results of the three years of the U.S.–Russian reset and his cooperation with Medvedev:

President Medvedev and I have I think successfully established the reset of the U.S.–Russian relationship over the last several years. And it has borne concrete fruit in the form of the New START Treaty, the 123 Agreement³⁴, the work that we did together imposing sanctions on Iran, and most recently, the efforts that we've made on Russia's WTO accession.

So, President Medvedev, thank you again for a constructive conversation. But more importantly, thank you for several years of constructive engagement with the United States. (Obama 2011b)

In “I think”, Obama constructs himself at the deictic center. The level of epistemic modality is rather average. In “President Medvedev and I”, Obama creates common ground with Medvedev. He articulates reset with the U.S. and Russia as well as with himself and Medvedev, constructed as the establishers of the reset. Obama articulates the New START, the 123 Agreement, sanctions on Iran, and Russia's WTO accession in the chain of equivalence around the nodal point of reset. These are constructed as the basis of the reset success. Medvedev's voice remains implicit, and whether he articulates U.S.–Russian relations with the same results remains unclear. Medvedev is thus interpellated into articulating the successful reset with the above results of the U.S.–Russian cooperation. The New START, the 123 Agreement as well as sanctions on Iran concern nuclear nonproliferation, or the nodal point of Obama's security-related hegemonic move, and are important on Obama's agenda. Having Russia in the WTO as a new market for American goods was an important point on Obama's agenda, too. Therefore, Obama constructs Medvedev's effort as “a constructive conversation [with Obama]” and as “constructive engagement with the United States” (since Medvedev's effort fitted Obama's hegemonic move).

The propositional assumption in “successfully established the reset of the U.S.–Russian relationship” is that a reset can also be established unsuccessfully. The successful reset is articulated with the New START, the 123 Agreement, Iran sanctions (security-related issues), and WTO (an economy-related issue). Hence, the “concrete fruit” of the successful reset in this excerpt is three

³⁴ The 123 Agreement is a bilateral U.S.–Russian civil nuclear energy cooperation agreement.

quarters about security and one quarter about economy. Issues pertaining to security are listed first, followed by those pertaining to business. “Established the reset” triggers the propositional assumption that the reset is not a single action, but a process that Obama is expecting to continue. Another propositional assumption is that what is established successfully is to develop successfully. So, Obama believes that the reset can be successful under the next presidents of the U.S. and Russia. In addition, the reset in this excerpt is constructed as a tree that, “after several years”, “has borne” “concrete fruit” and which is expected to grow and bear fruit in the future. So, on the temporal axis, Obama is implicitly constructing continuity in terms of reset that will last in the future.

The deictic center “we” in “the work that we did together” and “the efforts that we’ve made” is formed by Obama and Medvedev, as well as by the U.S. and Russia. They are maximally close to each other along the spatial-modal axis. However, by arguing that “President Medvedev and I have, I think, successfully established the reset /.../”, Obama continues to construct himself (as in “I think”) as the hegemonic voice of the reset. Medvedev is articulated at the deictic center “we” when doing the work is concerned, while the deictic center is formed by Obama alone when assessing the results. Obama thanks Medvedev for “a constructive conversation” and then says, “[b]ut more importantly, /.../”. This triggers the propositional assumption that this conversation is not as important as earlier ones (triggered by “more”), since Medvedev is not going to run for the second presidential term. “Established” triggers the propositional assumption that Obama is expecting the process of the reset to continue with Russia’s next president. Thus, Russia and its new president are interpellated into continuing the U.S.–Russian cooperation in the framework of successfully established reset and, to some extent, within successfully constructed new U.S.–Russian Self.

5.6.1. Discussion

On the basis of the analyzed excerpts, it can be argued that Obama was committed to reset U.S.–Russian relations as a part of his hegemonic move to partially fix security with the nodal point of global nuclear nonproliferation and, thorough this, to restore international credibility of the U.S. While addressing the Russian audience or speaking in the presence of Medvedev, Obama sought to suppress the dominant articulation of the U.S.–Russian cooperation as fixed with security and arms control. The new articulation of U.S.–Russian relations, or reset, fixed them with cooperation in the areas of commerce, civil society, clean energy, innovation, rule of law, communication between the U.S. and Russian people. However, despite Obama’s efforts, the dominant articulation tended to strike break and undermine the articulation of reset promoted by Obama.

As the reset of the U.S.–Russian relationship came to be fixed with security and arms control, Obama introduced broadening of the U.S.–Russian relation-

ship and articulated it with a wide range of areas in U.S.–Russian relations. In promoting his broadened articulation of the U.S.–Russian cooperation, Obama tended to emphasize that “this has to be more than”, and such claims continued until the end of Medvedev’s presidential term, indicating that the desired reset is forever deferred. Most propositional assumptions in the excerpts of this context signaled that the U.S.–Russian relationship remained what it initially was; and “something that should have changed 20 years after the end of Cold War” did not change. The only significant result of the U.S.–Russian economic cooperation was Russia’s ascension into the WTO. In contrast, the U.S.–Russian cooperation in security issues produced significant results, making Obama’s broadened articulations of the reset questionable. This way, the reset exhibited the challenges of U.S.–Russian relations. Obama was struggling to promote new articulations, but he failed, and structural uncertainty penetrated his utterances.

The reset as a way to achieve an effective partnership with Russia and to increase global security and prosperity ultimately served as a means of demonstrating the importance of American leadership for the world’s security. Effective partnership between the U.S. and Russia was evoked along the spatial-modal and temporal axes. The drift, suspicion and rivalry of the past were to be left behind by the deictic center (the U.S. and Russia) and steps were to be made to advance common interest in the future. Constructing Obama and Medvedev at the deictic center as representatives of the U.S. and Russia, committed to advancing common interests of their countries, was a decision to eliminate dislocation within the newly constructed U.S.–Russian Self, which allowed for constructing the U.S. and Russia at the deictic center, which, otherwise, could have been uneasy because of the existing suspicion and rivalry. Obama tended to differentiate himself within the deictic center, stressing his personal commitment in the process of reset, thus assuming the position of the voice of the reset in defining its goals and means as well as in assessing its results.

In addressing audiences outside Russia and in the absence of Medvedev, Obama generally relied on the articulation of the reset as fixed with security, because, otherwise, the U.S.’s cooperation with Russia might have compromised the ideals of the Western world. It appears that the first step of the progress in U.S.–Russian relations was settling the issue of security, because only here Obama constructed the U.S. and Russia as equals, whereas in other areas, like business, civil society, and dialog between the people of both countries, etc., the suppressed articulation of Russia as a learner struck back, endowing the U.S. with the power to instruct Russia from the position of a superior. Importantly, many propositional assumptions in this context indicated that the reset did not concern the disagreements and divergences in U.S.–Russian relations and, therefore, did not succeed in these areas.

5.7. Overall discussion of the empirical analysis of Obama's first term messages referring to Russia

In the first analyzed context, to promote his hegemonic move to partially fix security with the nodal point of global nuclear nonproliferation, Obama articulated Russia with its nuclear arsenal, implicitly suppressing other articulations of Russia, and constructed Russia as an equal partner, articulated with the U.S. and other nations in the chain of equivalence around nonproliferation. "Going beyond the Cold War" did not mean the improvement of U.S.–Russian relations, but the rearticulation of nuclear weapons with danger, rather than security. However, since the U.S. and Russia were fixed with their nuclear arsenals, which they planned to reduce but not eliminate entirely, the articulation of nuclear weapons with security nevertheless haunted Obama's hegemonic articulation at the level of propositional assumptions and implications. Constructing Russia as equivalent, but in many cases also different within the above chain of equivalence allowed Obama to reinforce his hegemonic move – Russia's participation in the project was clearly critical, yet Russia was constructed as equally important along with all other signatories of the Nonproliferation Treaty.

In the second context, Obama needed to reiterate articulations of Russia with security threat to the U.S. and CEECs, imperialism, and Iron Curtain. This allowed him to create urgency on the temporal axis and persuade Republican senators opposing the New START to vote for its ratification as soon as possible. Articulating the New START with the verification regime of Russia's nuclear activities, Obama differentiated between verified and unverified Russia, articulating verified Russia with security and unverified Russia with threat. Failure to ratify the New START would otherwise cause dislocation in Obama's nonproliferation discourse, in the framework of which the New START was articulated with strengthening of the Nonproliferation Treaty. In presence of Medvedev, however, Obama articulated the New START with proving the benefit of cooperation as opposed to the drift in U.S.–Russian relations, suppressing, at the level of propositional assumptions and implications, the articulation of the U.S. with Russia's Other and vice versa. Obama also articulated the New START with flexibility in protecting the U.S.'s and Russia's security, which, at the level of propositional assumptions and implications, indicated that the U.S. and Russia had diverging security interests and, without flexibility, may have ended up in a confrontation. Hence, although suppressed, the articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with confrontation haunted Obama's articulations of the New START.

In the third context, Obama sought to deal with the bone of contention in U.S.–Russian relations, missile defense system. CEECs, the U.S.'s allies, articulated the reduced need for missile defense with the U.S.'s reduced commitment to their security against Russian threat. In turn, the Russian government articulated missile defense with the threat to Russia's national security. To keep the benefits of cooperation with Russia, Obama sought to rearticulate

missile defense with an Iranian threat, claiming that the need for the former would decrease as the latter would diminish. Obama resolved to review the configuration of missile defense proposed earlier, hoping to win time, during which the U.S.–Russian cooperation on nonproliferation would help reconcile the U.S.’s and Russia’s position on missile defense. This way, Obama tried to articulate missile defense with nonproliferation. Russia was constructed as passive, excluded from the decision-making on missile defense. It also turned out at the level of propositional assumptions and implications that the decision on missile defense did not depend on U.S.–Russian relations. In turn, for its NATO allies, Obama articulated their security with Obama’s (and, by extension, the U.S.’s) commitment, seeking to dissociate the guarantee of security of the U.S.’s CEE allies from missile defense. Obama also tried to articulate missile defense with the U.S.’s and NATO’s cooperation with Russia, but, here, Article 5 became the limit to whichever progress of such cooperation: the more realizable cooperation with Russia seemed to be, the more sacrosanct commitment to Article needed to be. Thus, concerns of the U.S.’s CEE allies inevitably haunted any articulation of the U.S.–Russian cooperation.

In the fourth context, Obama set out to facilitate Russia’s accession to the WTO. Obama articulated U.S.–Russian economic relations with Russia’s WTO membership, implying that the former could develop only in the case of the latter. The WTO and its rules were implicitly articulated with global economy and a common path to prosperity. The U.S. was consistently articulated with the WTO and, implicitly, as an example. Restarting of the U.S. poultry exports to Russia was constructed as seriousness of Russia’s intentions to access the WTO, Medvedev and his team with progressive Russia. The U.S., constructed as an active party, had the power to influence Russia’s WTO ascension. In turn, Russia, constructed as a passive party, could only make signals of its desire for and efforts to achieve the WTO membership, implying that Russia could not become a WTO member without the U.S.’s active help. As Obama sought to articulate Russia with the WTO, implied obstacles that earlier impeded Russia’s WTO membership haunted this articulation. Despite being articulated with the WTO, Russia was constructed as different within the chain of equivalence consisting of the WTO members, since Russia was implicitly expected to violate the WTO rules. Hence, from the onset of its membership, Russia was always-already constructed, in Neumann’s (1996) terms, as a barbarian at the gate of civilization.

In the fifth analyzed context, Obama articulated the U.S.–Russian reset with the commitment of the two presidents. It was assumed such commitment would help to overcome the drift in U.S.–Russian relations rather quickly, and the suspicions and the rivalry of the past could be left behind. Constructing himself and Medvedev at the deictic center and close to each other on the spatial and modal axes, Obama sought to make the deictic center include the U.S. and Russia, but since, at the level of assumptions and implications, the drift, suspicions, and rivalry were still present in U.S.–Russian relations, Russia’s and the U.S.’s unity at the deictic center appeared problematic. Thus, drift,

suspensions, and rivalry of the past caused dislocation in the newly constructed U.S.–Russian Self.

Obama assumed that U.S.–Russian relations should develop in a definite way and articulated reset with the top priorities that were in line with his security-related hegemonic move. Medvedev was interpellated into accepting these articulations. It is, among other things, for this reason that, as it showed at the level of assumptions and implications, Obama considered his cooperation with Medvedev “constructive” and “productive”. Obama also articulated the U.S.–Russian reset with the benefits for the wider world, or constructed cooperation of particular countries in the areas of their mutual interests as something beneficial to and desirable by the whole world. This way the U.S.–Russian reset gained a universal nature. In this case, the newly constructed U.S.–Russian Self experienced no dislocations. For his domestic audience, Obama articulated the reset with security concerns and demonstration of indispensable American leadership on and partnership in global security. For his Polish audience, Obama articulated the U.S.–Russian reset with benefit for CEECs: through the reset, Obama and the U.S. managed to reduce tensions and facilitate dialog of the CEECs with Russia. As a result, Obama constructed reset as a well-established process and interpellated further Russian presidents into continuing it.

In the five analyzed contexts, Obama remained true to his agenda (either his security-related hegemonic move or his priority of remarkable increase of the U.S.’s exports). In all of the excerpts, Obama, with various degrees of epistemic and deontic modality, depending on the context of speaking, insisted on discussing and advancing his agenda points. From the fact that Obama, constructing himself at the deictic center, tended to emphasize his critical role in the U.S.–Russian reset (stressing that it was his idea, assuming the position to assess the progress of reset and define its aims), it is evident that Obama sought to inhabit the concept of reset with his own intentions and, thus, firmly integrate it into his own hegemonic articulations and, consequently, to successfully interpellate Russia into these articulations (for instance, articulation of reset with nuclear nonproliferation or the New START).

Articulations Obama made were in many cases stable and not seriously challenged by suppressed counterarticulations, which were, at the level of assumptions and implications, often striking back. In many cases, Obama was able to come up with decisions when his discourse, at the level of assumptions and implications, was being dislocated by subversive counterarticulations. One of the serious challenges of Obama’s reset discourse was that, from the very beginning, he articulated reset with the U.S.’s and Russia’s mutual interests, while diverging interests, despite their existence being presupposed, were not considered as the aim of reset. Obama believed that no relationships can succeed if the focus is on divergences. Thus, articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with reset suppressed the articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with deep divergences. However, in the majority of Obama’s excerpts analyzed, these divergences increasingly haunted Obama’s reset discourse at the level of

assumptions and implications. These divergences also implicitly triggered and at the same time prevented the desired transformation of reset into broadening, “additional partnership”, and other advanced types of extended, multifaceted cooperation, which could go beyond the basic level of security issues (since reset became firmly fixed with the New START). As a result, diverging interests proved to be the conditions of possibility and impossibility of the desired further development of reset and generally dislocated Obama’s reset discourse and the newly constructed U.S.–Russian Self.

Another challenge for Obama was to construct Russia at the deictic “we” in the utterances where Russia was clearly constructed as a constitutive outside of NATO, while the U.S. was constructed as its quintessential member. As a result, Russia, while at the deictic center, was implicitly constructed as so distanced from other members of the deictic center, that its presence at the deictic center, or the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right, appeared extremely problematic. To overcome this barrier, Obama constructed difference between Medvedev’s Russia, which was implicitly moving in the direction constructed as right, and, therefore, closer to NATO on the modal axis, and other (including Putin’s) Russia, which refused to move in the direction constructed as right and, therefore, increased its distance on the modal axis from NATO. The latter Russia was implicitly constructed as Other.

Another challenge that dislocated Obama’s reset discourse, regardless of the decisions Obama sought to find, was the issue of missile defense. Obama could not silence the voices of the NATO allies who articulated the possible elimination of the missile defense with the reduced commitment of Obama (and, by extension, the U.S.) to their security. Obama could not silence Russia’s concerns, since, at the level of assumptions and implications, missile defense was to be executed, regardless of the Iranian threat and U.S.–Russian cooperation. Speaking to the Russian audience, Obama sought to disarticulate missile defense from the Russian nuclear threat. However, at the level of existential and propositional assumptions, longstanding suspicions between the U.S. and Russia undermined this effort. On numerous occasions, in order to be persuasive, Obama attempted at structural closure, using words and phrases expressing the highest level of epistemic and deontic modality, like “fully”, “in no way”, “it was simply a statement of fact”, “sacrosanct”, etc., seeking to suppress the articulations of missile defense with either Russian or NATO allies’ concerns, but they forcefully struck back and finally dislocated Obama’s missile defense discourse.

The absence of trust between the U.S. and Russia was indicated explicitly, but mostly at the level of assumptions and implications in all contexts and haunted Obama’s articulations of U.S.–Russian relations. In the context of the New START, the absence of trust was indicated in the principle “trust but verify”; in the context of the WTO, the WTO mechanisms were directed at challenging Russia’s inappropriate trading behavior. Extensive negotiations pertaining to further actions prevented the building of trust. Absence of trust was especially evident in Obama’s reaction to Medvedev’s proposed new

architecture of European security. Insufficient trust in relation to Russia inevitably drove the latter toward the limits of entities Obama was constructing (NATO, international community, the U.S.), to the position of the constitutive outside of these entities. Due to insufficient trust, construction of the U.S. and Russia on the spatial-modal axis was also constantly unstable and fuzzy. The desire to cooperate and positive results of cooperation moved the U.S. and Russia closer to each other on the spatial-modal axis, while assuming of the Russian threat at all levels of cooperation placed the U.S. and Russia at the two extremes of the spatial-modal axis, even as both countries were explicitly constructed at the deictic center, efforts to construct the new U.S.–Russian Self were made, the continuity of these efforts was emphasized on the temporal axis, and discontinuity with the suspicions and rivalry of past was stressed.

CHAPTER 6:

Empirical analysis of Dmitry Medvedev's messages referring to the U.S.

6.1. Overall corpus description

The speeches, messages, press conferences, statements, articles, etc. that make up the corpus of Dmitry Medvedev's presidential rhetoric referring to the U.S. from the years 2008–2012 were downloaded from the Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia website during Medvedev's term in office and stored in the form of a Microsoft Word document. Therefore, Internet links, which were active then, might not be available anymore, since the president left office after 7 May 2012. However, most political messages can be retrieved, for instance, on the Internet Archive through the Wayback Machine³⁵. The total number of texts mentioning the U.S. is 292, which is almost twice as many as in the corpus of Obama's texts referring to Russia (149). Medvedev's first text was delivered on 22 May 2008, after his inauguration (on 7 May 2008), and his last text mentioning the U.S. was delivered on 27 February 2012, a little more than two months before the inauguration of Putin. The U.S. was mentioned in each of Medvedev's annual Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly.

Medvedev's political rhetoric concerning the U.S. can roughly be divided into three major periods. The first period covers the last months of G. W. Bush's presidency and is marked by strained relations between the U.S. and Russia. The second period encompasses the years of Medvedev's active cooperation with Obama up until Putin was nominated United Russia's candidate for president. Medvedev's rhetoric with respect to the U.S. during this period is marked largely by flexibility. The third period of Medvedev's U.S.-related rhetoric spans the remaining months of Medvedev's presidency after Putin's nomination and is mostly devoted to campaigning and reiterating what has been achieved for the past four years.

Medvedev's texts referring to the U.S. were analyzed through close reading and divided into a number of thematic contexts. Excerpts from one text could belong to different contexts; e.g., a press conference in which questions and answers focused on different issues. On the basis of close reading, excerpts representing either the major trends or peculiarities of the context were further selected for a close analysis.

The five contexts have been selected to correspond to the contexts in which Obama's rhetoric concerning Russia was analyzed (i.e., there is an intensive dialogic relation between the U.S. and Russia in these contexts): the New START Treaty, European missile defense shield and NATO–Russian relations,

³⁵ The Wayback Machine is a digital archive of Internet sites, available at <https://archive.org/web/>. All links to presidential messages active during Obama's first term in office and Medvedev's presidential term can be opened through that website.

Russia's accession to the WTO, and the discursive meaning of the U.S.–Russian reset. However, one context is different: in Obama's case, his global nuclear nonproliferation project was the first context studied, since nonproliferation was the nodal point with which Obama set out to articulate the empty signifier "security" in his hegemonic move. Medvedev's hegemonic move was to articulate security with a new global security architecture and with its essential part, the European Security Treaty. Therefore, the European Security Treaty is the first context studied. Each of the five selected contexts contains six excerpts, which are analyzed through the procedure outlined in the methodological part of the thesis: assumptions, indexicality, and implications are identified along with the operational concepts from Laclau and Mouffe's theory (articulation, elements, moments, empty signifier, nodal point, chains of equivalence/difference, constitutive Other, constitutive outside, dislocation, decision, interpellation, structural closure, and hegemonic move). In the analysis, Medvedev's original excerpts are provided in Russian, with English translations by the author of the thesis in the footnotes. The analysis of each context begins with a short introduction and ends with a discussion.

Like in the case of the Obama corpus, many analyzed excerpts of Medvedev's rhetoric are from his press conferences and interviews and not from official addresses and statements. This is due to the fact that, in press conferences and interviews, politicians have an opportunity to expand on a topic in more detail, which allows me to trace the promoted articulations and constructions in their hegemonic moves, as well as constitutive instabilities in such constructions (Macqilchrist 2011: 10). The choice of excerpts was guided by the wish to include the whole range of articulations employed. Since, in the interviews, comments come as an answer to a question, in the following analysis, just like in the analysis of Obama's excerpts, when an excerpt comes from an answer to a question, the question itself, together with its possible implications, is also briefly commented upon.

Other contexts in which Medvedev often referred to the U.S., but which did not find significant dialogic reaction in Obama's corpus are: U.S.–Russian relations; the U.S. as an example, both positive and negative; economy; the Russo–Georgian conflict; multipolarity; the U.S. as anonymous Other; terrorism. Since the number of texts in these contexts is rather great, they shall be addressed in future empirical studies. When Medvedev's cooperation with Obama became less intensive after Putin's nomination, it is largely in these contexts that Medvedev mentioned the U.S. in 2012 and not in the contexts where there was a strong dialogic relation with Obama.

As to the remaining contexts in which Medvedev spoke of the U.S., other contexts, except that devoted to Afghanistan, do not contain a significant number of texts. These contexts include what can be called Sovietology (in which Medvedev stressed that the U.S. should stop treating modern Russia as the Soviet Union), global nuclear nonproliferation (Medvedev's utterances produced in dialog with Obama's hegemonic project), environment (in which Medvedev appreciated Obama's readiness to cooperate on the issue in contrast to the Bush

administration, praised U.S. green technologies, etc.), energy economics (the field in which Russia sought to struggle for hegemony, promoted the idea of a unified Eurasian energy space, proposed a new legal basis for international cooperation in energy economics, etc.), sports, space, democracy and values, old stereotypes, such international issues as Iraq, North Korea, Middle East, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Syria, as well as many topics concerning everyday life: the Internet, inferior quality of Chinese toys, and the need to produce more things domestically, etc. All of these contexts could be explored in further research.

6.2. Context 1: European Security Treaty

The European Security Treaty was the project on Medvedev's foreign policy agenda within Russia's hegemonic move of creating the new global security architecture. Medvedev claimed that although several organizations are active in Europe (e.g., EU, NATO, OSCE, CIS, and CSTO), they do not prevent conflicts like the Yugoslav Wars and the Georgian–Ossetian conflict. Therefore, in his project, Medvedev proposed the creation of a framework of indivisible security in the Euro–Atlantic area, independent of blocks and partnerships. For Russia, among other things, this project would solve the issue of missile defense, improve relations of Russia with NATO, the U.S., and the EU, restoring trust and eliminating suspicions, and confirm Russia's status as a European power. Medvedev fostered negotiations on the treaty throughout his presidential term, but it was never drafted.

In Medvedev's first Address to the Federal Assembly, delivered on 5 November 2008, the day after Obama was elected U.S. president, Medvedev criticized the U.S. for causing the global economic crisis and threatened to deploy missiles in Kaliningrad if the U.S. was to locate missile defense capabilities in the Czech Republic and Poland:

Отмечу, что явно перезрел вопрос создания новой глобальной архитектуры безопасности. И для нас особенно важно добиться результата на евроатлантическом пространстве, объединяющем Россию, Евросоюз и Соединённые Штаты. Я выступил с инициативой о разработке соответствующего договора – договора о европейской безопасности. Повторю: такой документ позволил бы создать абсолютно чёткие и понятные всем правила поведения. Зафиксировать единый подход к разрешению конфликтов. Прийти к согласованной позиции по созданию надёжных инструментов контроля над вооружениями. (Medvedev 2008a)³⁶

³⁶ I note that the issue of creating new global security architecture is clearly overdue. And it is especially important for us to achieve results on the Euro–Atlantic area, which unites Russia, the EU, and the United States. I came up with the initiative to draft a corresponding treaty: European Security Treaty. I repeat: such document would allow [one] to create absolutely clear rules of behavior, understandable for everybody; to fix a unified approach to solving conflicts; to arrive at the agreed position on creation of reliable instruments of arms control.

Medvedev places himself at the deictic center in “I note” («отмечу»), implying that the topic is important to him personally. In “clearly overdue” («явно перезрел»), “clearly” («явно») conveys the highest level of epistemic modality, signaling structural closure. “Overdue” («перезрел») conveys the highest level of deontic modality. Urgency is implicitly constructed on the temporal axis. “Overdue” [overripe] compares the creation of the new global security architecture with a fruit, which has been ripe for a long time already, the implicit value assumption being that the creation of the new global security architecture has been desirable for a long time. Additionally, through this comparison, implicit common ground is created that the new global security architecture will benefit all participants. Thus, it is a hegemonic move, constructed to benefit security of all countries in the world. “New” («новая») triggers the propositional assumption that a global security architecture already exists, but the implicit value assumption is that it is unsatisfying and, hence, undesirable.

In “it is especially important for us to achieve results on the Euro–Atlantic area, which unites Russia, the EU, and the United States” («и для нас особенно важно добиться результата на евроатлантическом пространстве, объединяющем Россию, Евросоюз и Соединённые Штаты»), the deictic center “we” contains Medvedev and Russia as a whole. In “to achieve results” («добиться результата»), the existential assumption is that concrete results exist, while “achieve” («добиться») implies that Russia has to make efforts to gain them. This, in turn, implies that there are obstacles on Russia’s way and this implicitly distances Russia from the EU and the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis.

“Especially important” («особенно важно») triggers the propositional assumption that the creation of the new global security architecture outside the Euro–Atlantic area is not as important. Hence, for Medvedev, the new “global” security architecture primarily means the “Euro–Atlantic” one, uniting Russia, the EU, and the U.S. “Uniting” («объединяющее») constructs Russia, the EU, and the U.S. as proximate on both spatial and deontic axes, since “the Euro–Atlantic area” can be perceived as both a geographic and socio-political space. “Especially important for us” («для нас особенно важно») conveys a very high level of deontic modality and the importance of the EU and the U.S. for Russia. It is with them that Russia wants to be united in security and, implicitly, socio-politically. Hence, Russia, the U.S., and EU are articulated in the chain of equivalence around the nodal point of Euro–Atlantic security, and, therefore, the European Security Treaty, articulated with it.

In “I came up with the initiative to draft a corresponding treaty: European Security Treaty” («я выступил с инициативой о разработке соответствующего договора – договора о европейской безопасности»), “corresponding” («соответствующего») implies that the European Security Treaty is articulated with the new global security architecture. The implication is that the architecture benefits from the European Security Treaty: the latter is the first step in the former. “Results” («результат») is articulated with “treaty” («договор»); therefore, to achieve results means, for Medvedev, to draft a treaty. In “I came up with” («я выступил»), Medvedev constructs himself at the deictic

center and emphasizes his active role in and commitment to the European Security Treaty. “To draft” («о разработке») triggers the propositional assumption that Medvedev invites other parties to contribute to the treaty; however, Medvedev wants to achieve concrete results as he is proposing to draft this treaty.

The European Security Treaty (“the document”) is articulated with clear rules of behavior, a unified approach to solving conflicts and an agreed position on the creation of reliable instruments of arms control. Since Medvedev is at the deictic center in “I repeat” («повторю»), being the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right, the implication is that he (and, by extension, Russia) plays a decisive role in the elaboration of these rules and assessment of their application. “I repeat” («повторю») triggers the propositional assumption that Medvedev has already made this articulation, the implication being that it needs to be reiterated, both because of its importance (high level of deontic commitment) and the implied divergences on the issues with other potential participants of the treaty. On the temporal axis, Medvedev creates continuity with what he said before.

“Would allow [one] to create” («позволил бы создать») triggers the propositional assumption that there are no such rules now, but that they can be created. This implicitly places Russia far from the EU and the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis. The implication is that nothing, except the document proposed by Medvedev would lead to a unified approach to solving conflicts. In “absolutely clear rules of behavior, understandable for everybody” («абсолютно чёткие и понятные всем правила поведения»), “everybody” («всем») means Russia, the EU, and the U.S. The propositional assumption is that rules can be insufficiently clear. “Absolutely” and “everybody” convey the highest level of epistemic modality and, hence, signal structural closure. Such rules maximally reduce the distance between Russia, the EU, and, the U.S. on the modal axis. However, since it is Medvedev who demands that rules be absolutely clear, the implicit assumption is that Russia may not understand the rules established by the EU and/or the U.S.; therefore, in “understandable for everybody”, “everybody” means, above all, Russia. The implication is, therefore, that if these rules need to be understood by Russia in the first place, they need to be proposed and assessed by Russia.

In “fix a unified approach to solving conflicts” («зафиксировать единый подход к разрешению конфликтов»), the propositional assumption is that conflicts need to be solved in a coordinated manner. The value assumption is that such an approach is desirable. Another propositional assumption is that, currently, Russia, the EU, and the U.S. solve conflicts separately, which is, therefore, less desirable. This increases the distance between Russia on the one hand and the U.S./the EU on the other hand on the spatial-modal axis; the implication is that Russia and the U.S./the EU have different attitudes to conflicts. It is important for Russia not just to develop a unified approach to solving conflicts, but to “fix” («зафиксировать») it. This, too, is an attempt at structural closure.

In “to arrive at the agreed position on the creation of reliable instruments of arms control” («прийти к согласованной позиции по созданию надёжных инструментов контроля над вооружениями»), the propositional assumption is that these instruments are a nodal point for all participants (Russia, the U.S., and the EU). Another propositional assumption is that Russia, the EU, and the U.S. currently have a divergent position, but a shared position can be achieved. This, on the one hand, distances Russia from the EU and the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis, but, on the other hand, reduces this distance through potential agreement. Such an agreed position is established as a desired destination on the spatial-modal axis. The value assumption in “agreed” («согласованная») and “reliable” («надёжные») is that such position on instruments of arms control is desirable.

The second excerpt comes from Medvedev’s meeting with the representatives of the Council on Foreign Relations, held in Washington, D.C. on 16 November 2008, a day after the summit devoted to the financial crisis and attended by the leaders of 20 countries. At the meeting, Medvedev expressed his hope that the Obama administration would restore trust in U.S.–Russian relations and act in a strategic partnership:

На то, чтобы обеспечить стабильность в Европе, направлена и одна из идей, которая была сформулирована мной сразу после избрания на должность Президента, – это идея создания Договора о европейской безопасности, так называемого панъевропейского договора. Я хотел бы сразу сказать, что мы рассматриваем его не как альтернативу существующим сегодня системам безопасности в Европе. Нет. Это просто способ собрать воедино наши усилия. При понимании того, что в Европе остаются такие глобальные образования, как Евросоюз, как Североатлантический блок, как ОБСЕ. В Европе есть Содружество Независимых Государств, есть Организация коллективной безопасности – ОДКБ. Всё это те организации, которые работают в Европе. Но, на мой взгляд, настал час, настало время для того, чтобы собрать наши коллективные усилия, особенно перед лицом очень серьёзных угроз, с которыми мы сталкиваемся, – и экономических, и политических, и военных. Рассчитываем на то, что в работе над этим проектом примут участие все европейские государства, Соединённые Штаты Америки, Канада. Во всяком случае, эта тема мне представляется очень интересной. (Medvedev 2008b)³⁷

³⁷ To ensure stability in Europe, among other things, one of the ideas is directed, which was formulated by me right after the election to the post of president: it is the idea of creating European Security Treaty, the so-called pan-European treaty. I would like to say straight away that we are not considering it as an alternative to the security systems that exist in Europe today. No. It is just a way to put our efforts together. With the understanding that, in Europe, there remain such global entities as the European Union, as the North Atlantic bloc, as the OSCE. In Europe, there is the Commonwealth of Independent States, there is the Collective Security Organization (CSTO). All these are those organizations that work in Europe. But, in my opinion, the hour has come, the time has come to gather our collective efforts, especially in the face of the very serious threats that we encounter: economic, and political, and military threats. We are counting on the fact that all European countries, the United States of America, and Canada will take part in the work on this project. In any case, this topic seems very interesting to me.

The propositional assumption in “to ensure stability in Europe” («чтобы обеспечить стабильность в Европе») is that, currently, stability in Europe is insufficient. The value assumption is that stability is desirable. Medvedev establishes stability in Europe as a nodal point, around which he seeks to articulate Russia and other players in the chain of equivalence. “Among other things” («и») triggers the propositional assumption that Russia is making different efforts. Medvedev articulates the European Security Treaty with stability in Europe; therefore, since stability is desirable, the treaty is desirable, too. “One of ideas” («одна из идей») triggers the propositional assumption that Medvedev has several ideas of how to ensure stability, implying that the topic is very important for him (and, by extension, Russia). The treaty is constructed as a “pan-European treaty” («панъевропейский договор»), the propositional assumption being that this treaty unites the entire Europe. Since it is Medvedev who proposes the treaty, the propositional assumption is that Russia is a part of the pan-European treaty and, hence, Europe. “Pan-European” («панъевропейский») implicitly unites all Europe (including Russia) on the spatial as well as on the modal axis, thus erasing all geographic and socio-political borders.

In “formulated by me right after the election to the post of president” («сформулирована мной сразу после избрания на должность Президента»), Medvedev constructs himself at the deictic center and stresses his agency in, and commitment to, the idea of the European Security Treaty. “Right after” («сразу после») implies that Medvedev formulated this idea during G. W. Bush’s presidency when U.S.–Russian relations were strained. Therefore, initially, the European Security Treaty was not articulated with the reset in U.S.–Russian relations, and that the U.S. is important to Russia (in the framework of the treaty) regardless of the quality of U.S.–Russian relations.

In “we are not considering it as an alternative to the security systems that exist in Europe today” («мы рассматриваем его не как альтернативу существующим сегодня системам безопасности в Европе»), the propositional assumption is that such a view is possible. “I would like to say straight away” («я хотел бы сразу сказать») is an implicit anticipatory reply to the voices holding the opposing viewpoint. Medvedev emphasizes his point by a separate short sentence “No.” («Нет»). This way, Medvedev seeks to suppress the articulation of the European Security Treaty with the replacement of the existing security mechanisms in Europe. The implicit value assumption is that existing systems are desirable, since no alternative is being sought. In contrast, Medvedev articulates the European Security Treaty with a way of putting “our efforts” together (the deictic center unproblematically uniting Russia, the U.S., and the EU). In “it is just a way to put our efforts together” («это просто способ собрать воедино наши усилия»), «воедино» [in a unified manner] (“together”) places members of the deictic center very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis, making “one” («единый») entity out of them. “A way” («способ») triggers the propositional assumption that there are other ways. “Just” («просто») emphasizes that the European Security Treaty does not pose a serious threat to other security systems in Europe.

“With the understanding that” («при понимании того, что») signals that Medvedev acknowledges the importance of all organizations working in Europe. Medvedev creates a chain of equivalence which consists of “all /.../ those organizations that work in Europe” («всё это те организации, которые работают в Европе»). However, within this chain, the EU, NATO, and OSCE are foregrounded and constructed as “global entities” («глобальные образования»), while CIS and CSTO are mentioned separately, implying that they are not global. The organization of the chain of equivalence implies that the organizations that work in Europe belong to two blocks.

“But” («но») triggers the propositional assumption that, although Medvedev acknowledges all organizations that work in Europe, he is not satisfied with this configuration. In “but, in my opinion, the hour has come, the time has come to gather our collective efforts, especially in the face of the very serious threats that we encounter – economic, and political, and military threats” («но, на мой взгляд, настал час, настало время для того, чтобы собрать наши коллективные усилия, особенно перед лицом очень серьёзных угроз, с которыми мы сталкиваемся, – и экономических, и политических, и военных»), the propositional assumption is that the organizations listed in the chain of equivalence do not allow for collective efforts by all players in Europe, constructed at the deictic center. Medvedev stresses a specific point on the temporal axis, to stress urgency. The implied danger is constructed as close to the deictic center, while the solution is articulated solely with collective effort. However, in “in my opinion” («на мой взгляд»), Medvedev undermines his own construction, since it is implied that the sense of approaching danger is not shared. “Especially” («особенно») triggers the propositional assumption that gathering collective efforts is also necessary for other reasons.

The implied difference between the two sets of organizations within the chain of equivalence is that, although they all work in Europe, they have different memberships. In the first set, Russia’s role is not particularly significant, but it can represent the second set. Hence, “to gather our collective efforts” means either to increase Russia’s influence in the first set or to achieve collective effort by all players in Europe otherwise. It should be noted that the implication in this excerpt is that the EU and NATO cannot overcome serious threats without, above all, Russia and other members of CIS and CSTO.

In “we are counting on the fact that” («рассчитываем на то, что»), the deictic center is formed by Russian politicians and Russia as a whole. The voice of the deictic center is Medvedev, as expressed in “this topic seems very interesting to me” («эта тема мне представляется очень интересной»). Here, Russia is constructed as a driving force of the project, hoping³⁸ to unite all European countries, the U.S., and Canada. Hence, Medvedev seeks to create the chain of equivalence, consisting of the participating countries (as opposed to the organizations that already exist in Europe), around his constructed nodal point

³⁸ Shades of meaning of the verb «рассчитывать» include “to hope” and “to rely on something/-body”

of stability in Europe, articulated with the European Security Treaty. Therefore, although Medvedev claims otherwise, the treaty implicitly offers an alternative to the existing European security organizations because Medvedev believes that it is more effective. Thus, the suppressed articulation of the European Security Treaty with an alternative to other organizations working in Europe strikes back and haunts Medvedev's utterance.

"In any case" («во всяком случае») implies that Medvedev also anticipates a negative answer. In "this topic seems very interesting to me" («эта тема мне представляется очень интересной»), the propositional assumption is that the project is relevant to Medvedev, regardless of whether it succeeds or not. There is, thus, a remarkable discrepancy between Medvedev's call for collective efforts under the European Security Treaty in the face of serious threats and his subsequent construction of the project as just a very interesting topic. The level of deontic commitment in "seems very interesting" («представляется очень интересной») is rather average. This may imply that Medvedev is anticipating negative response from the parties concerned and, although seeking collective effort to tackle common threats, accepts it. This dislocates the new Self which contains Russia, the U.S., and the EU and which Medvedev is trying to construct.

The third extract comes from Medvedev's address at the University of Helsinki on 20 April 2009. The audience included Finnish political and administrative leaders as well as university staff and students. The major topic of the address was the new architecture of transatlantic security. Among other things, Medvedev cited the Helsinki Final Act, a declaration signed in 1975 by 35 countries to improve relations between the Communist block and the West, as starting the formation of the unified Euro-Atlantic security area:

На наш взгляд, примеров того в современной Европе немало. Это и военная операция на Балканах, и признание Косова, и кавказский кризис – нападение на Южную Осетию в прошлом году, и кризис договора об обычных вооружённых силах в Европе. Эти примеры можно множить. Они показывают, насколько всё-таки мы далеки ещё от совершенства в вопросах европейской безопасности. И нам нужно по-серьёзному заниматься архитектурой европейской безопасности.

Поэтому я полагаю, что такого рода решения могут развиваться на основе многопланового сотрудничества между Российской Федерацией, Евро-союзом, Соединёнными Штатами Америки. И такого рода решения могут находиться только за счёт укрепления доверия в Европе.

В этом плане и была сформулирована идея большого европейского договора о безопасности, который, на наш взгляд, должен стать не просто набором деклараций, а юридически обязывающим документом, основанным на равноправии и уважении партнёров. Он должен исходить из самых разных принципов международного права, но, может быть, самое важное – из недопустимости фрагментации безопасности на части, из признания неделимости безопасности на европейском континенте. Потому что, в какие бы альянсы, в какие бы договоры мы ни входили, в конечном счёте это не

страхует от самых разных проблем. Нужна новая, нужна международная площадка для этого. (Medvedev 2009)³⁹

The deictic center in “in our opinion” («на наш взгляд») contains Russian politicians and Russia as a whole. The propositional assumption is that this opinion may not be shared by others. The plethora of implicit examples, together with military operations in the Balkans, recognition of Kosovo, the Caucasian crisis, and crisis on conventional armed forces in Europe are all articulated in the chain of equivalence around the lack of European security, which these conflicts are constructed as “showing” («показывают»). The implication is that Russia acts in the interests of European security, constructed as the nodal point around which Russia seeks to articulate other countries in the chain of equivalence. In “how far we still are” («насколько всё-таки мы далеки») and “we need” («нам нужно»), the deictic center is formed by Russia and all players involved in the matter of European security. On the spatial axis, where the nodal point of European security is constructed as a destination, the deictic center is constructed as very far away from its destination. Medvedev articulates European security with the new security architecture, since “we need to seriously deal” («нам нужно по-серьёзному заниматься») triggers the propositional assumption that current European security is poor; the level of deontic commitment here is high.

Since “military operation in the Balkans” («военная операция на Балканах») is articulated with the lack of European security, the value assumption is that the military operation was undesirable. In the same way, the recognition of Kosovo is constructed as undermining European security and, therefore, as undesirable. While Medvedev constructs the military operation in the Balkans and recognition of Kosovo merely as events, without specifying the victims and aggressors, in the case of “the Caucasian crisis” («кавказский кризис»), he

³⁹ In our opinion, there are many examples of this in modern Europe. Among them is a military operation in the Balkans, and recognition of Kosovo and the Caucasian crisis – an attack on South Ossetia last year – and the crisis of the treaty on conventional armed forces in Europe. These examples can be multiplied. They show how far we still are from perfection in the matters of European security. And we need to seriously deal with the architecture of European security.

Therefore, I suppose that decisions of such kind can be developed on the basis of a multifaceted cooperation between the Russian Federation, the European Union, and the United States of America. And decisions of this kind can only be found through strengthening trust in Europe.

It is precisely in this regard that the idea of a large European security treaty was formulated, which, in our view, has to become not just a set of declarations, but a legally binding document based on the equality of, and respect for, partners. It has to proceed from a variety of principles of international law, but, perhaps most importantly, from the unacceptability of fragmentation of security into parts, from the recognition of the indivisibility of security on the European continent. Because to whatever alliances and to whatever treaties we belong, in the long run, this does not ensure against the whole variety of problems. A new, an international platform is necessary for this.

specifies that it was “an attack on South Ossetia last year” («нападение на Южную Осетию в прошлом году»), suppressing other articulations of the crisis (e.g., Russo–Georgian war). “The crisis of the treaty on conventional armed forces in Europe” («кризис договора об обычных вооружённых силах в Европе») triggers the value assumption that the treaty is desirable and its crisis is comparable to military crises.

“These examples can be multiplied” («эти примеры можно множить») implies that, since Medvedev does not add specific examples, he believes that he has already made his point. «Множить» (“to multiply”) emphasizes the great number of possible further examples. It remains unclear how an “example” is defined: a small-scale military conflict (the Caucasian crisis), large-scale military conflict (the military operation in the Balkans), issues with a treaty (the crisis of the CFE treaty), issues with international recognition of a new country (the recognition of Kosovo). It also remains unclear as to who is to provide the exhaustive list of examples, but the implication is that this can be done solely by Russia, as it is Medvedev’s and Russia’s viewpoint that is being shared (“in our opinion” («на наш взгляд»)).

In “therefore, I suppose that decisions of such kind can be developed on the basis of a multifaceted cooperation between the Russian Federation, the European Union, and the United States of America” («поэтому я полагаю, что такого рода решения могут развиваться на основе многопланового сотрудничества между Российской Федерацией, Евросоюзом, Соединёнными Штатами Америки»), “therefore” («поэтому») refers back to Medvedev’s constructed need to seriously deal with European security architecture. Here, the new security architecture is articulated with multifaceted cooperation between Russia, the EU, and the U.S. “Multifaceted” («многоплановое») implies that the cooperation is not limited to security matters and that Russia seeks being very close to the EU and the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis, signaling their importance in Russia’s identity construction. Medvedev articulates the new security architecture in Europe with strengthened trust in Europe. In “can only be found through strengthening trust in Europe” («могут находиться только за счёт укрепления доверия в Европе»), the propositional assumption is that trust is not as strong as it should be. This implies that Medvedev’s (and, by extension, Russia’s) desired closeness of Russia, the EU, and the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis does not currently exist.

In “I suppose” («я полагаю»), Medvedev constructs himself at the deictic center. However, there is a remarkable discrepancy between a rather medium epistemic modality in “I suppose” («я полагаю») and the previous urging to deal with European security to avoid crises. The cooperation on European security architecture is not constructed as a common ground, but as Medvedev’s vision, implying that Medvedev anticipates a negative response from the EU and the U.S. (triggered by “can be developed” («могут развиваться»)).

In “it is precisely in this regard that the idea of a large European security treaty was formulated” («в этом плане и была сформулирована идея большого европейского договора о безопасности»), the European Security Treaty is

articulated with cooperation between the U.S., the EU, and Russia and increased trust in Europe. Medvedev stresses that the treaty “has to become not just a set of declarations, but a legally binding document” («должен стать не просто набором деклараций, а юридически обязывающим документом»), where “has to” («должен») expresses the highest level of deontic modality. By saying “in our view” («на наш взгляд») and constructing Russia at the deictic center, Medvedev, on the one hand, implicitly strengthens his argument as produced by the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right, but, on the other hand, downplays Russia’s commitment by making the propositional assumption that this view might be Russia’s alone.

In “not just a set of declarations” («не просто набор деклараций») emphasizes the importance of a binding agreement. The implication is that Russia lacks trust with respect to the EU and the U.S., but a legally-binding treaty can increase trust. Thus, for Medvedev, dealing seriously with European security architecture means eventually producing a legally binding document. Here, the European Security Treaty is also articulated with equality and respect among partners, implying that the two are currently absent. Since Russia is at the deictic center in “in our view” («на наш взгляд»), the implication is that it is Russia that is experiencing the lack of equality and respect in its relations with the EU and the U.S.

In “it has to proceed from a variety of principles of international law, but, perhaps most importantly, from the unacceptability of fragmentation of security into parts, from the recognition of the indivisibility of security on the European continent” («он должен исходить из самых разных принципов международного права, но, может быть, самое важное – из недопустимости фрагментации безопасности на части, из признания неделимости безопасности на европейском континенте»), the propositional assumption is that international law is less important here than the indivisibility of security on the European continent. This principle is constructed as the most important («самое важное»), fragmentation of security as unacceptable. Therefore, Medvedev has a very strong deontic commitment to the indivisibility of security in Europe, although he tries to downplay it with “perhaps” («может быть»). The propositional assumption in “recognition of the indivisibility” («признание неделимости») is that there are also those who do not recognize this indivisibility. Medvedev seeks to articulate the European Security Treaty with indivisible security and suppress the articulation of European security with fragmentation into parts.

In “to whatever alliances and to whatever treaties we belong, in the long run, this does not ensure against the whole variety of problems” («в какие бы альянсы, в какие бы договоры мы ни входили, в конечном счёте это не страхует от самых разных проблем»), Medvedev seeks to suppress the articulation of security with belonging to alliances and treaties. In “we belong” («мы входим»), the deictic center is formed by the EU, the U.S., and Russia, which places them close to each other on the spatial-modal axis and constructs them as seeing the same problems and seeking to avoid them. In “the whole variety of

problems” («от самых разных проблем»), no agent is defined who is to blame for their occurrence.

As a result, Medvedev stresses that “a new, an international platform is necessary for this” («нужна новая, нужна международная площадка для этого»), repeating «нужна» (“necessary”) twice, expressing his strong deontic commitment. “International” («международная») apparently consists of Russia, the EU, and the U.S. A new international platform is also implicitly articulated with the European Security Treaty, or a legally binding treaty in which Russia, the EU, and the U.S. trust and respect each other. This implies maximal proximity between the EU, the U.S., and Russia on the spatial-modal axis. However, since Medvedev demands that the treaty be legally binding, the implication is that there are, and will be, divergences between the three, and by making the treaty legally binding, Medvedev wants to ascertain that the EU and the U.S. will be attentive to Russia’s viewpoint.

The fourth extract comes from the extended meeting of the Collegium of the Ministry of Defense on 5 March 2010. Among other things, Medvedev said that conflict potential as well as unsettled problems next to Russia’s borders constitute potential threat to Russia’s national security. At the same time, Russia is working hard to consolidate positive trends in contemporary international politics like drafting of the New START Treaty with the U.S. and resuming of full-scale contacts between Russia and NATO:

Барометром наших отношений с Соединёнными Штатами Америки, с Североатлантическим альянсом во многом является реакция на российскую инициативу о заключении Договора о европейской безопасности. Определяющим фактором здесь будет степень готовности наших партнёров закрепить в юридически обязывающей форме приверженность принципу неделимости безопасности в Европе. Сейчас обсуждение этого документа идёт достаточно активно. Убеждён, что предлагаемый нами Договор – это как раз тот формат, в рамках которого можно предотвратить различные региональные конфликты, прежде всего на Европейском континенте, в том числе конфликты, подобные грузино-осетинскому.

К сожалению, далеко не все страны и политики извлекли из событий августа 2008 года соответствующие уроки. К сожалению, продолжается восстановление военного потенциала Грузии, причём за счёт военной поддержки извне. Учитывая этот фактор, а также сложную социально-экономическую ситуацию на Кавказе, мною было принято решение о создании Северо-Кавказского федерального округа. Это позволит в том числе повысить эффективность взаимодействия находящихся там силовых структур. (Medvedev 2010a)⁴⁰

⁴⁰ The barometer of our relations with the United States of America, with the North Atlantic Alliance in many respects is the reaction to the Russian initiative to conclude European Security Treaty. The determining factor here will be the degree of readiness of our partners to fix, in a legally binding form, a commitment to the principle of indivisibility of security in Europe. Now, the discussion of this document is quite active.

At the deictic center in “our relations” («наши отношения») is Russia. “Our relations” increases the proximity on the spatial-modal axis between Russia on the one hand and the U.S. and NATO on the other hand. However, in “the barometer of our relations with the United States of America, with the North Atlantic Alliance in many respects, is the reaction to the Russian initiative to conclude European Security Treaty” («барометром наших отношений с Соединёнными Штатами Америки, с Североатлантическим альянсом во многом является реакция на российскую инициативу о заключении Договора о европейской безопасности»), the propositional assumption is that the barometer will show whether the U.S. and NATO are actually near to or remote from Russia on the spatial-modal axis but that, currently, this cannot be defined. Notably, the EU is absent from this list, the implication here being that Russia needs no barometer in its relations with the EU.

Through the barometer, relations between Russia on the one hand and the U.S. and NATO on the other hand are articulated with the European Security Treaty. The latter is explicitly constructed as the Russian initiative and reactions to this initiative as indicative of the U.S.’s and NATO’s relations with Russia. This implies Russia’s special role within the treaty. “In many respects” («во многом») triggers the propositional assumption that the reaction to the treaty is not the only indicator of the U.S.’s and NATO’s attitudes to Russia. Still, the implication is that Russia’s attitude to the U.S. and NATO develops in response to their attitude to Russia. Notably, it is Russia who chooses the barometer and assumes decisive role in assessing the state of the U.S.’s and NATO’s relations with Russia.

Medvedev specifies that a mere reaction, even if it is positive, will not suffice: “The determining factor here will be the degree of readiness of our partners to fix, in a legally binding form, a commitment to the principle of indivisibility of security in Europe” («Определяющим фактором здесь будет степень готовности наших партнёров закрепить в юридически обязывающей форме приверженность принципу неделимости безопасности в Европе»). In “our partners” («наши партнёры»), the deictic center is formed by Russia, and it embraces the U.S. and NATO, constructing the U.S. and NATO close to Russia on the spatial-modal axis and, hence, implicitly expecting a necessary degree of readiness to sign the European Security Treaty. In “the

I am convinced that our proposed treaty is exactly the format in the framework of which it is possible to prevent various regional conflicts, primarily on the European continent, including conflicts like the Georgian–Ossetian one.

Unfortunately, not all countries and politicians have learned the corresponding lessons from the events of August 2008. Unfortunately, restoration of the military potential of Georgia continues, and, what is more, at the expense of military support from abroad. Considering this factor, as well as the difficult socio-economic situation in the Caucasus, I made a decision to create the North Caucasian Federal District. This will allow, among other things, to enhance the effectiveness of the interaction of the power structures present there.

degree of readiness” («степень готовности»), Medvedev constructs readiness as a continuum. It remains unclear what degree of readiness qualifies as the “determining factor” («определяющий фактор»), but the implication is that ultimately Russia will decide this.

In “to fix, in a legally binding form” («закрепить в юридически обязывающей форме»), being committed to a principle is articulated with fixing it in a legally binding form. This implies Russia’s distrust of the U.S.’s and NATO’s commitment, which places Russia at the remote end of the modal axis from the U.S. and NATO. The implication is that, unless there are legal obligations, the U.S. and NATO will violate the principle. So, Medvedev implicitly constructs Russia as the champion of the indivisibility of security in Europe. Here, Medvedev pursues structural closure and, thus, clarity: he seeks to fix the European Security Treaty with the indivisibility of security in Europe and, at the same time, with good relations of Russia with the U.S. and NATO. The implication is that, if Russia’s relations with the U.S. and NATO are poor, security in Europe is divided. To achieve his aim, Medvedev establishes the European Security Treaty as “a barometer” and its signing as “a determining factor” to ensure that Russia’s relations with the U.S. and NATO are good enough and that the U.S. and NATO observe the principle of the indivisibility of security in Europe.

In “now, the discussion of this document is quite active” («сейчас обсуждение этого документа идёт достаточно активно»), Medvedev reiterates his implicit positive expectations regarding the treaty. “Discussion” («обсуждение») and “proceeds actively” («идёт /.../ активно») trigger the propositional assumption that Russia’s initiative is treated seriously. “Quite active” («достаточно активно») implies that the process could be more active. The time for discussion is “now” («сейчас»), whereas the implicit expectation is that the final decision will be made later.

Medvedev constructs Russia at the deictic center in “our proposed treaty” («предлагаемый нами Договор») and himself as the voice of the deictic center. In “I am convinced that our proposed treaty is exactly the format /.../” («Убеждён, что предлагаемый нами Договор – это как раз тот формат /.../»), “convinced” («убеждён») and “exactly” («как раз») express the highest level of epistemic modality, signaling structural closure. The propositional assumption is that no format, other than that of the European Security Treaty, can offer the framework in which various regional conflicts, like the Georgian–Ossetian one, can be prevented. Hence, Medvedev seeks to fix the European Security Treaty with strong European security, implicitly suppressing all other articulations of European security. Notably, “it is possible to prevent” («можно предотвратить») triggers the propositional assumption that, after the signing of the treaty, various regional conflicts may still occur.

The emphasis on the European Security Treaty as Russia’s proposed solution, as well as the highest level of epistemic modality with respect to the prevention of conflicts like the Georgian–Ossetian one implies that Russia knows why these conflicts occur and how to prevent them. Medvedev creates implicit

common ground between the potential signatories of the treaty, suppressing articulations of those conflicts with other interpretations. Therefore, the implication is that, within the framework of the treaty, all of Russia's geopolitical spheres of influence will remain intact and Russia will deal with security there, but on the basis of the legally binding European Security Treaty, in which Russia will play a central role.

In “not all countries and politicians have learned the corresponding lessons from the events of August 2008” («к сожалению, далеко не все страны и политики извлекли из событий августа 2008 года соответствующие уроки»), the propositional assumption is that some countries and politicians have learned the lessons but «далеко не все» [far from all] emphasizes that this number should have been greater. The precise nature of “the corresponding lessons” remains obscure. Unlearned lessons are articulated with the restoration of the military potential of Georgia and, implicitly, with potentially hostile intentions of Russia's neighbours which can produce conflicts elsewhere.

Medvedev articulates the prevention of the Georgian–Ossetian conflict with the suspension military aid to Georgia. Hence, the countries who provide it (above all, the U.S.) are implicitly constructed as undermining European security, while Russia is constructed as concerned with it. Anaphoric “unfortunately” («к сожалению») implies that the matter is very important to Russia but this has not changed the attitude of other countries.

Medvedev constructs “this factor” («этот фактор»), foreign military aid to Georgia, along with the difficult socio-economic situation in the Caucasus, as the reason for creating the new North Caucasian Federal District. In “this will allow, among other things, to improve the effectiveness of the interaction of the power structures present there” («это позволит в том числе повысить эффективность взаимодействия находящихся там силовых структур»), «повысить эффективность» [increase the effectiveness] triggers the propositional assumption that the current level of effectiveness does not suffice and the value assumption that more effective power structures in the Caucasus are desirable. The implication is that Russia is seeking to balance its power structures in North Caucasus to match Georgia's military potential; hence, the Georgian–Ossetian conflict is also constructed as a great concern to Russia and its power structures. Consolidating its military resources in the North Caucasus, Russia is implicitly preparing for a possible return of the conflict of August 2008 (this is another implicit meaning of “unfortunately” («к сожалению») and “the corresponding lessons” («соответствующие уроки»). The conflict is implicitly constructed as being between Russia and those who provide military aid to Georgia (mostly the U.S.). As a result, the U.S. and Russia are implicitly constructed at the two remote ends of the spatial-modal axis. This reduces the likelihood of the European Security Treaty, articulated with the unproblematic unity of Russia, the EU, and the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis.

The fifth extract is from Medvedev's article *Mission: Partnership* in the Slovak newspaper *Pravda* on 6 April 2010, the day before Medvedev's official visit to Slovakia:

Такая прочная безопасность нужна сегодня всем, кто живёт на пространстве Евроатлантики. Предложенный Россией проект договора о европейской безопасности призван подвести окончательную черту под эпохой «холодной войны» и закрепить в международном праве принцип неделимости безопасности. На практике это значит, что государства и международные организации не могут укреплять свою безопасность за счёт безопасности других стран и организаций.

Уроки страшных и разрушительных войн убедительно показали всему миру, что понятие безопасность – это не эфемерная категория. Россия, на долю которой выпали самые тяжёлые испытания и самые большие жертвы прошлой войны, стремится действовать здесь чётко и предсказуемо. Мы ведём активную работу в сфере разоружения и контроля над вооружениями, стремимся добиться здесь реального прогресса. Важнейший шаг в этом направлении – новый Договор о мерах по дальнейшему сокращению и ограничению стратегических наступательных вооружений. Подписание этого исторического документа с Президентом США Б.Обамой планируется 8 апреля с.г. в Праге, куда я направлюсь после визита в Словакию. (Medvedev 2010b)⁴¹

In this excerpt, “enduring security” («прочная безопасность») is articulated with indivisible security and with the European Security Treaty. “Is needed today” («нужна сегодня») triggers the propositional assumption that it does and did not exist. In “for all who live in the Euro–Atlantic area” («всем, кто живёт на пространстве Евроатлантики»), Medvedev creates a common ground, claiming that everybody would benefit from his project. This expresses the hegemonic nature of the project and implicitly suppresses other articulations of enduring security in the Euro–Atlantic area.

In “the draft of the European Security Treaty proposed by Russia is designed [called upon] to draw the final line under the Cold War era and to consolidate the principle of the indivisibility of security in international law” («предложенный Россией проект договора о европейской безопасности призван подвести окончательную черту под эпохой «холодной войны» и закрепить в

⁴¹ Such enduring security is needed today for all who live in the Euro–Atlantic area. The draft of the European Security Treaty proposed by Russia is designed [called upon] to draw the final line under the Cold War era and to consolidate the principle of the indivisibility of security in international law. In practice, this means that countries and international organizations cannot strengthen their security at the expense of the security of other countries and organizations.

The lessons of terrible and destructive wars convincingly showed the whole world that the concept of security is not an ephemeral category. Russia, who suffered the most difficult challenges and the biggest number of victims in the previous war, strives to act here clearly and predictably. We are actively working in the field of disarmament and arms control, we are striving to achieve real progress here. A crucial step in this direction is the new treaty on measures for further reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms. The signing of this historic document with U.S. President Barack Obama is scheduled for 8 April this year in Prague, where I will go after a visit to Slovakia.

международном праве принцип неделимости безопасности»), the European Security Treaty is articulated with the end of the Cold War, articulated with divided security. Both “final line” («окончательная черта») and «закрепить» [to fix] (“to consolidate”) signal structural closure, meaning that, when the European Security Treaty is signed, the Cold War is completely over and the principle of the indivisibility of security is completely fixed in the international law. The value assumption is that the Cold War is undesirable and, hence, divided security is undesirable as well. The propositional assumption is that the principle of the indivisibility of security is not sufficiently consolidated in the international law, and, thus, the Cold War era is not over. This implicitly places Russia and the West apart on the spatial-modal axis. Another propositional assumption is that the Cold War era can be ended which, in turn, reduces the distance between Russia and the West on the spatial-modal axis. The European Security Treaty is articulated with Russia in “proposed by Russia” («предложенный Россией»); the existential assumption here is that Russia’s draft of the treaty already exists.

In “in practice, this means that countries and international organizations cannot strengthen their security at the expense of the security of other countries and organizations” («на практике это значит, что государства и международные организации не могут укреплять свою безопасность за счёт безопасности других стран и организаций»), the consolidation of the principle of indivisible security is articulated with the inability of countries and international organizations to strengthen their security at the expense of others. In “in practice, this means” («на практике это значит»), Medvedev creates a difference between theory and practice in order to stress what is meant by the consolidation of the principle, thus suppressing other articulations.

Since the principle of indivisibility of security is articulated with the end of the Cold War, it follows that the Cold War era is not over because Western countries and international organizations seek to strengthen their security at the expense of others (the East). Since Russia is constructed as the country seeking to end the Cold War, the implication is that Russia does not do so. The value assumption is that such behavior is strongly undesirable; therefore, the countries and organizations that do so are implicitly constructed as remote from Russia on the modal axis and as Other with respect to Russia and European security.

In “the lessons of terrible and destructive wars convincingly showed the whole world that the concept of security is not an ephemeral category” («уроки страшных и разрушительных войн убедительно показали всему миру, что понятие безопасность – это не эфемерная категория»), Medvedev is creating a common ground, articulating security of the whole world with durability. The implication is that a major lesson of previous wars is that world security should be enduring. As Medvedev articulates enduring security with equal security, the implication is that, if equal security is not created, wars might reoccur. To emphasize his point, Medvedev constructs wars as “terrible and destructive” («страшных и разрушительных войн»), the value assumption being that they are strongly undesirable, while learning lessons from wars is strongly desirable.

“Convincingly” («убедительно») conveys a very high level of epistemic modality and signals structural closure.

In “Russia, who suffered the most difficult challenges and the biggest number of victims in the previous war, strives to act here clearly and predictably” («Россия, на долю которой выпали самые тяжёлые испытания и самые большие жертвы прошлой войны, стремится действовать здесь чётко и предсказуемо»), the implication is that Russia sacrificed and suffered the most for world security and, hence, knows how to maintain it. This way, Russia is articulated with security and constructed as having a special role in decision-making on world security. Here, clearness («чёткость») and predictability («предсказуемость») are constructed as major requirements for maintaining enduring security. The implication is that Russia cannot be considered a threat to anyone’s security because of its transparent actions. However, the propositional assumption in “strives to act” («стремится действовать») is that Russia is not always acting predictably.

Active work in the field of disarmament and arms control is articulated with enduring security. The value assumption is that progress in disarmament and arms control is desirable and Russia’s effort in the name of this progress is stressed. Russia is striving for “real progress” («реальный прогресс»), as opposed to progress in theory. Medvedev articulates real progress with signing of the New START, constructed as “a historic document” («исторический документ»). One implication here is that such real results are rare in the sphere of disarmament, and the New START is constructed as “historic” («исторический»). Another implication is that Russia contributes to history by creating and signing historic documents. On the other hand, Medvedev constructs disarmament and arms control as a direction («направление») on the spatial-modal axis toward which steps need to be taken. The New START is constructed as “a crucial step”, meaning that other steps have been made before (triggered by “further reduction and limitation” («по дальнейшему сокращению и ограничению»)) and can be made in the future. Thus, the New START, through being constructed as an important step in disarmament and arms control, is articulated with indivisible security and, hence, with the European Security Treaty.

At the deictic center “we” in “we are actively working” («мы ведём активную работу») and “we are striving” («стремимся») are Russian politicians and Russia as a whole. Here, Russia is constructed as an active and engaged participant in disarmament and arms control, while no other participants and their roles are explicitly mentioned. The implication is that Russia is working alone (just like no equal sacrifices were made for world security during WWII). In “with the U.S. President Barack Obama” («с Президентом США Б. Обамой»), participation of Obama and the U.S. in the New START is finally mentioned. Still, in “where I will go after a visit to Slovakia” («куда я направлюсь после визита в Словакию»), Medvedev constructs himself at the deictic center, stressing his own active role in the signing of the treaty. Through signing of the New START, the U.S. and Russia are constructed as close to each other on the

spatial-modal axis, and Obama (together with the U.S.) is tacitly interpellated into articulating the New START with the enduring and indivisible security. However, since the latter was previously articulated with preventing the U.S. from strengthening its security at the expense of, among other countries and organizations, Russia, the implication is that the U.S. and Russia are and will be always-already constructed at the two remote ends of the spatial-modal axis with respect to each other.

The sixth excerpt comes from Medvedev's speech at the Ceremony for the Presentation of Foreign Ambassadors' Letters of Credentials on 18 October 2010. Medvedev mentioned that, immediately after the meeting, he was leaving for the tripartite Germany–France–Russia summit in Deauville to negotiate the European Security Treaty. For Medvedev, a unified approach to security serves as the democratic foundation of modern international relations. Medvedev stressed that democracy had to be present not only in domestic politics, but also in foreign relations⁴²:

Мы обсудим жизнь в Европе, обсудим обеспечение европейской безопасности. Хотел бы напомнить, что именно на это направлена и та идея, которая была высказана мною в отношении Договора о европейской безопасности. Нам хотелось бы, чтобы и этот, возможно, документ, и другие усилия, которые предпринимает наша страна в сфере обеспечения безопасности, находили достойный отклик в мире.

Впрочем, задача обеспечения безопасности актуальна, конечно, не только для Европы, но и для Азиатско-Тихоокеанского региона, для Африки, для Америки. Поэтому по всем этим направлениям мы, естественно, будем продолжать свои усилия.

Задача продвижения такой объединительной международной повестки дня, совершенствования институтов безопасности полностью коррелируется с задачей модернизации нашей страны, нашей экономики, развития нашей политической системы.

Проявлением такого подхода является и преодоление стереотипов, отказ от прежнего мышления. И я считаю, что за последнее время это удаётся делать. Проявлением именно такого подхода стало и развитие наших контактов с Соединёнными Штатами Америки, и начало оздоровления российско-польских отношений, заключение договора между Россией и Норвегией о разграничении морских пространств в Баренцевом море и целый ряд других внешнеполитических событий, в которых принимала участие наша страна. (Medvedev 2010c)⁴³

⁴² Medvedev refers to his speech on the standards of democracy at the Yaroslavl Global Policy Forum.

⁴³ We will discuss life in Europe, discuss the ensuring of European security. I would like to remind that this is exactly what, among other things, the idea that was expressed by me in relation to the European Security Treaty is aimed at. We would like that this possible

At the deictic center “we” in “we will discuss life in Europe” («мы обсудим жизнь в Европе») are President Nicolas Sarkozy, President Dmitri Medvedev, and Chancellor Angela Merkel, representing France, Russia, and Germany, respectively. Here, Medvedev, Merkel, and Sarkozy are constructed very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis as close partners. Life in Europe is articulated with the ensuring of European security («обеспечение европейской безопасности»), both being constructed as topics of discussion at the summit. As Medvedev, representing Russia, participates in the discussion of life and security in Europe, the implication is that Russia belongs to Europe. Medvedev does not differentiate between life in or security of Europe and Russia. Hence, here, Russia is articulated with Europe and European security.

In “I would like to remind that this is exactly what, among other things, the idea that was expressed by me in relation to the European Security Treaty is aimed at” («хотел бы напомнить, что именно на это направлена и та идея, которая была высказана мною в отношении Договора о европейской безопасности»), Medvedev articulates the ensuring of European security with the European Security Treaty. However, the latter is constructed in abstract terms as “the idea” («та идея») that was expressed by Medvedev and about which he “would like to remind” («хотел бы напомнить») others. The latter triggers the propositional assumption that Medvedev’s idea may have been forgotten and needs to be reiterated. The implication is that there is an obstacle on the way to realizing this idea. “This is exactly what /.../” («именно на это /.../») triggers the propositional assumption that Medvedev’s idea may be aimed at achieving other goals. Therefore, Medvedev is in a dialogic relation in “I would like to remind”: he is addressing the voices who articulate the European Security Treaty with other aims than ensuring European security and seeks to suppress these articulations.

Medvedev is at the deictic center in “I would like to remind” («хотел бы напомнить») and “expressed by me” («высказана мною»), stressing his own input into European security. However, “I would like to remind” («хотел бы напомнить») expresses a medium level of deontic modality. “Among other

document, and also other efforts that our country is making in the sphere of ensuring security, find a decent response in the world.

However, the task of ensuring security is topical, of course, not only for Europe, but also for the Asia–Pacific region, for Africa, and for America. Therefore, in all these directions, we will naturally continue our efforts.

The task of promoting such a unifying international agenda, improving the security institutions, is fully correlated with the task of modernizing our country, our economy, the development of our political system.

The manifestation of such an approach is also the overcoming of stereotypes, and the rejection of former thinking. And I believe that, recently, it has been possible to do it. Manifestations of exactly this approach include the development of our contacts with the United States of America, the beginning of the recovery of Russian–Polish relations, the conclusion of a treaty between Russia and Norway on the delimitation of maritime areas in the Barents Sea, and a number of other foreign policy events in which our country has participated.

things” («и») triggers the propositional assumption that Medvedev (and, by extension, Russia as a whole) has a number of ideas about ensuring European security and the European Security Treaty is not the dominant one. This way, Medvedev and Russia are implicitly constructed as engaged in issues of European security. However, by downplaying the importance of his idea, Medvedev implicitly downplays his own importance and political influence.

In “we would like that this possible document, and, also, other efforts that our country is making in the sphere of ensuring security, find a decent response in the world” («нам хотелось бы, чтобы и этот, возможно, документ, и другие усилия, которые предпринимает наша страна в сфере обеспечения безопасности, находили достойный отклик в мире»), the deictic center is formed by Medvedev, other Russian politicians, and Russia as a whole. The focus is on Russia’s efforts in the field of security, while other players are not explicitly mentioned or even implicitly included into the deictic center. Hence, Russia is articulated with security, constructed as an important player in this field. However, the propositional assumption is that Russia’s efforts do not find a sufficient response in the world. This implicitly distances Russia from other countries, including European ones, on the spatial-modal axis. This also implies that, by expecting a response from the world community, Russia wants dialog, not isolation. Another propositional assumption is that the European Security Treaty as well as Russia’s other efforts related to security deserve such a response: «достойный» [worthy] (“decent”) triggers the value assumption that efforts made are desirable (and worthy). The implication is that the world benefits from Russia’s efforts.

In “this possible document” («этот, возможно, документ»), the European Security Treaty is constructed as an abstract effort, which has not yet become a document. Therefore, the implication is that a decent response from the world would mean negotiating the document on the basis of Russia’s proposals and signing it. Although the treaty is foregrounded and differentiated in “this possible document, and also other efforts /.../” («и этот, возможно, документ, и другие усилия /.../»), it still remains articulated, along with all of Russia’s other efforts, within the chain of equivalence constructed around ensuring security. Hence, Medvedev’s proposed and promoted European Security Treaty is subdued by the more general project of promoting Russia’s prominence in the field of global security.

In “however, the task of ensuring security is topical, of course, not only for Europe /.../” («впрочем, задача обеспечения безопасности актуальна, конечно, не только для Европы /.../»), the propositional assumption is that everything Medvedev said earlier actually concerned ensuring security in Europe. Hence, “the world”, apparently means, above all, the EU and NATO. “However” («впрочем») and “not only” («не только») imply that, for Russia, security in Europe is the most topical issue. Medvedev creates a chain of difference by dividing the task of ensuring security regionally. These regions are constructed as directions in which Russia is making security-related efforts. “Will /.../ continue” («будем продолжать») triggers the propositional

assumption that Russia has already been making such efforts in these regions. Medvedev articulates the topicality of security with the necessity of Russia's efforts. Using the words conveying the highest level of epistemic modality, i.e., "of course" («конечно») and "naturally" («естественно») to construct Russia's efforts, Medvedev imposes common ground and attempts at structural closure, constructing Russia's efforts as necessary and indisputable (since voices of the regions are mute). Russia is thus constructed as an indispensable and ubiquitous force. As a result, the protection of world security is Russia's hegemonic move.

This active role of Russia as a necessary force in ensuring security worldwide is constructed as "a unifying international agenda" («объединительная международная повестка дня»), the promotion of which Medvedev constructs as a task. "Unifying" («объединительная») implies Russia's participation in ensuring security in all regions, while "international" («международная») interpellates these regions into approving of Russia's participation. Medvedev also constructs a task of "improving the security institutions" («совершенствование институтов безопасности»). The propositional assumption is that the current security institutions are not sufficiently effective and can/need to be improved. Since this task is constructed and voiced by Medvedev, and the only country constructed at the deictic center so far has been Russia, the implication is that Russia seeks to play a central role in improving security institutions worldwide.

Furthermore, the hegemonic move within Russia's foreign policy (ensuring of global security) "fully correlates" («полностью коррелируется») with Medvedev's hegemonic move within domestic politics (to partially fix Russian economy and society with modernization). Medvedev articulates the promotion of a unifying international agenda with the modernization of Russia, its economy, and political system. The implication is that, as Russia plays a central role in world security, this positively influences Russia's modernization and the development of its political system. Thus, the opposite is also true as the result of this correlation: if Russia is prevented from being central in world security, this will have a negative influence on the process of its modernization.

The propositional assumptions in "the task of modernizing our country, our economy, the development of our political system" («задача модернизации нашей страны, нашей экономики, развития нашей политической системы») are that Russia and its economy need to be modernized and its political system needs to be developed. Here, Medvedev is in an implicit dialog with the West, since the West articulates Russia with an underdeveloped political system and an unmodernized economy. By rearticulating the Russia desired by the West with the progress of Russia's security-related hegemonic move, Medvedev interpellates the West into supporting this move.

In "manifestation of such an approach is also the overcoming of stereotypes, and the rejection of former thinking" («проявлением такого подхода является и преодоление стереотипов, отказ от прежнего мышления»), "such an approach" («такой подход») refers back to the international agenda constructed by Medvedev. "Such an approach" is articulated with the overcoming of stereo-

types and the rejection of former thinking. The existential assumption is that stereotypes and former thinking still exist, but the value assumption is that both are undesirable. “Also” («и») implies that such an approach is articulated with Russia’s modernization and the development of Russia’s political system, and, therefore, with Russia’s central role in world security. The implication is that as Russia’s security-related hegemonic move is progressing, and Russia is articulated with world security, stereotypes and former thinking will fade away.

In “and I believe that, recently, it has been possible to do it” («и я считаю, что за последнее время это удастся сделать»), Medvedev places himself at the deictic center and speaks on behalf of Russia. Due to the passive construction in “it has been possible” («это удастся»), it remains unclear who made the efforts. “Recently” («за последнее время») triggers the propositional assumption that this was not possible earlier. So, on the temporal axis, Medvedev implicitly constructs a turning point which occurred recently and after which overcoming of stereotypes and former thinking has become possible. In “manifestations of exactly this approach include” («проявлением именно такого подхода стало»), Medvedev articulates “development” («развитие») of Russia’s contacts with the U.S. (the propositional assumption being that they used to be underdeveloped), the beginning of the “recovery” («оздоровление») of Russian–Polish relations (the propositional assumption being that they used to be ailing), the conclusion of a treaty between Russia and Norway on the maritime areas in the Barents Sea, and a number of other foreign policy events in which Russia has participated within the chain of equivalence around the unifying international agenda, boiling down to Russia’s prominence in world security. The propositional assumption is that problematic situations can be solved when stereotypes and former thinking are abolished, implying that stereotypes persist on both sides involved.

6.2.1. Discussion

In this context, Medvedev promoted his hegemonic move to partially fix security with Russia’s proposed new global security architecture and the European Security Treaty. The treaty was constructed as uniting Russia, the EU, and the U.S. behind a set of certain transparent rules of behavior and approaches to security. Medvedev showed a high level of deontic commitment to his project and attempted at structural closure: if the treaty was to be concluded, no further discussions would be necessary. Medvedev articulated the treaty with ensuring stability in Europe, while unsuccessfully seeking to suppress the articulation of the treaty as an alternative to the existing security mechanisms in Europe. Medvedev articulated cooperation in the framework of the treaty with multifaceted cooperation, trust, equality, and respect between Russia, the U.S., and the EU. Hence, the treaty was implicitly constructed as a legally binding platform on which the EU and the U.S. needed to attend to Russia’s stances. The New START was constructed as a step toward indivisible security in the Euro–

Atlantic area within Medvedev's project of the European Security Treaty. In this context, the U.S. tended to be, on the one hand, implicitly constructed as Russia's Other in terms of security (especially pertaining to Georgian–Ossetian conflict) and, on the other hand, explicitly as a partner in signing the New START. The U.S. was also constructed as a crucial partner in drafting the European Security Treaty.

At the level of implications and propositional assumptions, it turned out that, although Russia wanted European countries and NATO to appreciate Russia's efforts in the field of European security, Russia continued them anyway. In this context, one implication was that Russia can resort to military actions if necessary. Medvedev articulated the topicality of ensuring security in various regions of the world with the necessity of Russia's security-related efforts there. Additionally, Medvedev articulated Russia's foreign policy aims with Russia's domestic politics, so that the more influential Russia is in the issues of global security, the more effective Russia is in modernizing its economy and developing its political system. Medvedev also articulated Russia's prominence in global security with the foreign policy approach that abolishes stereotypes and former thinking. On the temporal axis, Medvedev constructed a turning point after which abolishing of stereotypes and former thinking became possible, implying that this tendency will continue in future as well.

It can be concluded that Medvedev sought to promote his project of the European Security Treaty quite actively, articulating the treaty with various aspects prominent for Russia's foreign and domestic policy. However, he sometimes expressed rather medium or even low epistemic and deontic modality with respect to the treaty, and constructed it as one of the many efforts Russia was making in the field of European security. As a result, the importance and influence of both Medvedev and his project were severely downplayed.

6.3. Context 2: Elaboration and ratification of the New START Treaty

The New START Treaty was a crucial landmark for U.S.–Russian relations as well as the starting point of the U.S.–Russian reset. The previous START Treaty, concluded in 1991, expired on 4 December 2009 and it was necessary to substitute it with a newer version which would be valid for ten subsequent years. Taking into account the importance and duration of the treaty, Russia insisted, from the very beginning of the negotiations, on interdependence between the New START and implementation of missile defense capabilities, so that, if these capabilities were to be significantly expanded, Russia would have the right to withdraw from the treaty. While Obama generally sought to avoid the topic of missile defense in his discussions of the New START, Medvedev tended to emphasize the issue on most occasions. As a result, a

remark on missile defense was incorporated into the preamble of the New START.

The first excerpt is from Medvedev's interview with Italian media on 5 July 2009. The question asked is whether the issue of missile defense shield is connected with strategic offensive arms reduction, so that, without the solution of the issue, it is impossible to deal with the new agreement. Medvedev answers that these two matters are understandably connected. So, in Medvedev's view, the limitation of strategic offensive arms has to be viewed in correlation with missile defense capabilities:

Мы неоднократно говорили, и я об этом несколько раз говорил в последнее время, что мы против размещения соответствующих сил противоракетной обороны в Польше и в Чехии. И если предыдущая администрация Соединенных Штатов по этому вопросу занимала очень такую «упертую» позицию, то нынешняя администрация готова к обсуждению этой темы. Я думаю, что мы вполне способны здесь найти разумную развязку, ведь для того, чтобы решить этот вопрос, вовсе не обязательно перечеркивать все решения, которые были раньше. Достаточно проявить сдержанность, проявить способность к компромиссу. И тогда мы сможем договориться и по основному пакету нового договора по СНВ, и в то же время сможем договориться по вопросу того, как нам двигаться по линии противоракетной обороны. (Medvedev 2009)⁴⁴

In “we have said repeatedly /.../ that we are against /.../” («мы неоднократно говорили, /.../ что мы против /.../»), the deictic center is formed by Russian politicians and Russia as a whole. However, Medvedev differentiates himself from other Russian politicians, as well as from the previous presidential administration in “and I said this several times recently” («и я об этом несколько раз говорил в последнее время»). The propositional assumption is that although Medvedev is a new president, he has the same attitude to missile defense as previous and current Russian politicians. Thus, all Russian politicians are articulated in the chain of equivalence in opposition to missile defense. So, on the temporal axis, Medvedev constructs continuity in terms of Russia's stance on missile defense. Medvedev's and other Russian politicians' resolute stance is reflected in the highest level of epistemic modality (“we have said repeatedly” («мы неоднократно говорили»)) and in the highest level of

⁴⁴ We have said repeatedly, and I said this several times recently, that we are against the location of the corresponding forces of anti-missile defense in Poland and the Czech Republic. And if the previous administration of the United States took a very kind of *stubborn* position, then the current administration is ready for the discussion of this topic. I think that we are quite able to find a reasonable solution here because, in order to solve this issue, there is no need to cross out all the decisions which were [made] previously. It suffices to express restraint, to express the ability to make compromises. And in this case, we will be able to agree on the basic package of the new START agreement and, at the same time, we will be able to agree on the issue of how we should move along the line of anti-missile defense.

deontic modality (“we are against” («мы против»)). In the temporal marking “recently” («в последнее время»), the implication is that nothing in Russia’s attitude has changed. “Repeatedly” («неоднократно») and “several times” («несколько раз») trigger the propositional assumption that Russian politicians need to repeat the same thing on many occasions, one implication being that Russia and its implicit interlocutors are involved in an intensive discursive struggle over missile defense.

In “if the previous administration of the United States took a very kind of *stubborn* position, then the current administration is ready for the discussion of this topic” («если предыдущая администрация Соединенных Штатов по этому вопросу занимала очень такую «упёртую» позицию, то нынешняя администрация готова к обсуждению этой темы»), “stubborn” («упёртый») is articulated in opposition to readiness for discussion. “Упёртый” (“stubborn”) is a rather informal Russian word referring to somebody who is overly insistent on their position, like a ram. “A very /.../” («очень») intensifies the degree of stubbornness of previous U.S. administrations, implicitly constructed as inadequate. Still, Medvedev tries to soften his claim by using “kind of” («такая»).

In contrast to Russia’s current administration, in which there has been no recent change with respect to missile defense, the current U.S. administration is differentiated from the previous one. The value assumption is that being ready for discussion is desirable, since it is opposed to stubbornness. However, with its resolute position on the issue, just like the previous U.S. administration, Russia can be said to be also implicitly constructed as not inclined toward discussion (unless the discussion amounts to full acceptance of Russia’s position). Hence, in this matter, U.S.’s previous administration and Russia are constructed at the remote ends of the spatial-modal axis, while current U.S. administration is constructed as closer to Russia on the spatial-modal axis.

Several instances of Medvedev’s language use signal his flexibility. In “I think that we are quite able to find a reasonable solution here” («Я думаю, что мы вполне способны здесь найти разумную развязку»), Medvedev shows that, although he claims the opposite, he is still different from many Russian politicians and their stubborn position. Medvedev places himself at the deictic center and expresses his personal viewpoint. “Able to find a reasonable solution” triggers the propositional assumption that Medvedev is ready for discussion, just like the current U.S. administration. “A reasonable solution” («разумная развязка») implies that Medvedev is interested in a solution that makes sense. The existential assumption is that such a solution ultimately exists and the propositional assumption is that it can be found. Medvedev is reluctant to cross out previous agreements (“вовсе необязательно перечеркивать все решения, которые были раньше»), searches for the least sufficient effort to solve the issue («достаточно проявить»), and believes that a positive result is ultimately possible («и тогда мы сможем договориться»). Medvedev’s turn from stubbornness to flexibility is partly reflected in the shifts in the construction of the deictic center in this utterance: the first “we” is formed by Russia, while the U.S. is distanced from Russia on the spatial axis, and the first

“I” supports the first “we” (Russia). In the course of speaking, in the following “I”, Medvedev expresses his own opinion pertaining to the remaining instances of “we”, formed, although uneasily, by Russia and the U.S. Notably, Medvedev uses “we are quite able” («мы вполне способны») instead of a more neutral “we can” («мы можем»). An implication here is that “we” (the U.S. and Russia) inherently have the necessary ability to find a solution. “Quite” («вполне») signals a medium level of epistemic, as well as deontic, modality, implying that there is no urgency with respect to the issue and that reasonable solution is not too difficult to find.

In “because, in order to solve this issue /.../” («ведь для того, чтобы решить этот вопрос /.../»), the propositional assumption is that the issue is solvable. A reasonable solution is articulated with expressing restraint and ability to make compromises and in opposition to crossing out previous decisions. The deictic center “we” in “we are quite able” unites the U.S. and Russia, but with some uncertainty: “it suffices to express /.../” («достаточно проявить /.../») triggers the propositional assumption that the U.S. and Russia inherently possess restraint and the ability to compromise, but do not use them in solving the issue of missile defense; thus, the U.S. and Russia are implicitly distanced along the spatial-modal axis. However, Medvedev’s belief that the U.S. and Russia actually can express such qualities implicitly constructs the U.S. and Russia as closer to each other on the spatial-modal axis.

In “there is no need at all to cross out all the decisions which were [made] previously” («вовсе необязательно перечеркивать все решения, которые были раньше»), “cross out” («перечёркивать») triggers the propositional assumption that previous decisions can be perceived to be in conflict with reasonable solution on missile defense. The value assumption is that previous decisions are desirable and can be applied. “At all” («вовсе») serves to intensify the assumption. In “it suffices to express restraint, express the ability to make compromises” («достаточно проявить сдержанность, проявить способность к компромиссу»), the propositional assumption is that, to agree on missile defense, the U.S. and Russia either change previous decisions or change their attitudes. The value assumption is that change in the attitudes is preferable to that of the previous decisions.

“It suffices to express /.../” («достаточно проявить /.../») triggers the propositional assumption that there are also other necessary efforts to reach solution on missile defense, but they are less important than restraint and compromises. Hence, these two efforts are constructed as the necessary and sufficient conditions for agreeing on missile defense. Emphasis on these two factors expresses implicit opposition to Bush’s unilateral politics. These necessary and sufficient conditions are constructed to apply also when solving the issue of New START and probably other issues in U.S.–Russian relations. In “and in this case, we will be able to agree on the basic package of the new START agreement” («и тогда мы сможем договориться и по основному пакету нового договора по СНВ»), “in this case” («тогда») triggers the

propositional assumption that, in other case, if these conditions are not met, no agreement on the new START will occur.

This way Medvedev articulates missile defense and the New START with restraint and the ability to compromise rather than through the link between the limitation of strategic offensive arms and the corresponding missile defense capabilities (which, consequently, does not suffice). In articulating the New START with missile defense, Medvedev stresses that agreements on both issues are achieved “at the same time” («в то же время») (if achieved), establishing an inherent connection between the two.

In “we will be able to agree” («мы сможем договориться»), the deictic center is formed by the U.S. and Russia, but the propositional assumption is that Russia and the U.S. are not able to agree now, which places them apart on the spatial-modal axis. However, another propositional assumption is that agreement is possible, which implies that the U.S. and Russia can potentially be close on the spatial-modal axis. In “agree on the basic package of the new START agreement” («договориться и по основному пакету нового договора по СНВ»), the existential assumption is that a basic package of the New START exists, while “will be able to agree” triggers the propositional assumption that there are disagreements in relation to this package on both sides. One implied disagreement probably concerns missile defense, which is constructed as inherently connected to the New START.

In “we will be able to agree on the issue of how we should move along the line of anti-missile defense” («и в то же время сможем договориться по вопросу того, как нам двигаться по линии противоракетной обороны»), the existential assumption is that there is a “line” («линия») for Russia and the U.S. to move along. The implication is that the U.S. and Russia will agree on the package, while, “at the same time” («в то же время») moving along the line continuously. This implies that missile defense is a complicated issue. Thus, to articulate the New START with missile defense is fraught with difficulties, since they imply different processes. There is a history of “stubbornness” on missile defense but not on START talks. Hence, to articulate the New START with missile defense is, to a lesser extent, about correlating the offensive and defensive nuclear potentials, but, to a greater extent, a way to force moving along the line of missile defense. Medvedev’s urge to articulate the New START with missile defense reflects Russia’s continuing stubbornness.

The second extract is from Medvedev’s informal meeting with the leaders of the four parties represented in the Russian State Duma on 16 January 2010. The issues discussed concerned Medvedev’s annual address to the Federal Assembly on 12 November 2009, Russia’s political development, and foreign policy:

С учётом того, что я поставил перед вами вопрос о договоре о СНВ, то, конечно, переговоры у нас будут продолжены, они идут не просто, но в целом мы по многим позициям с американцами договорились, но в том, что касается законодательных процедур, я считаю это крайне важным, мы должны исходить из синхронности ратификации соответствующих документов.

Недопустима ситуация, которая когда-то сложилась в советский период, когда Советский Союз эти документы ратифицировал, а американцы этого не делали. Это паритетная вещь, и в этом заинтересованы оба государства: или мы вместе подготовленный договор, который действительно будет определённым образом просчитан, который будет отражать наши представления о стратегических ядерных силах на будущее, вместе ратифицируем, или этот процесс не может состояться.

Я считаю, что об этом должны знать наши американские партнёры. (Medvedev 2010a)⁴⁵

The deictic center in “I” in “I raised before you the issue” («я поставил перед вами вопрос») is Medvedev, while “you” («вами») refers to the leaders of the four political parties. The following deictic center “we” in “the negotiations between us” («переговоры у нас») incorporates Medvedev, Russian New START negotiations team as well as the U.S.’s New START negotiations team, excluding the four party leaders. The “we” in “we have agreed upon many positions with Americans” («мы по многим позициям с американцами договорились») excludes the U.S.’s New START negotiations team; the latter is somewhat distanced from Russia’s team along the spatial-modal axis as simply “Americans” (the latter neutrally meaning any U.S. citizen, but also frequently used to refer to the U.S. as Russia’s Other). In “we have to proceed from” («мы должны исходить»), the U.S.’s New START negotiations team is again included into the deictic center “we”, and, here, its inclusion is crucial for Medvedev, considering the highest deontic modality in “we have to” («мы должны»): Medvedev assures that both sides are part of the commitment he constructs as “crucially important” («я считаю это крайне важным»). The same situation occurs in “we” in “either we both ratify /.../, or this process cannot take place” («или мы вместе /.../ ратифицируем, или этот процесс не может состояться»). Hence, the uncertainties within the deictic center on agreement on many positions downplay them with respect to one crucial factor, synchronization of ratification, where the deictic center is stable, including the U.S. and Russia without any discrepancies.

Since Medvedev reports to the four party leaders on the progress of the negotiations, the implication is that they were unaware of the details; therefore,

⁴⁵ Considering that I raised before you the issue of the START treaty, then, of course, the negotiations between us will be continued, they proceed not easily, but on the whole we have agreed upon many positions with Americans; however, what concerns the legislative procedures, and I consider this crucially important, we have to proceed from the synchronization of ratification of the corresponding documents.

The situation which once occurred in the Soviet period as the Soviet Union ratified these documents while Americans did not do it, is unacceptable. This is a parity thing, and both countries are interested in this: either we both ratify the prepared treaty which will be actually calculated in a particular way and which will reflect our understanding of the strategic nuclear powers for the future, or this process cannot take place.

I believe that our American partners have to know this.

the four party leaders are excluded from each “we” in this sentence. Medvedev constructs himself as the voice of the deictic center “we” as he says “I consider this crucially important, we have to” («я считаю это крайне важным, мы должны») and speaks on behalf of both Russian and the U.S.’s New START negotiations teams. Medvedev appears to address the U.S.’s START negotiations team even to a greater extent than the four party leaders.

In “of course, the negotiations between us will be continued” («конечно, переговоры у нас будут продолжены»), “of course” («конечно») expresses high epistemic modality on the continuation of the New START negotiations. “Considering that” («с учётом того, что») implies that if Medvedev did not intend to continue negotiations, he would not have raised this issue. Although the U.S.’s voice is mute here, Medvedev creates the common ground through the propositional assumption that the New START negotiations have been taking place this far (triggered by “will be continued”) to construct the U.S. as interested in negotiations and ready to continue them.

Still, despite the interest and commitment of both sides, the process of negotiations is constructed as “not easy” («переговоры /.../ идут непросто»), although agreement has been achieved “upon many positions” («по многим позициям»). The propositional assumption is that there is a finite number of positions to negotiate, out of which many have been settled. By “not easy” («непросто»), it is implied that the “many positions” settled are minor in comparison to the remaining ones (that may be impossible to settle). However, “proceed not easily” can also imply that, in general, it takes Russia’s and the U.S.’s New START negotiations teams great effort to negotiate each position, which substantially distances the U.S. and Russia, as well as their New START negotiations teams, along the spatial-modal axis and dislocates the new U.S.–Russian Self Medvedev is constructing.

In this excerpt, the New START is articulated with synchronized ratification. Negotiations and agreement on many positions are secondary to ratification. Medvedev resorts to the highest deontic modality to refer to the situation in which the treaty is ratified by only one of the two parties: “this situation /.../ is unacceptable” («недопустима ситуация»). Ratification is constructed as the fulfillment of one’s obligations. Since the U.S. needed more time to ratify a similar treaty in the Soviet times (here, again, the U.S. is distanced from Russia along the spatial-modal axis as “Americans” («американцы»)), the implication is that, this time, it is the U.S., too, that may fail to ratify the treaty. The U.S., or “Americans”, is constructed in opposition to the Soviet Union, which ratified the treaty, or fulfilled its obligations. The implication is that Russia will definitely ratify the treaty if the U.S. does so, too. Consequently, in this excerpt, Medvedev distances the U.S. along the spatial-modal axis as Russia’s Other due to the mistrust that has remained since the Soviet times.

Saying that “this is a parity thing, and both countries are interested in this” («это паритетная вещь, и в этом заинтересованы оба государства»), Medvedev articulates the New START with the mutual interest of the U.S. and Russia. Here, Medvedev constructs both Russia and the U.S. as chains of

equivalence, or both are viewed as internally homogeneous entities, articulated with their concrete interests. Hence, Medvedev does not construct Russia or the U.S. as chains of differences; e.g., containing several parties which have different opinions on the interests of their countries. In the same vein, saying that “the prepared treaty which will be actually calculated in a particular way and which will reflect our understanding of the strategic nuclear powers for the future” («подготовленный договор, который действительно будет определённым образом просчитан, который будет отражать наши представления о стратегических ядерных силах на будущее»), Medvedev makes the propositional assumption that a stable understanding of the strategic nuclear powers for the future is possible between Russia and the U.S. (“our” unites the U.S. and Russia, as well as their New START negotiations teams, at the deictic center). In the same way, dissatisfaction with “the particular way” («определённым образом») of calculations in the treaty by different political actors is not considered, the propositional assumption in both cases being that, if mutual effort is made, this effort cannot be ignored and has to be respected and observed by both the U.S. and Russia as a whole.

Therefore, in this excerpt, the New START negotiations are articulated with effort, and Russia reacts painfully if this fails to reach its objectives: “this process cannot take place” («этот процесс не может состояться»). Another vulnerable place for Medvedev appears to be Russia’s parity with the U.S.: “this is a parity thing” («это паритетная вещь»): if Russia ratifies the New START and the U.S. does not, this may imply that Russia needs the treaty more than the U.S., although “both countries are interested in this” («в этом заинтересованы оба государства»). Russia appears to fear being a weaker partner and the lack of equality. For Russia, at least in this context, equality with the U.S. is crucial.

Additionally, in “this is a parity thing, and both countries are interested in this”, the propositional assumption is that there are also issues in which U.S. and Russia are not equally interested. Another propositional assumption is that, with respect to parity, the approach is to be a synchronic ratification or action; therefore, parity and mutual interest are fixed with synchronic actions or absence of such actions on both sides. The New START is constructed as such a parity thing, and Medvedev seeks to communicate that to the U.S. partners: “I believe that our American partners have to know this” («Я считаю, что об этом должны знать наши американские партнёры»). Constructing himself, Russia’s New START negotiations team, as well as probably Russia as a whole at the deictic center “our” («наши»), Medvedev speaks on behalf of the deictic center (“I believe” («я считаю»)), implicitly creating a common ground that Russia as a whole supports his claim. By saying “our American partners have to know it”, Medvedev makes a propositional assumption that the U.S. partners do not know this, the implication being that synchronic ratification is not as important for them as for Russia.

The third extract originates from Medvedev’s meeting with the representatives of social, academic, and political circles of the U.S. on 14 April 2010. After finishing his introductory remarks, Medvedev is answering two questions

posed by the moderator: how will the negotiations between Russia and the U.S. on nuclear and other arms proceed after the New START Treaty has been signed and is waiting for ratification; what will happen after the successful conclusion of the Washington nuclear summit:

Что же касается наших отношений и, скажем, «START Treaty», то мне бы хотелось, чтобы за этим последовал хотя бы один юридический факт – ратификация этого Договора. Если ратификация состоится – значит, мы с Президентом Обамой работали не зря. А если ратификации не будет – значит, мы вернулись к определённым советским временам, когда такого рода договоры не ратифицировались. Но с другой стороны – мне бы казалось крайне важным, чтобы наши отношения не сводились к сотрудничеству в ядерной сфере или к ограничению стратегических вооружений, хотя, действительно, этого от нас ждут, и мы несём важнейшую ответственность перед всем мировым сообществом по этой теме. Мне бы хотелось, чтобы у нас открылась более широкая кооперация по всем другим направлениям. (Medvedev 2010b)⁴⁶

In the first sentence, “our relations” («наши отношения») are articulated with “START Treaty”, which is, in turn, articulated with “ratification” («ратификация»); however, “let’s say” («скажем») triggers the propositional assumption that there are other dimensions in U.S.–Russian relations. The deictic center in “our relations” («наших отношений») is formed by Russia and the U.S. Saying “START Treaty” in English, Medvedev is trying to position himself closer to the target audience. There is a medium level of deontic modality in “I would like it to be followed” («мне бы хотелось, чтобы за этим последовал»). Still, for Medvedev, the signing of the treaty is firmly fixed with ratification. For instance, in “by at least one single legal fact” («хотя бы один юридический факт»), “at least” («хотя бы») triggers the propositional assumption that the treaty can be followed by several legal facts, one of which is ratification. At the same time, “at least” triggers the propositional assumption that ratification is the most important of all other legal facts, the implication being that it is the necessary and sufficient condition for the treaty.

In the second sentence, ratification is constructed as the desired nodal point. Medvedev, Obama, and their effort make up the chain of equivalence around the nodal point and gain meaning from it (“If ratification occurs, it will mean that I and President Obama have not worked in vain” («Если ратификация

⁴⁶ Pertaining to our relations and, let’s say, the START Treaty, I would like that it would be followed by at least one single legal fact: ratification of this Treaty. If ratification occurs, it will mean that I and President Obama have not worked in vain. If, however, ratification does not occur, it will mean that we have returned to specific Soviet times when such kinds of documents were not ratified. On the other hand, I would consider it crucially important that our relations do not amount to nuclear cooperation or reduction of strategic arms, even though, really, it is expected from us and we bear a vital responsibility before the whole world community in this domain. I would like that a wider cooperation would open up between us in all other directions.

состоится – значит, мы с Президентом Обамой работали не зря»)). The failure to ratify the New START would dislocate Medvedev’s discourse of the European Security Treaty, of which the New START is one step. Hence, as a decision, Medvedev constructs nonratification as Other, articulated with return to “specific Soviet times” («значит, мы вернулись к определённым советским временам»), understood as the Cold War era standoff. Medvedev does not want to return to the meaningless efforts conveyed by the word «зря» (“in vain”). Since the Soviet Union used to be constitutive Other for the U.S. and vice versa, the value assumption is that “return to specific Soviet times” is definitely undesirable; hence, articulating nonratification with returning to Soviet times makes ratification of the New START strongly desirable. On the temporal axis, Medvedev constructs change from the Soviet times (left in the past) to the new time (being experienced at present), which is expected to continue in the future.

In the second part of the excerpt, Medvedev seeks to articulate U.S.–Russian relations («наши отношения») equally with “nuclear cooperation or reduction of strategic arms” («сотрудничество в ядерной сфере или ограничение стратегических вооружений») and with “cooperation in all other directions” («кооперация по всем другим направлениям»). However, in “I would like that a wider cooperation would open up between us in all other directions” («Мне бы хотелось, чтобы у нас открылась более широкая кооперация по всем другим направлениям»), the propositional assumption is that such cooperation is closed, although “wider” («широкая») triggers the propositional assumption that cooperation still exists to some degree. An implication here is that an obstacle prevents a wider cooperation and implicitly distances Russia from the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis, thus making their construction at the deictic center “we” problematic throughout the excerpt and dislocating the new U.S.–Russian Self Medvedev is trying to construct.

In contrast, with respect to nuclear cooperation, “do not amount to” («не сводились к») triggers the propositional assumption that it is the domain in which most substantial cooperation between Russia and the U.S. is (and has been) taking place. The propositional assumption in “really, it is expected from us and we bear a vital responsibility before the whole world community in this domain” («действительно, этого от нас ждут, и мы несём важнейшую ответственность перед всем мировым сообществом по этой теме») is that Russia and the U.S. are cooperating on nuclear issues because of their international obligations. Another propositional assumption is that the world community does not expect broader cooperation from the U.S. and Russia, which might, therefore, be one of the reasons why this cooperation is not expanding. “Really, it is expected from us” («действительно, этого от нас ждут») triggers the propositional assumption that Russia and the U.S. respect the needs of the world community. Therefore, their international position and image (as world powers) is significant to both the U.S. and Russia, and, hence, they both take the “vital responsibility” («важнейшая ответственность») they bear before the world very seriously.

For instance, while the reason for nuclear cooperation is expressed through strong value assumptions (“vital responsibility”), strong epistemic modality (“really”), and intensifiers (“the whole world community”), the reason for cooperation in all other directions is only expressed through Medvedev’s strong deontic commitment (“I would consider it crucially important” («мне бы казалось крайне важным»). The U.S.’s voice is mute here, but by being included into the deictic center in “between us” («у нас»), it is constructed as part of the common ground and sharing the desire to cooperate. Medvedev does not state precisely what should be done by whom in order to expand cooperation, whereas in the context of nuclear cooperation, he names the task and agents clearly.

The deictic center in “our relations” («наши отношения»), “it is expected from us” («этого от нас ждут»), “we bear” («мы несём»), and “between us” («у нас») is formed by the U.S. and Russia. However, the “we” in “between us” is less stable, since there is a discrepancy between Medvedev’s highest deontic commitment to the development of a wider U.S.–Russian cooperation (“I would consider it crucially important”), with Medvedev speaking on behalf of the deictic center, and the implication that this wider cooperation is blocked despite Medvedev’s strong commitment. Throughout the utterance, Medvedev is seeking to make himself as close as possible to the target audience (by constructing the U.S. together with Russia at the deictic center, by using English language expressions, and by emphasizing his strong commitments) to communicate his desire for a wider cooperation. With respect to the New START, on the other hand, Medvedev makes sure he is not explicitly too persistent about the ratification. His decisions boil down to the reiteration of the Cold War and its return in case of failure to ratify the New START.

The fourth extract is from Medvedev’s meeting with Russia’s ambassadors and permanent representatives in international organizations on 12 July 2010. Medvedev says that innumerable challenges common to all have to be met, including the spread of WMDs, international terrorism, and drug trafficking, environmental issues, and climate change. Medvedev says that it is unreasonable to expect that everybody would agree with Russia’s view and that Russia will not agree with everybody, either but that it is important to understand in which direction the world is moving, since it is the precondition for further development in practical politics and international issues:

Такой разворот происходит сейчас и в наших отношениях со многими странами, с таким важным партнёром, как Соединённые Штаты. Я надеюсь, что остатки «холодной войны» уйдут в прошлое. Но мы не имеем права останавливаться на пути налаживания взаимопонимания, становления общих целей между двумя такими сильными державами, как Соединённые Штаты и Россия. Это очень важный, давно назревший шаг. Нас объединяет осознание того, что основу национальной безопасности составляет устойчивое и поступательное развитие. Полностью совпадает с нашим и комплексный подход к обеспечению безопасности, исходящий из понимания того, что военная сила имеет ограниченные возможности. И последним

подтверждением этому было заключение Договора об СНВ. (Medvedev 2010c)⁴⁷

In the first sentence of the excerpt, “many countries” («многие страны») and “the United States” («Соединённые Штаты») are articulated in the chain of equivalence around “such turn /.../ in our relations” («такой разворот /.../ в наших отношениях»). It can be inferred that the turn concerns countries uniting their efforts to face common challenges. The implication is that Russia does not distinguish between partners (“many countries” and the U.S.). The implication is that Russia’s approach to relations with “many countries” («со многими странами») is similar to that with the U.S. However, the U.S. is still differentiated within the chain of equivalence as an important partner, which implies that not all countries are as important. Another implication is that it is actually the U.S. with whom such a turn of relations is most effectively realized, while this might not apply to other countries.

However, the propositional assumption in “I hope that the remnants of the Cold War will go to the past” («я надеюсь, что остатки «холодной войны» уйдут в прошлое») is that they exist now and the value assumption here is that they are undesirable. Medvedev’s low deontic commitment to doing away with the remnants of the Cold War (“I hope” («я надеюсь»)) implies that Medvedev realizes that this may not be easily achieved. Moreover, Medvedev is hoping that they will disappear themselves (“will go to the past” («уйдут в прошлое»)), not as the result of concrete activities by specific agents. Constructions like “the remnants” («остатки») position the U.S. as a fence-sitter between the “many countries” which do not consider Russia as a threat and the remaining countries which do – therefore, no turn in their relations with Russia is occurring. This implies Russia’s role as the constitutive outside in the U.S. identity construction.

Medvedev constructs the past, present, and future of U.S.–Russian relations along the temporal and spatial-modal axes. Facing common challenges together is positioned on the temporal axis as the future of the relations (or along the spatial-modal axis as one of the final points of the turn in the relations). This is opposed to the Cold War, or facing each other as a challenge, positioned on the temporal axis as the past of the relations (or along the spatial-modal axis as the initial point of the turn). At the deictic center, now, are the remnants of the Cold War and, since Medvedev claims that the turn is occurring, progress toward the

⁴⁷ Such a turn is occurring now also in our relations with many countries, with such an important partner as the United States. I hope that the remnants of the Cold War will go to the past. Still, we have no right to stop on the way of improving mutual understanding and development of common goals between two such strong powers as the United States and Russia. This is a very important and long overdue step. We are united by the awareness that the foundation of national security is constituted by sustainable and progressive development. It fully coincides with ours also [the U.S.’s] complex approach to providing security, which is rooted in the understanding that military strength has limited opportunities. And the final confirmation of that was the signing of the New START Treaty.

future. However, Medvedev's quite low deontic commitment to the getting over the Cold War ("I hope") introduces a discrepancy, implying that the progress is and/or will not be easy.

In "still, we have no right to stop on the way of improving mutual understanding and development of common goals between two such strong powers as the United States and Russia" («но мы не имеем права останавливаться на пути налаживания взаимопонимания, становления общих целей между двумя такими сильными державами, как Соединённые Штаты и Россия»), the existential assumption is that, for the U.S. and Russia, there is a "way of improving mutual understanding and development of common goals" («путь налаживания взаимопонимания, становления общих целей»). "Stop" («останавливаться») triggers the propositional assumption that progress is occurring. "Still" («но») triggers the propositional assumption that the remnants of the Cold War should not prevent Russia and the U.S. from developing common goals. However, this is probably what is actually happening, and Medvedev resorts to the highest level of deontic modality in "we have no right to stop" («мы не имеем права останавливаться») to articulate U.S.–Russian relations with mutual understanding, to suppress the articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with the Cold War, and successfully construct the new U.S.–Russian Self.

The value assumption is that constant improvement in U.S.–Russian relations is desirable and very important for Russia. Medvedev constructs Russia and the U.S. as "two such strong powers" («две такие сильные державы»), articulating Russia and the U.S. in the chain of equivalence and implying equality between the two states. The U.S.'s voice is mute here, but Medvedev constructs Russia and the U.S. at the deictic center in "we have no right to stop", thus creating the common ground that the U.S. and Russia are two strong powers which necessarily have to develop mutual understanding and common goals continuously. Hence, such step in U.S.–Russian relations is "long overdue" («давно назревший шаг», in literal translation "overripe"). The propositional assumption in "stop on the way of improving" («останавливаться на пути налаживания») is that mutual understanding and development of common goals between the U.S. and Russia need to be improved and that Russia and the U.S. are not countries which, by default, understand each other.

The propositional assumption in "long overdue step" («давно назревший шаг») is that the move toward the improvement in U.S.–Russian relations should have occurred long ago. The implication is that the external conditions for the improvement of U.S.–Russian relations emerged long time ago, but the U.S. and Russia were reluctant to take this step. Medvedev implicitly constructs an external and an internal dimension in U.S.–Russian relations. An external dimension can be expressed through the propositional assumption that strong powers in general have to develop common goals, whereas the internal dimension can be expressed through the propositional assumption that particular powers, like the U.S. and Russia, for instance, may find it hard to do, among other things, due to the remnants of the Cold War in their relations. Hence, there is a

discrepancy in whether the progress in U.S.–Russian relations has actually been going on or it is only about to occur. Medvedev constructs the turn as both occurring and not occurring.

In “we are united” («нас объединяет»), the deictic center is formed by the U.S. and Russia. This intensifies the imposition of common ground along with the use of the verb “unite” («объединять»), relatively strong epistemic modality in the statements (“we are united” («нас объединяет»), “is constituted” («составляет»)), and the use of the passive voice. The implication in “we are united by the awareness that /.../” («нас объединяет осознание того, что /.../») is that the U.S. and Russia have developed such an awareness independently of each other. This implies, in turn, that there are objective truths which exist independently of the development of bilateral relations. Hence, if both countries adhere to these objective truths, they are united. In this case, one of the objective truths is the articulation of national security with sustainable and gradual progress.

Another objective truth constructed by Medvedev is articulating military strength with limited opportunities. In “complex approach to providing security, which is rooted in the understanding that military strength has limited opportunities” («комплексный подход к обеспечению безопасности, исходящий из понимания того, что военная сила имеет ограниченные возможности»), complex approach is constructed as a direct material consequence of the understanding that military strength is limited, constructed as an abstract truth. The New START is constructed as the crucial, “final” material consequence of this truth. It should be noted that both articulations (national security as sustainable development and military strength as having limited opportunities) have been promoted in Obama’s discourse of nonproliferation; however, in Medvedev’s utterance, they are presented as objective truths. In “fully coincides with ours also [the U.S.’s] complex approach” («полностью совпадает с нашим и комплексный подход»), it is not Russia’s complex approach that coincides with the U.S.’s one, but vice versa.

In “fully coincides with ours”, the deictic center is formed by Russia, constructing it as the origin of the epistemic true and deontic right. Hence, the implicit value assumption is that it is desirable to coincide with Russia. “Fully coincides” implies that the U.S.’s and Russia’s approaches to providing security were not developed in the course of bilateral relations, but coincide because of adherence to the same understanding. The propositional assumption is that there can be various degrees to which one country’s approach can coincide with another’s. Here, the U.S.’s and Russia’s approaches coincide fully, which places the countries very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis.

Similarly, in “the final confirmation of that was the signing of the New START Treaty” («последним подтверждением этому было заключение Договора об СНВ»), “the final” («последний») triggers the propositional assumption that there can be a “final confirmation” («последнее подтверждение»). Words like “final” and “fully”, as well as statements with relatively strong epistemic modality (“is rooted in” («исходящий из»), “has limited

opportunities” («имеет ограниченные возможности»), “was the signing” («было заключение») imply closure of the structure with no discrepancies or dislocations in it. As a result, while there are discrepancies in constructing progress in U.S.–Russian relations, Medvedev succeeds in closing the structure in U.S.–Russian cooperation in military and security issues, imposing total common ground between Russia and the U.S. in these areas.

The fifth extract is from Medvedev’s interview on 24 December 2010 in which he is answering questions concerning results of the year 2010. The question on the ratification of the New START is the second question of the interview. One of the interviewers starts by saying that, during the Carter and Clinton presidencies, he enjoyed O. Henry’s quote from *Cabbages and Kings* that, in addition to all other misfortunes of that year, the U.S. had a Democratic president. However, in the interviewer’s view, Obama was a different Democrat, having pushed the New START through the senate:⁴⁸

Потому что он действительно молодец, я с Вами согласен. Он сумел в довольно непростых условиях провалить ратификацию важнейшего документа по СНВ, потому что, я об этом только что сказал, на мой взгляд, на этом будет основываться наша безопасность на ближайшие годы.

Я вообще могу сказать, что мне работается с Президентом Обамой легко, он человек, который умеет слушать и слышать, человек, который не находится в плену у каких-то стереотипов. Человек, который в принципе (может быть, для политика это самое главное) отвечает такому условию: он выполняет обещания – будь то СНВ, будь то ВТО, будь то ратификация одного из очень важных соглашений по атомному сотрудничеству или работа по международным вопросам. Так что я желаю моему коллеге хорошо отдохнуть. Он качественно сделал свою работу, о чём я ему вчера и сказал: «Барак, отдыхай». (Medvedev 2010d)⁴⁹

⁴⁸ В. КУЛИСТИКОВ: Дмитрий Анатольевич, об СНВ. При Картере и при Клинтоне мне очень нравилась одна фраза у О’Генри в «Королях и капустах»: «В тот год в Соединённых Штатах ко всем прочим несчастьям был президент-демократ». А вот Обама, демократ, совершенно не такой человек, он молодец: он провалил через сенат этот важный документ об СНВ. Скажите, пожалуйста, а почему вчера так поздно состоялся с ним разговор, он что, праздновал ратификацию?

⁴⁹ Since he has really done a good job, I agree with you. He managed, in relatively uneasy conditions, to push the ratification of the crucial document regarding START, because, as I have just said, in my opinion, this will be the basis of our security in the coming years.

In general, I can say that, for me, to work with President Obama is easy, he is a person who can listen and hear, a person who is not in captivity of any stereotypes. [He is] A person who basically (perhaps in a politician, it is the most important) meets this condition: he fulfils promises, be it START, be it WTO, be it ratification of one of the very important agreements on nuclear cooperation, or work on international issues. So, I wish my colleague good holidays. He has done his job with quality, and this is what I told him yesterday: “Barack, take a break”.

In this excerpt, Medvedev, first of all, explicitly conforms to the common ground created by the interviewer: “he has really done a good job, in that I agree with you” («он действительно молодец, я с Вами согласен»). Both the agreement with the interviewer and the praise of Obama are intensified by using strong epistemic modality in “really” («действительно»). The word «молодец» (a person who has done a good job) reflects a rather informal and, thus, more intensive praise, which draws Obama very close along the spatial-modal axis to the deictic center formed by Medvedev in “I” («я») and also to the interviewer, who initially created this common ground. Thus, Obama is implicitly constructed as close to Russia as a whole on the spatial-modal axis.

Being «молодец» is articulated with the ratification of the New START, and since Obama managed to achieve ratification in “relatively uneasy conditions” («в довольно непростых условиях»), he is constructed as having done a “really” good job («действительно молодец»). The ratification of the New START is, in turn, articulated with security (“our security in the coming years” («наша безопасность на ближайшие годы»)). In “relatively uneasy conditions”, “relatively” («довольно») triggers the propositional assumption that, on the scale of difficulty, the conditions that Obama faced in the ratification of the New START were moderate. However, in “push the ratification” («продавить ратификацию»), “push” («продавить») triggers the propositional assumption that ratification faced a serious barrier that Obama had to break. Hence, on the spatial axis, the New START is constructed as a moving entity.

Since the New START is constructed as “the crucial document” («важнейший документ»), the value assumption is that its ratification is strongly desirable and necessary; hence, the opposing force is implicitly constructed as Other. The implication is that crucial documents should be viewed unanimously. No opposition to the ratification of the New START in Russia is implied. As for the U.S., the situation is different: Obama is articulated with security through the ratification of the New START, whereas the U.S. politicians opposing ratification are implicitly constructed as Other and articulated with absence of security. Security is constructed as “our” («наша безопасность»), shared by the U.S. and Russia, both countries being constructed at the deictic center and close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. Medvedev successfully constructs the new U.S.–Russian Self. However, what remains implicit is that politicians opposing ratification of the New START fought for the U.S.’s security, too, which they constructed separately from the security of Russia.

Medvedev stresses his own opinion while articulating the ratification of the New START with security: “as I have just said, in my opinion” («я об этом только что сказал, на мой взгляд»), the propositional assumption being that other articulations are possible, too. In “this will be the basis of our security in the coming years” («на этом будет основываться наша безопасность на ближайшие годы»), “in the coming years” («на ближайшие годы») triggers the propositional assumption that the ratification of the New START only affects the U.S.’s and Russia’s security for a limited period of time.

“In general” («вообще») generalizes praise of Obama, which is initially articulated with the ratification of the New START, into other domains. Apart from the New START, which is the domain of “nuclear cooperation” («атомное сотрудничество»), Obama is praised in the domain of “international issues” («работа по международным вопросам»). The generalized praise turns from being «молодец» (as in the case of the New START) to being easy to work with («мне работается с Президентом Обамой легко»). The latter is articulated with being able to listen and hear, having no stereotypes, and fulfilling promises. Fulfilling promises is constructed as “perhaps” “the most important” quality in a politician («может быть, для политика это самое главное»). “The most” («самое») triggers the propositional assumption that there are other important qualities, too, and “perhaps” («может быть») that some of those may be even more important in a politician.

Medvedev stresses his personal dimension in articulating the ease of collaboration with the ability to listen and hear, to abandon stereotypes, and to fulfill promises: “I can say that, for me” («я вообще могу сказать, что мне») implies that other politicians may have different articulations. For Medvedev, “listen and hear” («слушать и слышать») are fixed together, implying that he wants to be heard, not just listened to as a precondition to fulfillment of promises. “Not in captivity of any stereotypes” («не находится в плену у каких-то стереотипов») triggers the existential assumption that stereotypes exist in U.S.–Russian relations and the propositional assumption that they make communication more difficult, hence distancing the U.S. from Russia on the spatial-modal axis.

“In captivity of” («в плену у») triggers the value assumption that stereotypes are strongly undesirable and the propositional assumption that they limit freedom of communication. Importantly, the use of the passive voice in “not in captivity of any stereotypes” triggers the propositional assumption that stereotypes capture people, like viruses. “Captivity” implies that stereotypes prevent a politician from listening and hearing. Obama is, therefore, constructed as free from stereotypes, unlike other politicians who are difficult to work with. Medvedev stresses fulfillment of promises as perhaps the most important quality in a politician, implying that there are many politicians who do not do so. In Obama’s case, “basically meets” («в принципе /.../ отвечает») triggers the propositional assumption that Obama could work toward fulfilling all of his promises, but the implication is that the current level is satisfactory for Medvedev.

Medvedev articulates good rest as depending on the quality of the job done. Medvedev assesses the quality of Obama’s work as sufficient and expresses his praise “and this is what I told him yesterday” («о чём я ему вчера и сказал») (seen in the suggestion that Obama can take a break). As Obama has already been constructed as very close to Medvedev and the Russian audience, this construction is reinforced in the very informal address, “Barack, take a break” («Барак, отдыхай»). In praising Obama, Medvedev is consistently using high epistemic and deontic modalities, but adds words like “relatively” and “basically”

and, by doing so, he somewhat downplays his praise. In other words, it can be said that Obama personally (and not the U.S. as a whole) is articulated in the Russian identification discourse by having the qualities Russians require for cooperation (the implication, in turn, being that these qualities are inherent in Russian politicians); however, there are still discrepancies in this articulation.

The sixth excerpt is from Medvedev's reception of ten new heads of diplomatic missions in Russia, who presented Medvedev with their diplomatic credentials, on 8 February 2011. Medvedev addressed the new ambassadors by saying that the first decade of the current century had confirmed that the world community was moving toward a polycentric world order, which is more just and democratic and reflects the concerns of different countries. Medvedev argued that, on this background, the key factor in international relations is cooperation, efforts in the name of multilateral development, and collective prevention of common threats and challenges:

Важным условием нашей солидарной работы по достижению цели современного развития, современного устойчивого развития является укрепление глобальной безопасности. Существенным вкладом в этом направлении стало заключение Договора о мерах по дальнейшему сокращению и ограничению стратегических наступательных вооружений между Россией и Соединёнными Штатами Америки, который вступил в силу буквально в эти дни. Этот результат достигнут благодаря заинтересованной работе на принципах равноправного, конструктивного сотрудничества, и мы рассчитываем на то, что он будет дополнительным вкладом в формирование архитектуры общемировой безопасности. (Medvedev 2011)⁵⁰

In "our joint work" («наша солидарная работа»), the deictic center is formed by Russia, the ten countries whose representatives are present, and all countries in the world, since "the strengthening of global security" («укрепление глобальной безопасности»), articulated with sustainable development, implies global participation. The word "joint" («солидарная») along with the pronoun "our" («наша») create common ground, presupposing consent of all other countries. Since joint work is being done to achieve sustainable development, the value assumption is that such development is desirable and important equally for Russia and all other countries. In "an important condition for /.../" («важным условием /.../»), "an" triggers the propositional assumption that sustainable development depends on a number of conditions, strengthening of global security being one the most important.

⁵⁰ An important condition for our joint work in achieving the goal of modern development, modern sustainable development is the strengthening of global security. A significant contribution in this direction has become the conclusion of the agreement regarding further reductions and limitation of strategic offensive arms between Russia and the United States of America, which came into force just several days ago. This result has been achieved, owing to the interest in the work on both sides, work on the basis of equal, constructive cooperation, and we count on the fact that it will constitute an additional contribution to the formation of the architecture of world security.

Hence, sustainable development is constructed as the nodal point toward which Russia and all other countries are moving. It is articulated with the strengthening of global security and with other factors that remain implicit. Russia and other countries are articulated in the chain of equivalence around the nodal point; however, Russia is constructed as different, since Medvedev is speaking on behalf of the deictic center. The implication is that, when achieved, sustainable development spreads to all countries equally. In the same vein, in “the strengthening of global security” («укрепление глобальной безопасности»), “strengthening” («укрепление») triggers the propositional assumption that global security is not strong enough, and Russia, along with other countries, will benefit from strengthening it.

The New START is articulated with the strengthening of global security and, therefore, achieving the goal of sustainable development. In “a significant contribution” («существенный вклад»), the propositional assumption is that the New START is one. “Further” («дальнейший») triggers the propositional assumption that the U.S.–Russian cooperation on the reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms is constant. The words “further” and “direction” signal the direction and movement along the spatial-modal axis: the deictic center, including all countries, but in which now Russia is differentiated along with the U.S., is moving toward the goal. Temporal marking “which came into force just several days ago” («который вступил в силу буквально в эти дни») triggers the propositional assumption that the work toward achieving the above goals is constantly being done.

The New START is constructed as the “result” («результат»). The latter is articulated with interest on both sides (the U.S. and Russia) as well as constructive cooperation (between the U.S. and Russia). Since the reasons for the result need to be stated explicitly, the implication is that, in U.S.–Russian relations, such cooperation is not the case by default, which implicitly distances the U.S. and Russia from each other on the spatial-modal axis. The New START is constructed as showing that work on the basis of mutual interests is possible. In “we count on that it will constitute an additional contribution to the formation of the architecture of world security” («мы рассчитываем на то, что он будет дополнительным вкладом в формирование архитектуры общемировой безопасности»), the deictic center “we” («мы») is apparently Russia, and Medvedev’s implication is that to work with Russia on global security architecture is possible on the same basis as cooperating on the New START.

The New START, with other contributions, is articulated in the chain of equivalence around Russia’s hegemonic nodal point – new global security architecture, with Russia as its quintessential member. “An additional” («дополнительный») triggers the propositional assumption that there are other contributions to the new global security architecture, too. “We count on the fact that it will constitute /.../” («мы рассчитываем на то, что он будет /.../») implies that other countries may not articulate the New START with the formation of the architecture of global security that Russia envisions and triggers the propositional assumption that Russia is not in a position to decide about it.

The New START, an agreement between two countries, is constructed as a global matter, the importance of which transcends the interests of the two countries. Success of the New START allows Medvedev (as well as Obama) to construct the New START as a successful step in larger global projects. In this excerpt, Medvedev articulates the New START in the chain of equivalence around two global projects: as “an important condition /.../ in achieving the goal of modern sustainable development” and as “an additional contribution to the formation of architecture of world security”. If, with respect to the project of sustainable development, articulated with strengthening of global security, the New START “has become” a significant contribution (high level of epistemic modality), then, with respect to the formation of new world security architecture, the New START is only hoped to be an additional contribution (“we count on the fact that it will /.../”) reflects a relatively low level of epistemic modality). Hence, there is a discrepancy here: while strengthening global security, the New START can merely (if at all) serve as an additional contribution to the formation of world security architecture. Therefore, global security is articulated differently in different global projects. One implication is that the formation of world security architecture is a special hegemonic move.

6.3.1. Discussion

The six excerpts in this context revealed various articulations, assumptions, decisions, as well as discrepancies in Medvedev’s discourse on the New START. In the first one, Medvedev sought to articulate the New START with missile defense, constructing an inherent connection between the two issues. However, the issue of missile defense was pregnant with so much opposition between the U.S. and Russia, and so many uncertainties and discrepancies were proposed as “reasonable solutions” as Russia and the U.S. were united at the deictic center, that the corresponding prospects of signing the New START, constructed as interdependent with moving further on missile defense, appeared severely challenged. In the second excerpt, through the interplay in the formation of the deictic center by including and excluding referents, and speaking on behalf of the deictic center in all cases, Medvedev constructed himself as superior to the leaders of four Russian parties and equal with the U.S. However, demanding synchronic ratification of the New START on both sides, Medvedev appeared to fear any distortion of the equality. This fear produced uneasiness in the process of negotiations; uneasiness also arised from the absence of trust.

In the third excerpt, to eliminate possible dislocation resulting from the failure to (synchronically) ratify the new START, Medvedev’s decision involved articulating nonratification with a return to the Soviet times, or the Cold War. In addition,, through a variety of linguistic means, like formation of the deictic center, high deontic modality, intensifiers, etc., Medvedev showed a strong commitment to developing U.S.–Russian relations in areas other than nuclear

cooperation. In the fourth excerpt, Russian ambassadors and representatives of international organizations were given directions on Russia's position. This excerpt, therefore, provided insight into Russia's identity construction. There were many uncertainties and discrepancies in the first part of the excerpt, devoted to the progress of U.S.–Russian relations. It remained unclear whether the turn in relations was occurring or was only about to occur. However, the structure achieved closure in the second part of the excerpt, devoted to security and the New START. In this part, Medvedev integrated articulations from Obama's discourse into his Russian foreign policy discourse.

In the fifth excerpt, with some discrepancies, Medvedev articulated Obama (but not the U.S. as a whole) with Russia because of having qualities that enable effective cooperation with Russia (on the example of the successful conclusion of the New START). Finally, the sixth excerpt demonstrated how the ratified New START was articulated as a part of major global projects. Medvedev implicitly struggled to articulate the New START with the hegemonic nodal point of global security architecture, of which Russia was a quintessential part. However, this articulation was problematic, since the decision was not for Russia to make. In contrast, the New START was articulated easily with the strengthening of global security within the framework of global sustainable development. Hence, global security was articulated differently in different security-related hegemonic moves.

6.4. Context 3: Missile Defense and NATO–Russian Relations

Ever since G. W. Bush proposed his plan to add a third Ground-Based Midcourse Defense site in Europe, the topic of missile defense has served as the point of dislocation in almost every discourse within U.S.–Russian relations. While the U.S. and NATO assured Russia that there was no reason to worry about the plan, Russia treated it as a threat to its territory and as an infringement on the strategic nuclear balance. While Medvedev insisted on Russia's participation in missile defense, the U.S. and NATO did not support this initiative. To secure success of the New START talks, Obama announced European Phased Adaptive Approach (hereafter EPAA) in September 2009 to replace the Bush administration's plan and to delay the deployment of the new approach. Medvedev insisted that the treaty should connect the validity of the treaty and significant expansion of missile defense, so that Russia could withdraw from the treaty when it believes that the enhancement of missile defense poses a significant threat to Russia.

The first extract is from Medvedev's meeting with the students and instructors of the University of Pittsburgh on 25 September 2009. He is answering a question about what kinds of U.S.–Russian relations he wanted in five years. In his answer, Medvedev stressed the importance of personal relations between

himself and Obama for bilateral U.S.–Russian relations. Medvedev emphasized that suspending the implementation of missile defense capabilities in Poland and the Czech Republic was a courageous decision on Obama’s part:

Я не рассуждал на эту тему, но тем не менее всё равно скажу: недавнее решение, которое было принято Президентом США, по отказу от создания третьего позиционного района противоракетной обороны в Европе – это, конечно, решение, которое продиктовано его представлениями о защите интересов Соединённых Штатов Америки. Это не пророссийское, не прокитайское или проевропейское решение – это американское решение. Но очень важно то, что в процессе его принятия Барак Обама всё-таки слушал то, что ему говорил я, видимо, анализировал, и это тоже был один из моментов, на основании которого было принято это решение. Это означает, что мы учимся друг друга слушать. Мне кажется, что это крайне важно, даже по таким тонким, щепетильным вопросам, как внутренняя безопасность.

И иногда необходимо принимать решения, которые требуют мужества. А я считаю, что такие решения – это мужественные решения. Изменить решение предыдущей администрации, касающееся не внутренней, а внешней политики, – это сложное решение. Я пытался поставить себя на его место и хочу сказать, что это было бы очень непростое решение. Уже одно это, мне кажется, заслуживает уважения. (Medvedev 2009)⁵¹

In “I have not discussed this topic, but I will [nevertheless] still say” («я не рассуждал на эту тему, но тем не менее всё равно скажу»), the propositional assumption is that Medvedev was not directly asked about missile defense during the meeting. Strong emphasis on the desire to “but” («но»), “nevertheless” («тем не менее»), “still” («всё равно») constructs Medvedev’s comment to the topic as very important on the deontic scale. The fact that Medvedev needs to “nevertheless” discuss the issue implies that, for his audience, the topic might not be so important. The topic Medvedev sought to discuss was Obama’s decision concerning “the renouncement of the creation of the third positional

⁵¹ I have not discussed this topic, but I will [nevertheless] still say: the recent decision which was made by the U.S. president concerning the renouncement of the creation of the third positional area of anti-missile defense in Europe was, of course, dictated by his ideas of defending the interests of the United States of America. This is not a pro-Russian, pro-Chinese, or pro-European decision. This is an American decision. However, what is very important is that, in the process of making it [this decision], Barack Obama was nevertheless listening to what I was telling him [and] was probably analyzing [it], and this was also one of the factors on the basis of which this decision was made. This means that we are learning to listen to each other. I think this is extremely important, even with respect to such delicate, sensitive issues as internal security.

And sometimes it is necessary to make decisions which require courage. And I believe that such decisions are courageous decisions. To alter the decision of the previous administration which concerns not internal, but foreign policy, is a difficult decision. I tried to put myself in his place and want to say that it would have been a very difficult [not easy] decision [for myself]. This alone already, I think, deserves respect.

area of anti-missile defense in Europe” («по отказу от создания третьего позиционного района противоракетной обороны в Европе»). Importantly, by using the word “renouncement” («отказ»), Medvedev makes the propositional assumption that Obama will not continue with the missile defense capabilities, which is crucial for Russia. Obama’s voice remains mute throughout the utterance and common ground is imposed: his decision to modify the plan is constructed as the decision to abolish it.

In “decision /.../ was, of course, dictated by his ideas of defending the interests of the United States of America” («это, конечно, решение, которое продиктовано его представлениями о защите интересов Соединённых Штатов Америки»), the existential assumption is that there are “the interests of the United States of America” and the propositional assumption that these need to be defended. Obama is articulated with this. Obama’s ideas are realized in his decisions: “the recent decision” («недавнее решение») is articulated with “his ideas” («его представления»), and the articulation is intensified by the verb “to dictate” («продиктовать»). Medvedev stresses that Obama’s decision was dictated by his own ideas (the deictic center “I” is formed by Medvedev, while Obama is distanced from the deictic center as “he”). This construction of the deictic center is strategically used to distance Obama from Medvedev; however, they are implicitly very close along the spatial-modal axis because of the importance of Obama’s decision to Russia.

In “decision /.../ was, of course, dictated by his ideas of defending the interests of the United States of America («это, конечно, решение, которое продиктовано его представлениями о защите интересов Соединённых Штатов Америки»), “of course” («конечно») is used to convey the high level of epistemic modality. In Russian, «конечно» covers the whole spectrum of meaning from expressing strong epistemic modality at the one extreme to sarcastically making positive statements to convey the opposite meaning at the other extreme. In this utterance, by «конечно» Medvedev is trying to strengthen his justification of Obama’s decision as being in the interests of the U.S. However, the need to explain the reasons for Obama’s decision implies that it is not self-evident and downplays the strong epistemic modality of «конечно» almost to the level of meaning the opposite.

In “this is not a pro-Russian, pro-Chinese, or pro-European decision. This is an American decision” («это не пророссийское, не прокитайское или проевропейское решение – это американское решение»), the propositional assumption is that the U.S. can make pro-Russian, pro-Chinese, pro-European, and American decisions. A “pro-Russian” decision comes first in this list. The listed decisions form the chain of difference, where pro-Russian, pro-Chinese, and pro-European decisions are articulated in opposition to American decisions. The propositional assumption is that an American and a pro-Russian decision do not coincide. Therefore, in Medvedev’s construction, the U.S., Russia, Europe, and China have different interests, which distances the countries/regions from each other along the spatial-modal axis. It should also be noted that Medvedev needs to justify Obama’s decision and explicitly articulate it with the interests

of one particular player, the U.S., implicitly suppressing the articulation of abolition of missile defense with Russia's interests.

Having constructed the decision to renounce the creation of missile defense as Obama's independent decision in the interests of the U.S., Medvedev constructs himself as having influenced the decision. The two constructions are separated by "however" («но») in "however, what is very important is that, in the process of making it [this decision], Barack Obama was nevertheless listening to what I was telling him" («Но очень важно то, что в процессе его принятия Барак Обама всё-таки слушал то, что ему говорил я»). The existential assumption is that there was a process during which the decision was taking shape (and Medvedev was active in this process). It remains unknown when the process began and why the decision was made when it was made. "What is very important" («очень важно то, что») conveys a very high level of deontic modality and triggers the propositional assumption that listening to Medvedev (and Russia in general) is very important. «Всё-таки» («nevertheless») triggers the propositional assumption that Obama did not have to listen to Medvedev with respect to the matter, constructed to concern the U.S.'s interests.

In «.../ was probably analyzing [it], and this was also one of the factors on the basis of which this decision was made» («.../ видимо, анализировал, и это тоже был один из моментов, на основании которого было принято это решение»), Medvedev continues to diminish his influence on Obama's decision by using a marker of low epistemic modality ("probably" («видимо»)) as well as by limiting his dialog with Obama to only "one of the factors" («один из моментов») influencing the decision-making. Notably, «видимо, анализировал» ("was probably analyzing") triggers the propositional assumption that what Russia says is not always analyzed, the implication here being that when it is, decisions supported by Russia are consequently made.

"One" («один») in "one of the factors" («один из моментов») triggers the propositional assumption that there were several factors on the basis of which Obama made the decision. However, since Obama made the decision supported by Medvedev, the implication is that the majority of these factors either were in line with Medvedev's viewpoint, were against the location of missile defense for different reasons, or there were no other factors than Medvedev's claim. In "this means that we are learning to listen to each other" («это означает, что мы учимся друг друга слушать»), "this" («это») refers to Obama's listening to Medvedev, analyzing his claims and subsequently making a decision desirable to Medvedev. Therefore, to be "learning to listen to each other" is articulated with "this", or making pro-Russian decisions. The value assumption is that such listening to each other is desirable. Here, the deictic center "we" unites Obama and Medvedev, constructing them as very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. However, the propositional assumption in "we are learning" («мы учимся») is that Obama and Medvedev are only starting the long path to becoming capable of listening to each other.

In "I think this is crucial, even with respect to such delicate, sensitive issues as internal security" («мне кажется, что это крайне важно, даже по таким

тонким, щепетильным вопросам, как внутренняя безопасность»), the propositional assumption is that on sensitive matters like internal security presidents usually do not listen to each other and that other issues are less sensitive than internal security. “Extremely important” («крайне важно») conveys the highest level of deontic modality and triggers the value assumption that it is strongly desirable that Obama would listen to Medvedev with respect to U.S.’s internal security, and vice versa. The propositional assumption is that Medvedev can give Obama constructive advice concerning the U.S.’s internal security, and vice versa. However, the improbability of such a situation is implied in the remarkable contrast within the phrase “I think this is crucial” («мне кажется, что это крайне важно») between the low epistemic modality of “I think [it seems to me]” («мне кажется») and the highest deontic modality of “this is crucial” («это крайне важно»). It remains unclear here whether missile defense is to be seen as the U.S.’s internal security issue.

Furthermore, “and sometimes it is necessary to make decisions which require courage” («и иногда необходимо принимать решения, которые требуют мужества»), “sometimes” («иногда») triggers the propositional assumption that the majority of decisions made by presidents/politicians do not require courage. One implication can be that presidents/politicians are usually not courageous enough to make such decisions. In “and I believe that such decisions are courageous decisions” («а я считаю, что такие решения – это мужественные решения»), Obama’s decision is constructed as courageous. Notably, the root of the word «мужество» (“courage”) refers to masculinity («муж» meaning “man”), so the implication here is that Obama is a true man. In “to alter the decision of the previous administration which concerns not internal, but foreign policy, is a difficult decision” («изменить решение предыдущей администрации, касающееся не внутренней, а внешней политики, – это сложное решение»), the propositional assumption is that to alter decision of the previous administration concerning internal security is easier.

In “I tried to put myself in his place and want to say that it would have been a very difficult [not easy] decision [for myself]. This alone already, I think, deserves respect” («я пытался поставить себя на его место и хочу сказать, что это было бы очень непростое решение. Уже одно это, мне кажется, заслуживает уважения»), the implication is that, for Medvedev, it would have really been difficult to alter Putin’s decisions. Here, Medvedev implicitly emphasizes continuity with Putin’s decisions in Russia’s foreign policy.

The second excerpt originates from the press conference held by Obama and Medvedev after the signing of the New START Treaty in Prague on 8 April 2010. The presidents were asked whether the U.S. and Russia could reach an agreement on missile defense, a major hindrance to further cuts in the U.S.’s and Russia’s nuclear arsenals. Obama promised to initiate a discussion on cooperation on missile defense not only bilaterally, but also with European allies. He said he felt optimistic after the signing of the New START about Russia’s and the U.S.’s readiness to lead the reduction of world’s dependence on nuclear weapons. In his answer, Medvedev reiterated the importance of the

interconnection between the New START and expansion of missile defense and stressed Russia's interest in closely cooperating on missile defense with the U.S.:

Мы оценили те шаги, которые были сделаны действующей администрацией Соединённых Штатов Америки по решениям, которые принимались в области ПРО прежней администрацией. Это в значительной мере способствовало достижению прогресса. Это не значит, что у нас нет никаких расхождений в понимании, но есть желание и воля этим вопросом заниматься. Мы предложили Соединённым Штатам Америки также свои услуги в области создания глобальной системы противоракетной обороны. Об этом нужно думать, имея в виду уязвимость нашего мира, те террористические угрозы, в том числе и возможности использования ядерного оружия террористами, которые существуют в нашем мире. В этом плане я так же, как и мой коллега, Президент США, оптимист, и я считаю, что по этим вопросам мы сможем договориться. (Medvedev 2010a)⁵²

The deictic center “we” («мы») in the first sentence consists of Medvedev, other Russian politicians, and Russia as a whole. In “we have appreciated the steps /.../” («мы оценили те шаги /.../»), “appreciated” («оценили») triggers the value assumption that the steps taken by the current U.S. administration are desirable. Through «оценили» (“appreciated”), Russia is constructed in a position to evaluate what the U.S. does. The U.S.’s current and previous administrations are differentiated with respect to missile defense. While the previous U.S. administration made “decisions” («решения»), the current U.S. administration made “steps /.../ concerning decisions which were made /.../ by the previous administration” («шаги, которые были сделаны /.../ прежней администрацией»). The implication is that the nodal point of missile defense, constructed by the previous U.S. administration, remains important to the current one, since the latter acts within the structure created by the previous administration. The nodal point of missile defense cannot be eliminated by the current U.S. administration: “in the sphere of missile defense” («в области ПРО») triggers the existential assumption that this sphere still exists. However, the current U.S. administration can take steps to rearticulate the nodal point, which Russia can appreciate. Hence, there is more flexibility in the U.S.’s hegemonic articulation of the nodal point of missile defense.

⁵² We have appreciated the steps which were made by the current administration of the United States of America concerning decisions which were made in the sphere of missile defense by the previous administration. This, to a significant degree, facilitated the achievement of progress. This does not mean that we do not have any divergences in understanding, but there is a desire and will to deal with this issue. We also offered the United States of America our services in the sphere of the creation of a global system of anti-missile defense. It is necessary to think about it, considering the vulnerability of our world, the terrorist threats which exist in our world, including also terrorists’ opportunities to use nuclear weapons. In this respect, I am an optimist, just like my colleague, the U.S. president, and I believe that we can agree on these issues.

In “this, to a significant degree, facilitated the achievement of progress” («это в значительной мере способствовало достижению прогресса»), “to a significant degree” («в значительной мере») triggers the propositional assumption that other factors facilitated progress on the New START, too, and missile defense was one of them. The propositional assumption is that the progress needed to be facilitated, implying that it was initially hindered. “Significant degree” («значительная степень») triggers the propositional assumption that, without any steps taken on missile defense, no progress would have been possible, the implication being that, initially, missile defense constituted a significant hindrance to progress on the New START. Thus, missile defense is implicitly constructed as a condition of possibility and impossibility of the New START.

In “this does not mean that we do not have any divergences in understanding” («это не значит, что у нас нет никаких расхождений в понимании»), “this” («это») refers to the achievement of progress. “This does not mean” («это не значит») triggers the propositional assumption that progress means the elimination of divergent understandings. In this case, however, divergences remain even after progress has been achieved. An implication is that, as long as the nodal point of missile defense is not eliminated, misunderstandings persist. The deictic center “we” («у нас») is formed by the U.S. and Russia. Within the deictic center, the U.S. and Russia are still distant on the spatial-modal axis because of divergent understandings that persist, although the implied convergences as well as the desire and will to deal with missile defense reduces the distance between them.

In “but there is a desire and will to deal with this issue” («но есть желание и воля этим вопросом заниматься»), “but” («но») triggers the propositional assumption that “a desire and will to deal with this issue” compensate for the divergent understandings. The propositional assumption is that both the U.S. and Russia want to deal with missile defense. The implication is that the previous administration did not; therefore, the desire and will of the current U.S. administration is implicitly stressed. “Desire” is articulated with “will”, and both are opposed to “divergences in understanding”. Divergences in understanding imply that both sides have interests that do not converge. Hence, dealing with the issue means having to consider the divergent interests of the other side. Here, Obama’s steps are implicitly constructed as being considerate of Russia’s interests.

In “we also offered the United States of America our services in the sphere of the creation of a global system of anti-missile defense” («мы предложили Соединённым Штатам Америки также свои услуги в области создания глобальной системы противоракетной обороны»), the deictic center “we” («мы») and “our” («свои») is again exclusively formed by Medvedev, Russian politicians, and Russia as a whole, while “the United States of America” are excluded from the deictic center. Still, the U.S. and Russia are constructed as close on the spatial-modal axis, as Russia offers the U.S. its services. “Offered /.../ our services” («предложили /.../ свои услуги») constructs the U.S. as

being in a position to decide over missile defense. The propositional assumption is that the U.S. is planning to create a global system of missile defense, while “offered” («предложили») triggers the propositional assumption that Russia’s services were not initially a part of the plan. Another propositional assumption is that Russia can participate in global security frameworks. Being able to create a “global system” («глобальная система») implies that the U.S. has a global standing and power. As a result, here, the nodal point of missile defense is articulated with the U.S., while Medvedev (and, by extension, Russia) seeks to rearticulate the nodal point of missile defense with Russia’s participation, seeking to suppress the articulation of missile defense with Russia’s exclusion from the plan.

In “it is necessary to think about it” («об этом нужно думать»), the second “it” refers to Russia’s participation in missile defense. “It” is articulated in opposition to “the vulnerability of our world” («уязвимость нашего мира»), “terrorist threats” («террористические угрозы»), and “terrorists’ opportunities to use nuclear weapons” («возможности использования ядерного оружия террористами»). Still, this opposition is expressed through the word “considering” («имея в виду»). «Иметь в виду» denotes taking something into account as one of the factors, but not as a primary one. The implication is that terrorist threats are not a primary reason for the creation of a global missile defense shield with Russia’s assistance. In the same vein, “it is necessary” («нужно») conveys a relatively high level of deontic modality; however, it could be higher, considering the nature of threats that need to be tackled. This implies that Medvedev (and Russia as a whole) either is not certain whether Russia’s services can be accepted, or he does not consider the vulnerability of the world and terrorist threats as Russia’s primary concern. Otherwise, however, articulating Russia’s participation in missile defense within the discourse of tackling common challenges together (the deictic center in “our world” («наш мир») is inclusive of everybody, except for terrorists) serves as a strategy to rearticulate missile defense with Russia’s security, or Russia’s primary concern. This way, the articulation of missile defense with a threat to Russia’s security is suppressed.

In “I am an optimist, just like my colleague, the U.S. president” («я так же, как и мой коллега, Президент США, оптимист»), Medvedev is at the deictic center; constructing Obama as “my colleague”, Medvedev draws him very close to himself on the spatial-modal axis. In “I believe that we can agree on these issues” («я считаю, что по этим вопросам мы сможем договориться»), “we” («мы») unites Obama and Medvedev at the deictic center, and, in “I believe” («я считаю»), Medvedev speaks on behalf of the deictic center, creating common ground. Medvedev and Obama, both at the deictic center and both constructed as optimists, are articulated in the chain of equivalence (through “just like” («так же»)) around the nodal point of “these issues”. “Can agree” («сможем договориться») triggers the propositional assumption that there is no agreement yet between Medvedev and Obama on missile defense, which implicitly distances the two on the spatial-modal axis. However, agreement is constructed as

achieved in the future: “believe” and “can” convey relatively high level of epistemic modality. “In this respect” («в этом плане»), referring to the U.S.–Russian cooperation on missile defense, triggers the propositional assumption that Medvedev might be a pessimist in some other respects. Here, optimism is constructed as a guarantee of future agreement: being an optimist is articulated with being able to agree on the issues of interest. Hence, articulated with optimism, Obama is interpellated into eventual agreement on missile defense with Russia.

The third excerpt is from a press conference to the Polish media on 6 December 2010, before Medvedev’s official visit to Poland. One of the questions asked was whether the Lisbon summit was indeed historical, marking a turning point in NATO–Russia and Russia–West relations. Medvedev replied that, apart from the areas in which NATO–Russian cooperation is established, there are areas, like missile defense, which could unite Russia and NATO even more. Medvedev said that Russia was asked to think of its place in the EPAA, which was to be created by NATO by 2020. Medvedev said that Russia agrees, but wants this project to be equal, so that Russia knows its precise place and responsibilities as well as the precise threats which are to be mutually countered:

Или же, если Россия не найдёт себе всё-таки соответствующего места в этой системе, к 20-му году мы можем прийти к ситуации, когда соответствующий «зонтик» противоракетной обороны будет рассматриваться как фактор, дестабилизирующий ядерное равновесие, снижающий возможности России для того, чтобы ядерный паритет поддерживался до тех пор, пока есть ядерное оружие. И вот это второе может послужить к 20-му году основанием для нового витка гонки вооружений. Нам бы этого очень не хотелось. Именно поэтому я сформулировал соответствующую идею секторальной ответственности отдельных государств в рамках противоракетной обороны в Европе на саммите в Лиссабоне. И я очень жду, что мои партнёры – и Соединённые Штаты Америки, и другие партнёры из стран НАТО – самым внимательным образом изучат идею Российской Федерации. (Medvedev 2010b)⁵³

Here, “or” («или же») triggers the propositional assumption that there are only two possible scenarios and further discussion is limited. “Still” («всё-таки») implies Russia’s desire to find its place in the system (the first scenario) and its

⁵³ Or, if Russia still does not find a corresponding place for itself in this system by the year 2020, we can reach a situation in which the corresponding *umbrella* of missile defense will be regarded as a factor destabilizing nuclear parity and decreasing Russia’s opportunities of keeping nuclear parity as long as nuclear weapons exist. And this second point can serve as a basis for a new spiral of the arms race by the year 2020. We would very much not want this. This is precisely because of this that I formulated the corresponding idea of sectoral responsibility of separate countries in the framework of missile defense in Europe at the Lisbon summit. And I am really looking forward to my partners, both the United States of America and other partners from NATO states, most attentively studying the Russian Federation’s idea.

reluctance about the second scenario. “Does not find” [will not find] («не найдёт») triggers the propositional assumption that Russia is searching for a place in this system; however, what Russia is searching for is a “corresponding place” («соответствующее место»), meeting the parameters defined by Russia. Therefore, whether Russia finds such a place or not is judged by Russia alone. Notably, in “if Russia /.../ does not find a /.../ place for itself in this system” («если Россия не найдёт себе /.../ места в этой системе»), “this system” («эта система») triggers the existential assumption that the nodal point of missile defense exists regardless of Russia’s participation. Russia is constructed as struggling for the nodal point, seeking to articulate it with “a corresponding place” for Russia. If Russia’s efforts to fix the nodal point with a place for Russia are unsuccessful, Russia implicitly threatens to articulate missile defense with arms race. Currently, in “if Russia /.../ does not find a /.../ place for itself in this system”, Russia is constructed as a constitutive outside of the U.S. and NATO, for which a place can be found in the system (otherwise, Russia would not be searching for it) and, at the same time, such a place cannot be found (otherwise, Russia would not be considering the second scenario).

The second scenario is constructed as “a situation in which the corresponding *umbrella* of missile defense will be regarded as a factor destabilizing nuclear parity and decreasing Russia’s opportunities of keeping nuclear parity as long as nuclear weapons exist” («ситуация, когда соответствующий «зонтик» противоракетной обороны будет рассматриваться как фактор, дестабилизирующий ядерное равновесие, снижающий возможности России для того, чтобы ядерный паритет поддерживался до тех пор, пока есть ядерное оружие»). In other words, if Russia fails to fix the nodal point with a special place for Russia, it will construct the nodal point as a threat to Russia’s security, articulated with destabilization of nuclear parity to Russia’s disadvantage and, therefore, with a new arms race. However, in “by the year 2020, we can reach a situation” («к 20-му году мы можем прийти к ситуации»), “can” («можем») conveys a medium level of epistemic modality, which prevents the description of the second scenario from sounding like an explicit threat. The deictic center “we” («мы») here is formed by Russia and other countries related to missile defense. Reaching («приходить») implies movement of the deictic center along the spatial axis toward the threat. In the same vein, “by the 2020” («к 20-му году») ⁵⁴ implies movement of the deictic center along the temporal axis toward the threat. As the deictic center also contains other countries related to the system, Russia’s decreased ability to maintain nuclear balance is constructed as a threat for all of them.

In “the corresponding *umbrella* of missile defense” («соответствующий «зонтик» противоракетной обороны»), *umbrella* («зонтик») refers to the Cold War term *nuclear umbrella*, which is related to the U.S.’s nuclear guarantees to its allies. In this construction, the nodal point excludes Russia as

⁵⁴ The date determined by the U.S. for the full implementation of the four phases of the European missile defense system.

the Other, and Russia, in turn, treats this *umbrella* as a threat to its security. The use of passive voice in “will be regarded” («будет рассматриваться») facilitates the imposition of the common ground that the *umbrella* of missile defense will be regarded as a factor of destabilization of nuclear parity not only by Russia, but also by other countries. “Will” («будет») triggers the propositional assumption that missile defense is not regarded as such at the moment of speaking.

In “destabilizing nuclear parity” («дестабилизирующий ядерное равновесие»), “destabilizing” («дестабилизирующий») triggers the propositional assumption that, currently, nuclear parity is stabilized, as well as the value assumption that this is desirable. In “decreasing Russia’s opportunities of /.../” («снижающий возможности России для того, чтобы /.../»), the propositional assumptions are that Russia can maintain nuclear parity and that these opportunities can be decreased (or increased). In “keeping nuclear parity as long as nuclear weapons exist” («для того, чтобы ядерный паритет поддерживался до тех пор, пока есть ядерное оружие»), nuclear parity is constructed as maintained even after Russia’s opportunities have been reduced. The implication is that Russia can keep nuclear parity also in the context of decreased opportunities, but such a situation is undesirable for Russia. “As long as” («до тех пор, пока») triggers the propositional assumptions that time may come when nuclear weapons no longer exist (which is an implicit quote of Obama’s nonproliferation discourse), and that nuclear parity needs to be kept until that time. So, nuclear weapons are articulated with nuclear parity. The use of passive voice in “of keeping nuclear parity” [so that nuclear parity would be kept] («чтобы ядерный паритет поддерживался») imposes the common ground that nuclear parity is necessary.

In “this second point can serve as a basis for a new spiral of the arms race by the year 2020” («вот это второе может послужить к 20-му году основанием для нового витка гонки вооружений»), destabilization of nuclear parity is articulated with the escalation of the arms race. However, “can” («может») triggers the propositional assumption that the destabilization does not necessarily escalate the arms race. It also conveys a medium level of epistemic modality, diminishing the urgency of Medvedev’s message. It remains implicit who will initiate the possible arms race, but the latter creates a common ground, triggering the propositional assumption that, once one side is in the race, the other side needs to participate as well. “A new spiral” («новый виток») triggers the propositional assumption that an arms race consists of spirals of which there can be an infinite number; “a new” («новый») triggers the propositional assumption that the old spiral has ended and another one can begin.

Medvedev stresses that “we would very much not want this” («нам бы этого очень не хотелось»). Here, the deictic center “we” («нам») is formed by Russian politicians and Russia as a whole. “Very much” («очень») triggers the value assumption that an arms race is strongly undesirable by Russia. However, “would” («бы») lowers the level of deontic modality, while “not want” («не хотелось») triggers the propositional assumption that it is also possible to want

an arms race. The implication is that an arms race is the last option for a country (Russia) to protect its infringed security interests. Hence, an arms race is implicitly articulated with security. In “this is precisely because /.../” («именно поэтому /.../»), sectoral responsibility within the missile defense system is articulated in opposition to a potential arms race. This implies that Russia articulates its security with either responsibility for a particular sector within missile defense or an arms race. Medvedev stresses his agency in the matter by putting himself at the deictic center in “I formulated” («я сформулировал»), emphasizing that his vision of the matter represents the vision of Russia as a whole. Hence, the implication is that, if the parties involved do not make the choice formulated by Medvedev, Russia will unwillingly initiate an arms race.

In “corresponding idea of sectoral responsibility of separate countries in the framework of missile defense in Europe” («соответствующая идея секторальной ответственности отдельных государств в рамках противоракетной обороны в Европе»), Medvedev constructs missile defense as the chain of difference consisting of different sectors, for which separate countries are responsible. Countries which bear the responsibility remain implicit; however, since the idea is formulated by Medvedev, Russia implicitly is among these countries. Hence, to rearticulate the nodal point of missile defense in Europe, Medvedev articulates missile defense with sectors and, through sectors, with responsible countries. Thus, being one of the responsible countries, Russia is articulated with the nodal point.

In “I am really looking forward to my partners, both the United States of America and other partners from NATO countries, most attentively studying the Russian Federation’s idea” («и я очень жду, что мои партнёры – и Соединённые Штаты Америки, и другие партнёры из стран НАТО – самым внимательным образом изучат идею Российской Федерации»), Medvedev implicitly accepts the hegemony of the U.S. and NATO over the nodal point of missile defense. However, in “my partners” («мои партнёры»), Medvedev constructs the U.S. and other NATO members close to himself on the spatial-modal axis, while stressing his absolute conformity with the Russian Federation. In “my partners” («мои партнёры»), Medvedev constructs the chain of equivalence consisting of the U.S. and other NATO members, in which the U.S. is foregrounded and differentiated from others.

The propositional assumption in “and I am really looking forward /.../” («и я очень жду /.../») is that decision-making will take time. Both “and I am really looking forward” («и я очень жду») and “most attentively” («самым внимательным образом») convey the importance of the issue for Russia as well as Medvedev’s significant personal investment into the matter. In “most attentively studying” [will most attentively study] («самым внимательным образом изучат»), the propositional assumption is that it is possible for the U.S. and NATO to study Medvedev’s idea otherwise. The very need to stress this implies that Medvedev worries that the U.S. and NATO will not take his idea seriously. To make his partners focus, Medvedev needs to implicitly threaten to launch an arms race. This way, here, attentive study of the Russia’s

idea is implicitly articulated with mandatory positive response to it on behalf on the U.S. and NATO.

The fourth extract originates from Medvedev's official statement to the citizens of Russia, delivered on 23 November 2011 in response to the implementation of the Phase One of EPAA on the territories of Turkey, Spain, Poland, and Romania. Medvedev said that Obama's decision to modify Bush's plan allowed the U.S. and Russia to conclude New START. Now, Russia is concerned with the EPAA, which, if fully deployed, will be located close to Russia's borders. Medvedev acknowledged that his idea of sectoral responsibility in missile defense was not considered seriously and, although Russia is still open to negotiations, there are several retaliatory measures Russia is starting to implement in Kaliningrad and the rest of Russia. If the measures prove insufficient, Medvedev promised to deploy short-range Iskander missiles in the West and in the South of Russia, as well as in Kaliningrad Oblast, to strike missile defense sites, if necessary:

Я убеждён, что и сегодня подобный подход открывает уникальные возможности для выхода России и Североатлантического альянса на подлинное стратегическое партнёрство. Ведь трения и конфронтацию в наших отношениях могут заменить принципы равноправия, неделимости безопасности, взаимного доверия и предсказуемости.

К сожалению, Соединённые Штаты Америки, а вслед за ними и другие натовские партнёры не проявили серьёзной готовности двигаться в этом направлении. Они не собираются, во всяком случае на сегодняшний день, учитывать нашу озабоченность архитектурой европейской ППРО на данном этапе, а нас лишь убеждают, что их планы не направлены против России. Причём говорят: «Это не против вас, вы не волнуйтесь», – что называется, успокаивают.

Но это на уровне исполнительной власти, а законодатели в некоторых странах прямо говорят: «Имейте в виду – это против вас». А когда мы ставим вопрос о том, чтобы положить это на бумагу в форме чётких недвусмысленных юридических обязательств, следует жёсткий отказ. (Medvedev 2011a)⁵⁵

⁵⁵ I am convinced that, also today, such an approach opens unique opportunities for Russia and the North Atlantic Alliance to enter genuine strategic partnership. After all, frictions and confrontations in our relations can be substituted by the principles of equality, indivisibility of security, mutual trust, and predictability.

Unfortunately, the United States of America and, following them, also other NATO partners, have not expressed serious readiness to move in this direction. They are not going, at least today, to take into account our concern about the architecture of the European missile defense system at this stage, while they are merely convincing us that their plans are not directed against Russia. And they say, “This is not against you, do not worry” – calming us down, as it is called.

However, this is on the executive level, whereas legislators in some countries say directly, “Keep in mind, this is against you.” But when we raise a question about putting this on paper in the form of clear, unambiguous legal obligations, a rigid refusal follows.

Medvedev constructs himself at the deictic center in “I am convinced” («я убеждён»), “convinced” («убеждён») triggering a high level of epistemic modality. “Also today” («и сегодня») triggers the propositional assumption that today is like the past, the implication being that, although Russia has responded to the deployment of ЕРАА, sectoral responsibility can still be discussed. This implies the importance of the issue to Russia. In “opens unique opportunities for Russia and the North Atlantic Alliance to enter genuine strategic partnership” («открывает уникальные возможности для выхода России и Североатлантического альянса на подлинное стратегическое партнёрство»), there are several propositional assumptions: first, that there are no so such opportunities or genuine strategic partnership (triggered by “opens” («открывает»)); second, that strategic partnership between Russia and NATO exists, but it is not genuine. The value assumption is that genuine strategic partnership is desirable. Third, opportunities for genuine NATO–Russian strategic partnership exist, but they are not unique. The value assumption is that unique opportunities are desired. Thus, sectoral responsibility is constructed as very desirable and special, and Medvedev seeks to articulate NATO–Russian relations with sectoral responsibility. However, “opens” («открывает») and “to enter” («для выхода») imply the existence of a hindrance on the spatial-modal axis, which prevents Russia and NATO from moving further together in the same direction. Being articulated with genuine strategic partnership between Russia and NATO, sectoral responsibility is constructed as eliminating the implied hindrance and providing entrance into genuine NATO–Russian strategic partnership.

The propositional assumption in “after all, frictions and confrontations in our relations can be substituted /.../” («ведь трения и конфронтацию в наших отношениях могут заменить /.../») is that there are frictions in NATO–Russian relations. In “can be substituted by the principles of equality, indivisibility of security, mutual trust, and predictability” («могут заменить принципы равноправия, неделимости безопасности, взаимного доверия и предсказуемости»), the propositional assumption is that there are no principles of equality, indivisibility of security, mutual trust, and predictability in Russia–NATO relations. This implies extreme distance between Russia and NATO on the spatial-modal axis. By saying “can be substituted” («могут заменить»), Medvedev seeks to suppress the articulation of NATO–Russian relations with confrontations and rearticulate these relations with equality, indivisibility of security, mutual trust, and predictably under sectoral responsibility approach.

There is an implication that the U.S. and NATO still want to move in the direction of equality, indivisible security, trust, and predictability with Russia, but they do not articulate this direction with sectoral responsibility. In Medvedev’s construction, the U.S. is foregrounded and differentiated within the chain of equivalence consisting of NATO members who have not supported Russia’s proposal, articulated with improving NATO–Russian relations. The implication is that not pursuing sectoral responsibility means not wanting improvements in NATO–Russian relations.

In “they are not going to take into account our concern” («они не собираются учитывать нашу озабоченность»), the U.S. and NATO are articulated in the chain equivalence and constructed as “they” in opposition to “us” in “our concern” («наша озабоченность»). The deictic center is formed by Russian politicians and Russia as a whole. The existential assumption is that Russia’s concern exists and the propositional assumption is that it needs to be taken into account, with the implication that Russia’s concern with missile defense is justified. «Не собираются» has a negative connotation, suggesting that the U.S. and NATO can consider Russia’s concern, but they do not. Hence, here, the U.S. and NATO are constructed as Russia’s Other.

In “they are merely convincing us that their plans are not directed against Russia” («а нас лишь убеждают, что их планы не направлены против России»), the propositional assumption is that the U.S. and NATO know about Russia’s concerns but think that they are unfounded. Hence, the U.S. and NATO do not articulate missile defense with threat to Russia’s security. In order to suppress this articulation and impose the common ground that missile defense threatens Russia’s security, Medvedev makes the propositional assumption (triggered by “merely” («лишь»)) that the U.S. and NATO are convincing Russia to abandon its concerns to conceal the fact that it is they who are neglecting Russia’s concerns. This implies that Russia is right to be concerned, and articulation of missile defense with threat to Russia’s security is justified.

Medvedev emphasizes his point by quoting his interpretations in “and they say, “This is not against you, do not worry” – calming us down, as it is called” («Причём говорят: «Это не против вас, вы не волнуйтесь», – что называется, успокаивают»). In “this is not against you” («это не против вас»), as well as in “their plans are not directed against Russia” («их планы не направлены против России»), with the propositional assumption that missile defense and the U.S. and NATO’s plans can be against Russia; so, the U.S. and NATO are implicitly constructed as Russia’s Other.

The propositional assumption in “calming us down” («успокаивают») is that the U.S. and NATO understand Russia’s concerns. However, since there is no trust in NATO–Russian relations, Russia does not believe the U.S. and NATO on this issue. Moreover, “calming us down, as it is called” («что называется, успокаивают»), implies that Russia treats the U.S. and NATO’s arguments as superficial and even sarcastic. Still, in “at least today” («во всяком случае на сегодняшний день»), “at least” («во всяком случае») triggers the propositional assumption that the situation may change. The implication is that the U.S. and NATO are significantly distanced from Russia along the spatial-modal axis, but not so far as to be unable to reach each other; proximity in NATO–Russian relations is constructed as desirable and possible.

To cement Russia’s concerns and construct the U.S. and NATO’s claims as two-faced, Medvedev creates an opposition between the discourse of executive and legislative levels in some countries. What these “some countries” («некоторые страны») are remains implicit; “some” («некоторые») triggers the propositional assumption that legislators do not contradict their executive branch. In

the constructed opposition between legislators and the executive branch, the former are implicitly constructed as saying the truth, the latter as two-faced. For instance, legislators “say directly” («прямо говорят»), while the executive branch tries to “calm [Russia] down, as it is called”. In “keep in mind, this is against you” («имейте в виду – это против вас»), “keep in mind” («имейте в виду») triggers the propositional assumption that legislators of the countries Medvedev refers to want Russian politicians to be even more concerned about missile defense, which is the opposite of calming Russia down. This reinforces the articulation of missile defense with a threat to Russia’s security.

Medvedev implicitly constructs Russia as misled by the U.S.’s and NATO’s ambiguity and, hence, seeking clarity. In “when we raise a question” («когда мы ставим вопрос»), the deictic center “we” is formed by Russian politicians and, inclusively, Russia as a whole. The propositional assumption is that prior oral commitments were unclear to Russia and that Russia wants the U.S. and NATO put their words on paper. Here, “paper” («бумага») and “the form of legal obligations” («в форме юридических обязательств») are constructed as credible unlike oral commitments. In “a rigid refusal follows” («следует жёсткий отказ»), the passive construction makes it implicit who actually expressed a rigid refusal. “Rigid” («жёсткий») conveys the highest level of deontic modality, implying that the U.S. and NATO do not consider such a document as an option. In contrast, there is more flexibility in making oral commitments. This implies the two-facedness of the U.S. and NATO as Russia’s Other as well as absence of trust in NATO–Russian relations. For Russia, trust in NATO–Russian relations is articulated either with sectoral responsibility approach or with the legal document certifying that missile defense is not against Russia. The U.S. and NATO are constructed as ready to move in the direction of sectoral responsibility, but not sufficiently, as well as certify that missile defense is not against Russia, but only orally. As a result, Russia is constructed as being suspended in ambiguity.

The fifth utterance is from Medvedev’s meeting with journalists of the Northwestern Federal District in Petrozavodsk on 24 November 2011, after Medvedev supported Putin’s candidacy in the 2012 presidential elections on 24 September 2011, the day after Medvedev’s official statement on European missile defense (23 November 2011). One of the questions asked pertained to whether it was possible to conduct passport and customs checks on the trains running from Kaliningrad to St. Petersburg and Moscow like on the new train from St. Petersburg to Helsinki. Medvedev replied that negotiations were being conducted with the Lithuanian government. The question then specified whether, after Medvedev’s statement on missile defense, negotiations on such questions could still be expected. Medvedev said that, provided there is good will, it is possible to have both onboard passport and customs checks as well as missiles, if necessary:

Но если говорить серьёзно, то это, конечно, не связанные до конца вещи, потому что всё-таки наши отношения с Евросоюзом очень многоплановые,

многоаспектные, они не сводятся к обсуждению темы с ЕвроПРО. Тем более, прямо скажу, конструкция европейской ПРО в значительной мере навязана Соединёнными Штатами Америки, а мои партнёры разные (не буду их называть, чтобы не ставить в неловкое положение) мне периодически намекали: «Ну что ты меня спрашиваешь? Американцы определились, это они решили, это они продвигают. А наша роль такая: мы члены НАТО, мы свою территорию предоставим, и всё. Мы и деньги на это не можем тратить, у нас их нет просто». Поэтому по ЕвроПРО нам нужно договариваться прежде всего с американцами и Североатлантическим альянсом. (Medvedev 2011b)⁵⁶

The “matters” («вещи») which Medvedev articulates with each other are Russia’s retaliatory measures against European missile defense and facilitated customs checks on fast trains which connect Russian cities by crossing European countries. These two issues were articulated with each other by the journalist in his question; Medvedev, in turn, reiterates this articulation by articulating both topics with good will. However, in “but, to speak seriously” («но если говорить серьёзно»), the propositional assumption is that what has been said previously is not serious. The implication is that Medvedev is reluctant to articulate facilitated customs checks with retaliatory measures. Indeed, retaliatory measures imply that Russia and the EU are at the opposite ends of the spatial-modal axis. However, in “not completely connected issues” («не связанные до конца вещи»), the propositional assumption is that the issues are connected. Medvedev also distinguishes between completely connected and not completely connected issues. The high level of epistemic modality in “of course” («конечно») implies that this is easy.

“Since /.../ still” («потому что всё-таки») implies that facilitated customs checks can be discussed without missile defense. To suppress the articulation of EU–Russian relations with missile defense, Medvedev seeks to stress the diverse nature of these relations by using the intensifier “very” («очень») and repeating the prefix “multi-” in “very multidimensional, multiaspectual” («очень многоплановые, многоаспектные»). In “our relations” («наши отношения»), the deictic center contains Russia and, inclusively, the EU, placing them close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. However, the very necessity to emphasize

⁵⁶ But, to speak seriously, these are, of course, not completely connected matters, since our relations with the EU are still very multidimensional, multiaspectual – they do not boil down to discussing the topic of European missile defense. Moreover, I will say directly, the construction of European missile defense is, to a significant degree, imposed by the United States of America, while my various partners (I will not name them in order not to embarrass them) have periodically hinted to me, “Why are you asking me about that? Americans have made up their minds – it is them who decided this, it is them who promote this. While our role is the following: we are NATO members, we will provide our territory, and that’s it. We cannot even spend money on this, since we simply do not have it.” That is why we need to negotiate European missile defense, first and foremost, with the Americans and the North Atlantic Alliance.

this, as well as the use of “still” («всё-таки») implies the existence of a contradiction.

In “they do not boil down to discussing the topic of European missile defense” («они не сводятся к обсуждению темы с ЕвроПРО»), the implication is that somebody may think that EU–Russian relations boil down to discussing missile defense. To tackle this assumption, Medvedev constructs EU–Russian relations as a chain of difference, consisting of numerous dimensions and aspects, missile defense being one of them. The value assumption is that the more dimensions and aspects relations contain, the better. Here, missile defense is constructed as one aspect of EU–Russian relations. Opposition is implicitly constructed between multidimensional, multiaspectual relations and relations which boil down to only one dimension, where all differences are connected/fixed to the nodal point of missile defense and gain their meaning from it.

“Moreover” («тем более») implies that there is an even more weighty reason not to articulate EU–Russian relations with missile defense. In “I will say directly” («прямо скажу»), the propositional assumption is that Medvedev does not always say what he thinks directly. Notably, by promising to make his point directly, Medvedev creates common ground with his audience, since the implication is that he is going to tell the truth. In telling the truth, Medvedev constructs missile defense as “imposed” («навязанная»), the propositional assumption being that the EU was against it, with the value assumption that missile defense is undesirable. This implicitly constructs the U.S. and the EU at the opposite extremes of the spatial-modal axis. Another propositional assumption is that the U.S. has the power to impose its decisions on the EU. The implication is that, by imposing missile defense on the EU, the U.S. affects EU–Russian relations negatively and is, therefore, implicitly constructed as Other. This way, Medvedev rearticulates missile defense with the U.S. in opposition to the EU and Russia. However, in “is, to a significant degree, imposed” («в значительной мере навязана»), “to a significant degree” triggers the propositional assumption that missile defense was not completely imposed by the U.S. and was at least partly supported by the EU, which implicitly places the U.S. and the EU closer on the spatial-modal axis.

“While” («а») implies the existence of an opposition between the U.S. and unnamed European politicians. In “my various partners” («мои партнёры разные»), Medvedev is at the deictic center and constructs his European partners as very close to himself on the spatial-modal axis and, implicitly, remote from the U.S. In “I will not name them in order not to embarrass them” («не буду их называть, чтобы не ставить в неловкое положение»), the propositional assumption is that these partners do not express their real opinion publicly, implying that they are intimidated by the U.S. Thus, Medvedev articulates these European politicians into the chain of equivalence against the U.S., which is implicitly constructed as the Other who imposes its will on the EU and European politicians.

However, “have periodically hinted to me” («мне периодически намекали») triggers the propositional assumption that Medvedev’s partners have not said

that directly and it remains unclear whether Medvedev interpreted the hints correctly. Still, “periodically” («периодически») is intended to stress the correctness of Medvedev’s interpretation. What follows is Medvedev’s interpretation of his partners’ hints: “Why are you asking me about that? Americans have made up their minds – it is them who decided this, it is them who promote this” («Ну что ты меня спрашиваешь? Американцы определились, это они решили, это они продвигают»). Here, «ну» is a very informal Russian word; «ты» is also an informal way of addressing a partner in Russian; «американцы», which otherwise means the U.S. citizens, here informally refers to the U.S. administration and has a negative connotation. Such informal talk places Medvedev and his partners very close on the spatial-modal axis and distances the U.S. as Other from them. The propositional assumption in “why are you asking me about that?” («Ну что ты меня спрашиваешь?») is that it was Medvedev who raised the topic of missile defense. «Ну» implies that Medvedev’s partners tended to redirect him to the U.S. Furthermore, each of Medvedev’s alleged partners places her-/himself at the deictic center in “me” («меня»), which is opposed to “Americans”. The anaphoric “it is them who” («это они») is used to stress the U.S.’s central role in missile defense.

In his interpretation of his European partners’ hints, Medvedev constructs an opposition, triggered by “while” («а») in “while our role is the following” («а наша роль такая»), between these partners and Americans. The propositional assumption is that Americans and Europeans have different roles in the missile defense issue. While Americans are constructed as playing an active role, Europe is extremely passive: “we will provide our territory, and that’s it” («мы свою территорию предоставим, и всё»). In “we are NATO members” («мы члены НАТО»), the deictic center “we” («мы») unites European partners. The latter are articulated in the chain of equivalence around NATO, implying that all European NATO members play the same role.

In “we will provide our territory” («мы свою территорию предоставим»), this role is articulated with providing territory. The propositional assumption is that, if a country is a NATO member, it inevitably succumbs to the will of the U.S.; so, the U.S. is explicitly constructed as NATO’s supreme power. “And that’s it” («и всё») implies that European NATO members who provide their territory for missile defense do not have the right to discussion. Here Medvedev attempts at structural closure, articulating European NATO members with NATO and NATO with U.S.’s supremacy. This way, Medvedev constructs European countries as the U.S.’s vassals, who serve as mere territorial resources. Nevertheless, in “we cannot even spend money on this, since we simply do not have that money” («мы и деньги на это не можем тратить, у нас их нет просто»), Europe’s passivity is explained by the lack of material resources. The propositional assumption is that the U.S. has money for missile defense, in contrast to the European NATO members. All in all, within the so-called European partners’ hints, there is no implication that, for Europe, missile defense is totally undesirable – the only difference between the European

countries and the U.S. is the degree of power and availability of material resources.

In “that is why /.../” («поэтому /.../»), Medvedev constructs Europe’s powerlessness on missile defense as the reason why Russia should negotiate primarily with the U.S. and NATO (triggered by “first and foremost” («прежде всего»)). In “the Americans and the North Atlantic Alliance” («американцы и Североатлантический альянс»), Medvedev constructs the chain of equivalence of actual decision-makers. In this chain, the foregrounded U.S. is constructed as having the most power. “We need to negotiate /.../” («нам нужно договариваться») implies Russia’s powerlessness, since it needs to find ways of negotiating. “We” contains Medvedev, Russian politicians, and, inclusively, Russia as a whole. “We need” («нам нужно») expresses Russia’s high level of deontic commitment to the matter. The propositional assumption in “with the Americans and the North Atlantic Alliance” («с американцами и Североатлантическим альянсом») is that NATO still plays an important role in missile defense talks, although Medvedev previously made it clear that missile defense is U.S.-imposed. In Medvedev’s construction, therefore, NATO as an organization is different from its member states and is remote from Russia on the spatial-modal axis, while each NATO member state separately is close to Russia on the spatial-modal axis. In Medvedev’s construction, NATO as an organization is fixed with the U.S., both being implicitly constructed as Other.

The sixth utterance is from Medvedev’s meeting with the commanders of the missile regiments of the 60th Missile Division on 21 February 2012. One of the commanders asked Medvedev if his firm position on the location of missile defense in Europe meant the beginning of a confrontation with Western countries. Medvedev said that his statement only meant that Russia had to react to NATO’s plans, as they affect Russia’s strategic interests:

Если они к тому времени от этих планов откажутся, а в ряде случаев наши коллеги по этому вопросу демонстрировали гибкость, значит, и мы тоже будем демонстрировать эту гибкость. Но если размещение сил и средств ПРО будет продолжаться по тому плану, который утвердило НАТО, нам придётся сделать всё то, о чём я сказал.

Ещё раз подчёркиваю: это не наш какой-то отдельный российский милитаризм или рудименты «холодной войны» – это просто трезвый расчёт, по-другому мы не можем поступить. Кто бы, подчёркиваю, ни руководил нашей страной, кто бы ни был во главе Соединённых Штатов Америки, во главе Североатлантического альянса, нам придётся это просто сделать. Это должны понимать те наши партнёры, с которыми мы ведём диалог по поддержанию стратегического паритета. (Medvedev 2012)⁵⁷

⁵⁷ If, by that time, they abandon these plans, and, in some cases, our colleagues, on this issue, have demonstrated flexibility, we, therefore, will also demonstrate such flexibility. However, if deployment of forces and assets of European missile defense continues according to the plan confirmed by NATO, we will need to do everything I have said.

In “if, by that time, they abandon these plans” («если они к тому времени от этих планов откажутся»), the propositional assumption is that “they” (the U.S. and NATO) can abandon their plans “by that time” (2018 to 2020). “In some cases our colleagues, on this issue, have demonstrated flexibility” («в ряде случаев наши коллеги по этому вопросу демонстрировали гибкость») triggers the propositional assumption that, in the matter of missile defense, flexibility suggests the abandonment of a plan. In “we will also demonstrate such flexibility” («и мы тоже будем демонстрировать эту гибкость»), the propositional assumption is that Russia can also demonstrate flexibility, but only in response to the U.S.’s and NATO’s flexibility. To “demonstrate such flexibility” («демонстрировать эту гибкость») implies that both sides have diverging interests, but nevertheless make concessions. This constructs the U.S. and NATO as remote from Russia on the spatial-modal axis and at the same time reduces the distance between them.

The deictic center “we” in “we, therefore, will also demonstrate such flexibility” («значит, и мы тоже будем демонстрировать эту гибкость») is formed by Russia, its politicians, and Russia as a whole as opposed to the U.S. and NATO and their politicians, constructed as “they” in “if, by that time, they abandon these plans” («если они к тому времени от этих планов откажутся»). When Medvedev speaks about flexibility, the U.S. and NATO and their politicians are constructed as “our colleagues” («наши коллеги») and placed very close to Russia on the spatial-modal axis. In “if by that time, they /.../” («если они к тому времени /.../») triggers the propositional assumption that there is a time limit and, hence, a sense of urgency is constructed on the temporal axis.

The deictic center “we” in “we will need to do everything I have said” («нам придётся сделать всё то, о чём я сказал») is formed by Russian politicians and, inclusively, Russia as a whole; Medvedev speaks on behalf of the deictic center, claiming that Russia will do what he said. “We will need to do” («нам придётся сделать») conveys Russia’s unwillingness to implement the mentioned measures; the implication being that there is need Russia cannot neglect. “The plan confirmed by NATO” («план, который утвердило НАТО») is articulated with Russia’s need “to do everything” («сделать всё») Medvedev previously claimed to keep the balance. Hence, missile defense is articulated with NATO and the U.S. in opposition to Russia. Still, “everything” («всё») triggers the propositional assumption that a partial implementation of measures by Russia is possible, too. In “according to the plan confirmed by NATO” («по тому плану, который утвердило НАТО»), the propositional assumption is that the deployment of missile defense can continue according to another plan. In “I

I underline once more: it is not our some kind of distinct Russian militarism, nor rudiments of the Cold War – this is simply a sober calculation, we cannot act differently. I underline that, whoever would rule our country, whoever would be the head of the United States of America, of the North Atlantic Alliance, we will need to simply do this. Those, our partners, with whom we are conducting the dialog pertaining to keeping the strategic parity, have to understand this.

underline once more” («ещё раз подчёркиваю»), Medvedev is constructed at the deictic center. The phrase conveys the highest levels of epistemic and deontic modality, expressing Medvedev’s confidence in his argument as well as its importance for him. So, on the one hand, Medvedev, as the commander-in-chief, is determined as he speaks to the commanders of missile regiments; on the other hand, Medvedev is in an implicit dialog with NATO and the U.S.

The implication in “it is not our some kind of distinct Russian militarism, nor rudiments of the Cold War («это не наш какой-то отдельный российский милитаризм или рудименты «холодной войны»») is that there are those who articulate Russia’s retaliatory measures to missile defense with Russia’s militarism and rudiments of the Cold War, while Medvedev seeks to suppress these articulations. On the temporal axis, Medvedev constructs and stresses discontinuity with the Cold War. However, the existential assumptions are that Russian militarism and the rudiments of the Cold War exist. The existence of “rudiments of the Cold War” («рудименты «холодной войны»») implicitly construct Russia and NATO (together with the U.S.) at the opposite extremes of the spatial-modal axis. To counter the above articulations and suppress them, Medvedev articulates Russia’s retaliatory measures with sober calculation. The value assumption in “sober calculation” («трезвый расчёт») is that it is sensible and desirable. Thus, Russian militarism and rudiments of the Cold War are constructed in opposition to sober calculation.

Russian militarism is modified by “some kind of” («какой-то»), implying that this is a fantasy. Still, “our /.../ militarism” («наш /.../ милитаризм») places militarism at the deictic center formed by Russia. “This is simply /.../” («это просто /.../») conveys the highest level of epistemic modality. In “simply” («просто»), Medvedev attempts at structural closure, constructing the articulation of Russia’s retaliatory measures with sober calculation and excluding all other possible articulations. “We cannot act differently” («по-другому мы не можем поступить») conveys the highest level of deontic commitment and triggers the propositional assumption that Russia needs to react and that there is only one way of doing it.

In “I underline that, whoever would rule our country, whoever would be the head of the United States of America, of the North Atlantic Alliance” («Кто бы, подчёркиваю, ни руководил нашей страной, кто бы ни был во главе Соединённых Штатов Америки, во главе Североатлантического альянса»), “I underline” («подчёркиваю») conveys the highest level of epistemic and deontic modality and triggers the propositional assumption that this argument has to be reiterated. Another propositional assumption is that Russia’s conduct differs, depending on the personality of the leaders of the U.S., NATO, and Russia (triggered by “whoever” («кто бы»)). In “whoever” («кто бы»), Medvedev seeks to detach the political course of the country from the personality of its political leader. Thus, political leaders make the chain of equivalence around the logical, sober, and, therefore, objective political course of the country. Among other things, the implication is that there is no difference between Medvedev and Putin as Russia follows its objective political course.

In “we will need to simply do this” («нам придётся это просто сделать»), “we will need” («нам придётся») conveys extreme reluctance and necessity, amplified by “simply” («просто»). By using “simply”, Medvedev attempts at structural closure. Russia’s retaliatory measures are constructed as not depending on the relationships between the leaders of Russia, the U.S., and NATO and Medvedev seeks to suppress the articulation of the opposite.

To achieve structural closure, Medvedev seeks to make his partners accept his opinion. “Our partners /.../ have to understand this” («это должны понимать /.../ наши партнёры») conveys the highest level of deontic modality. However, “have to” («должны») triggers the propositional assumption that they do not. “This” («это») is supposed to mean Medvedev’s articulation of Russia’s retaliatory measures with sober calculation rather than with the person leading Russia, the U.S., or NATO. The implication is that Russia’s partners might assume that a different president could change Russia’s course. This gap in understanding places these partners apart from Russia on the spatial-modal axis, while in “those of our partners” («те наши партнёры»), Russia’s partners are constructed as being closer on the spatial-modal axis to the deictic center (formed by Russia and its politicians). “Those” («те») triggers the propositional assumption that not all partners have to understand Medvedev’s point, but only those involved in the dialog. In “we are conducting the dialog” («мы ведём диалог»), the propositional assumption is that Russia and its partners are in an ongoing dialog, which places them closer to each other on the spatial-modal axis. “Pertaining to keeping the strategic parity” («по поддержанию стратегического паритета») triggers the propositional assumption that strategic parity is important and needs to be kept.

6.4.1. Discussion

In this context, six excerpts pertaining to missile defense and NATO–Russian relations were analyzed. In the first excerpt, Medvedev praised Obama for his decision to abandon the location of missile defense in Europe, without any indication of the temporary nature of this decision. The latter was articulated with learning to listen to each other; however, it was implied that listening to Medvedev meant making “pro-Russian decisions”. In the second excerpt, one could see struggle for the nodal point of missile defense: while accepting the U.S.’s hegemony over the nodal point, Russia sought to challenge it and to rearticulate the nodal point, so as to fix it with Russian assistance. The same happened in the third excerpt, where Russia was constructed as articulating ЕРАА with “a corresponding place” for Russia. To eliminate dislocation, Medvedev’s decision was to articulate missile defense with sectoral responsibility and, through this, with Russia assuming responsibility for a specific sector of missile defense. Rejection of sectoral responsibility approach to missile defense was articulated with arms race.

In the fourth excerpt, it became clear from the question Medvedev was asked that missile defense implicitly interfered with each plane of multidimensional EU–Russian relations and, as a result, dislocated the whole structure of these relations. To eliminate the dislocation and suppress the articulation of EU–Russian relations with missiles, Medvedev articulated missile defense with the U.S.’s imposition of its interests. Still, even as Medvedev constructed European countries as powerless, the implication was that these countries did not consider the plan harmful. In the fifth excerpt, Russia demanded that the principle of the indivisibility of security be applied not only within NATO, but in the whole Euro–Atlantic region, including Russia. The overall implication in this excerpt was that NATO wanted to improve NATO–Russian relations, but not the way Russia proposed. In turn, Russia considered this as a total disregard of Russia’s concerns by NATO.

Finally, in the sixth excerpt, Medvedev aimed at achieving structural closure by articulating Russia’s retaliatory measures with sober calculation and suppressing their articulations with Russian militarism, rudiments of the Cold War, and the personalities of leaders. Medvedev constructed leaders of Russia in the chain of equivalence around Russia’s objective political decisions. All in all, although Medvedev sought to rule out articulations of Russia’s reaction to missile defense with anything other than sober calculations, the real concern seemed to lie not only in Russia’s fear that missile defense could potentially break strategic balance, but also in Russia’s fear for its identity as a European power. Russia cannot be a truly European power, when being excluded from European security architecture; so, Medvedev attempted to construct missile defense as a U.S.-imposed measure, while seeking to articulate the EU with Russia on the basis of multidimensional cooperation. Consequently, in this context, apart from the cases where Medvedev thought that the plan was abolished, the U.S. (along with NATO) was constructed as Russia’s Other, and even when the new U.S.–Russian Self was being constructed, it was extremely dislocated.

6.5. Context 4: Russia’s accession into the World Trade Organization

Russia had been seeking to become a WTO member for 18 years, from 1993, when it was finally accepted on 22 August 2012. The success can be attributed to the cooperation between Obama and Medvedev, since their predecessors had been unable to reach this aim. Upon Russia’s accession, WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy said this was a “win-win result” for Russia and the WTO: Russia became “a more attractive place to do business”, whereas the WTO reassured its “relevance and vibrancy /.../ as an instrument for international cooperation” (WTO 2010: para. 3). The following sections will analyze six of Medvedev’s texts delivered for domestic and international audiences in the years 2010 and

2011 to demonstrate the peculiarities of Medvedev's construction of the Russia–WTO relationship and the U.S.'s role therein.

The first extract originates from the transcript of Medvedev's meeting with the 22 managers of U.S. venture capital funds and several members of both Russian and U.S. presidential administrations in Moscow on 25 May 2010. The issues discussed included Russia's investment climate, potential for innovation, investments into Russia's high technology sector, and development of Russia's center for innovations in Skolkovo:

На полях, что называется, замечу: я считаю, что вступление России во Всемирную торговую организацию существенно изменило бы общую атмосферу. Мы хотели бы этого и рассчитываем на то, что и правительство Соединённых Штатов Америки, администрация и деловое сообщество будут эту идею поддерживать, потому что, я неоднократно об этом говорил, нам надоело уже находиться в «предбаннике», что называется, пытаться вступить в эту организацию. Мы уже вступаем, по-моему, гораздо дольше, чем китайцы, хотя наша экономика всё-таки меньше китайской, и вообще-то у нас достаточно открытые правила, всем понятные. (Medvedev 2010a)⁵⁸

In “I believe” («я считаю»), Medvedev constructs himself at the deictic center and makes an existential assumption that there is a “general atmosphere” («общая атмосфера») in international relations, and the propositional assumptions that Russia's WTO accession will produce a “substantial” («существенно») change of this atmosphere and that there is room for substantial change, the value assumption here being that this change is desirable, since the deictic center is the source of the epistemic true and deontic right. This way Medvedev seeks to articulate Russia with the WTO. However, Medvedev constructs his belief low on the scale of epistemic certainty: in “would change” («изменило бы»), the implication is that not everyone might agree. In the second sentence, the deictic center “we” includes Medvedev, Russia's government, and Russia as a whole, constructed as agreeing with Medvedev's viewpoint: “we would like it to happen” («мы хотели бы этого») assumes that Russia wants WTO accession and improvement of the general atmosphere. However, there is, once again, a discrepancy between Medvedev's construction of Russia's WTO accession as a desirable goal and his use of the subjunctive mood in “we would like it to happen”, reflecting a lower modal value of this commitment. The same point can be made pertaining to the introductory statement to the whole utterance: “As a side note, I will make a remark” («На полях, что называется, замечу») – Medvedev constructs the important point

⁵⁸ As a side note, I will make a remark: I believe that Russia's WTO accession would substantially change the general atmosphere. We want it and we expect that the U.S. government, administration, and business community will be supporting this idea because, as I have said many times, we are tired of being held in the “dressing room”, trying to access this organization. We have been accessing, I think, much longer than the Chinese, even though our economy is smaller than the Chinese one, and, in general, we have sufficiently open rules, which are understandable to everybody.

he is going to make as a side issue, which is rather low on the scale of deontic modality.

These discrepancies imply that Russia is aware of its secondary role in the decision-making: although Russia's claim is strong, the final decision will be made by the WTO members. Thus, Russia "expects", "hopes for", "counts on" (the three being the shades of meaning of the Russian verb *рассчитывать*) the U.S.'s help: "we expect that the U.S. government, administration, and business community will be supporting this idea" («мы /.../ рассчитываем на то, что и правительство Соединённых Штатов Америки, администрация и деловое сообщество будут эту идею поддерживать»). The propositional assumption is that the U.S. is connected to the WTO, with the value assumption that the U.S.'s support is strongly desirable. This way, Medvedev seeks to articulate Russia with the WTO through the U.S., which means that the U.S. is implicitly fixed with the WTO.

Medvedev creates the chain of difference consisting of the U.S. government, the U.S. administration, and the U.S. business community. He stresses that Russia needs support of each of these U.S. bodies, the implication being that the support of only one or two may not be enough to solve the difficult issue of Russia's WTO accession. One implication is that not all U.S. bodies support Russia's WTO accession, another that the U.S.'s actions are only effective when they are unanimously supported by major U.S.'s components. It is only in this case that Medvedev can make all U.S. components equivalent by referring to them collectively as "the U.S".

Medvedev says that Russia is "fed up" with being kept in the "dressing room", trying to access WTO («нам надоело уже находиться в «предбаннике», /.../ пытаться вступить в эту организацию»). In the same vein, Medvedev stresses that Russia wants to access the WTO, not "try to access" it. Medvedev emphasizes Russia's urge by saying that he has repeatedly reiterated this fact: "I have said it many times" («я неоднократно об этом говорил»), the implication being that his voice is not heard internationally on this topic. This urge constitutes the reason why the U.S.'s support is so necessary. Medvedev invents strategies to construct this attitude toward Russia as unjust; for instance, Medvedev seeks to articulate Russia with the WTO in opposition to China, but since China is a WTO member, the articulation of China with the WTO challenges Medvedev's attempted articulation.

In other words, Medvedev's statement "in general, we have open rules, understandable to everybody" («и вообще-то у нас достаточно открытые правила, всем понятные») implicitly constructs Russia in opposition to China. The nodal point here is "rules" and it is fixed with being "open" and "understandable". The WTO is implicitly constructed as having the most open and understandable rules, Russia's rules are constructed as sufficiently open and understandable, whereas China is placed at the remote end of the modal axis, since China's rules are implicitly constructed as the least open and understandable. This allows for the construction of the delay of Russia's WTO accession as illogical: if Russia's rules are closer to the WTO's hegemonic

standard (Russia is in this case at the deictic center “we” («мы»), being thus constructed as the origin of the deontic right), then its unification with the WTO needs to be faster than in the case of the remote end of the modal axis. Russia’s economy is constructed as smaller than the Chinese one, the propositional assumption being that it is easier for smaller economies to meet the regulations necessary for the WTO membership. As a result, according to all criteria of the WTO accession constructed by Medvedev, Russia should have become a member long ago. However, the implicit articulation of China with the WTO undermines Medvedev’s criteria and his logic.

The second extract comes from the joint press conference on the outcomes of the EU–Russia summit, which took place in Rostov on Don in June 2010. The focus of the press conference was mainly on EU–Russian relations in various domains:

И, наконец, последнее – за кем сегодня решение. Решение, конечно, за теми государствами, которые должны согласовать окончательно позицию по этому поводу. Мы вчера говорили о том, что можно было бы ещё сделать. У нас идут непростые переговоры с американскими партнёрами на эту тему, но мне кажется, что всем, в том числе и американским партнёрам, пора бы определиться: членство России в ВТО – это не «морковка», которую нам всё время предлагают в качестве приза за хорошее поведение, а это просто необходимость – для того, чтобы Россия была полноценным интегральным участником международных экономических процессов. (Medvedev 2010b)⁵⁹

In this excerpt, the decision («решение») on Russia’s WTO membership is constructed as the final goal that Russia is struggling to reach. In “of course, the decision is made by those countries which must finally agree upon their position on this issue” («решение, конечно, за теми государствами, которые должны согласовать окончательно позицию по этому поводу»), the decision is articulated with several unnamed countries. “Must” («должны») conveys the highest level of deontic modality; “finally” («окончательно») implies that there is an implicit factor which urges these countries to come up with their final position. These countries are implicitly fixed with the WTO. The level of epistemic modality in “of course” («конечно») is the highest, implying structural closure; hence, Medvedev (representing Russia as a whole) implicitly accepts the prerogative of these countries in making the decision on Russia’s WTO membership.

⁵⁹ And finally, who makes the decision now? Of course, the decision is made by those countries which must finally agree upon their position on this issue. Yesterday, we talked about what else could be done. We are having difficult negotiations with U.S. partners on this topic, but it seems to me that it is time for everybody, including the U.S. partners, to make up their minds: Russia’s WTO membership is not a carrot, which we are constantly being offered as a prize for good behavior; rather, it is simply a necessity, so that Russia would be a fully-fledged integral participant of international economic processes.

In “yesterday we talked about what else could be done” («мы вчера говорили о том, что можно было бы ещё сделать»), “what else” triggers the propositional assumption that all that is possible has been done and implies that this may not suffice. The implicit obstacles distance Russia from the decision-making countries on the spatial-modal axis, although both Russia and these countries are constructed at the deictic center “we” («мы»), and the implied distance on the spatial-modal axis is reduced through the dialog like the one that had taken place the day before. The low deontic commitment in “could be done” («можно было бы сделать») implies that all essential steps have already been taken. Since Medvedev speaks on behalf of the deictic center, he imposes the common ground that this view is shared by the countries, with which he has been negotiating.

The fact that Russia is having “difficult negotiations with the U.S. partners on this topic” («У нас идут непростые переговоры с американскими партнёрами на эту тему») implies that what has been done has not removed obstacles on Russia’s way to the WTO. This difficulty distances Russia from the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis, although the U.S. is constructed close to the deictic center (formed by Russia) on the spatial-modal axis through being “partners” («партнёры») and having negotiations. Here, the U.S. is implicitly articulated with the WTO. Among the countries articulated with the WTO and decision on Russia’s WTO membership, the U.S. is treated differently, since negotiations with the U.S. are emphasized separately from those with other countries. The U.S. is, therefore, implicitly attributed a special role in deciding upon Russia’s WTO membership.

Hence, in “but it seems to me that it is time for everybody, including the U.S. partners, to make up their minds” («но мне кажется, что всем, в том числе и американским партнёрам, пора бы определиться»), Medvedev tries to urge the negotiating countries to determine their position. Again, the U.S. is differentiated within the chain of equivalence constructed around the decision. Medvedev seeks to suppress the articulation of decision-making with the remaining divergences. However, «пора бы» [it is about the time] triggers a low level of deontic modality and expresses Medvedev’s (and, by extension, Russia’s) irritation. “It seems to me” («мне кажется»), with Medvedev being constructed at the deictic center, conveys a very low level of deontic modality, undermining Medvedev’s articulations. In «Russia’s WTO membership is not a carrot, which we are constantly being offered as a prize for good behavior; rather, it is simply a necessity” («членство России в ВТО – это не «морковка», которую нам всё время предлагают в качестве приза за хорошее поведение, а это просто необходимость»), Medvedev articulates Russia’s WTO membership with necessity and seeks to suppress its articulation with a prize for good behavior. The first articulation is Russia’s, the second is attributed to the countries that need to decide on Russia’s WTO membership. Members of the WTO are constructed as seeking to change Russia’s behavior. “It is time /.../ to make up their minds” («пора бы определиться») triggers the propositional

assumption that WTO members, including the U.S., do not yet consider Russia's WTO membership a necessity.

The implication is that these countries articulate Russia with bad behavior. However, sometimes Russia's behavior is also considered good by the WTO members, which implies, again, that Russia is a fence-sitter of the WTO, since its behavior is unacceptable, but not always. The propositional assumption in "so that Russia would be a fully-fledged integral participant of international economic processes" («для того, чтобы Россия была полноценным интегральным участником международных экономических процессов») is that Russia is not a fully-fledged participant in international economic processes, while the implication is that Russia seeks to be such a participant, like other WTO members. The WTO, as a nodal point, is, therefore, articulated with full participation in economic processes, whereas Russia, as a fence-sitter, demarcates the WTO. By seeking WTO membership, Russia reiterates the economic supremacy of the WTO, while the WTO, in turn, is constructed as attracting Russia. Referring to a carrot and stick approach, to which Russia is averse, Medvedev says that Russia is "being offered" a carrot («нам предлагают») where the use of the passive voice leaves the agent implicit; this way, the WTO is constructed as anonymous Other, which allows Russia to implicitly construct its identity as a country to which such approach is unacceptable and whose behavior is intact.

Finally, in Medvedev's construction, WTO members articulate the WTO with a carrot in relation to Russia. For Russia, in turn, the WTO is a necessity because Russia is seeking to be articulated with economic supremacy, which the elements of the chain of equivalence around the WTO derive from the WTO as a nodal point. Medvedev seeks to create the common ground and aims at structural closure, stressing that Russia's WTO membership is "simply a necessity" («просто необходимость»). The implication is that it is a disadvantage for everybody if Russia is not a full participant of economic processes. However, Medvedev's claim is not particularly convincing, as the hegemonic force (the WTO and its members) inhabits this utterance as a whole. The deictic center "us" (formed by Russia and its politicians) as well as "I" (formed by Medvedev) does not coincide with the origin of the deontic right and the epistemic true: the ultimate decision is to be made, "of course" («конечно»), by WTO members. After articulating Russia's WTO membership with a necessity for everybody, Medvedev implicitly downgrades Russia to a less than a full participant in global economic processes and constructs no threats along the temporal axis that would urge WTO members to accept Russia. However, the most important discrepancy in this excerpt appears to be that Medvedev implicitly constructs the WTO as anonymous Other to suppress the articulation of Russia with bad behavior.

The third excerpt is from Medvedev's interview with *The Wall Street Journal* (2010) before his visit to the U.S. during which Medvedev planned to continue the improved dialog between the U.S. and Russia, as well as visit the Silicon Valley:

Нас иногда упрекают, говорят: вот вы здесь что-то не так сделали, здесь вы занимаетесь, допустим, какой-то поддержкой той промышленности или тех отраслей, которые в этих условиях поддерживаться не должны, а такие преференции сейчас применяться не могут. В общем, обычно идёт на эту тему дискуссия. Так вот она отпадёт сама собой, как только Российской Федерация вступит в ВТО. Нас уже водят за нос довольно давно, гораздо больше, чем некоторые другие очень крупные экономики. Я уже не говорю о том, что сегодня во Всемирной торговой организации присутствуют такие страны, чью экономику рыночной-то назвать нельзя, но они там есть. России – нет. Поэтому, ещё раз повторяю: я надеюсь, что те обещания, которые были когда-то и мне даны со стороны действующей американской администрации, будут исполнены. (Medvedev 2010c)⁶⁰

In the first sentence of the excerpt, the deictic center “we” is formed by Medvedev and Russia as a whole: “we are sometimes reproached by being said” («нас иногда упрекают, говорят»). The deictic center is constructed in opposition to anonymous Other, who reproaches Russia. This escalates Medvedev’s further accusation that Russia has been “led by the nose” for a relatively long time («нас уже водят за нос довольно давно»). In both cases the agent, concealed behind the passive constructions, is apparently the WTO. With the construction of the WTO as Other, all of the organization’s reproaches addressed to Russia are devalued. Although Medvedev does not directly claim that the reproaches have no foundation, he does not construct them as serious but downgrades them by using many indefinite devices: “did something in a wrong way” («что-то не так сделали»), “let’s say” («допустим»), “some support” («какой-то поддержкой»), thus distancing the reproaches from the deictic center along the spatial-modal axis and implying that Russia’s economic activities are actually acceptable. Hence, here, Medvedev is in an implicit dialog with the WTO, which is constructed as articulating Russia with unacceptable economic activities. Medvedev, in turn, seeks to suppress this articulation.

To tackle the articulation of Russia’s failure to become a WTO member with Russia’s unacceptable economic activities, Medvedev instead articulates this with the WTO’s unacceptable activities (e.g., leading Russia by the nose). Since the value assumption is that hypocrisy is undesirable, the WTO is implicitly constructed as Other for Russia and also generally. Notably, by negating the WTO as Other, Russia constructs its identity as a country that should not be

⁶⁰ We are sometimes reproached by being said: here you did something in a wrong way, here you are dealing with, let’s say, some support of the production or the sectors which mustn’t be supported in such conditions and such preferences cannot be currently implemented. So, usually this topic is discussed. However, this discussion will disappear by itself the moment the Russian Federation enters the WTO. We have been led by the nose for quite a long time now, much longer than certain other very large economies, let alone saying that, today, within the World Trade Organization, there are countries whose economy cannot even be called market economy; still, those countries are in the WTO and Russia is not. Therefore, I repeat once more: I hope that the promises which were once given to me, too, on behalf of the current U.S. administration, will be fulfilled.

reproached or mislead. However, the propositional assumption in “we have been led by the nose for quite a long time now” («нас уже водят за нос довольно давно») is that Russia still allows such attitude to a certain degree, implying that Russia acknowledges the WTO’s superiority. For instance, when Medvedev cites the WTO’s reproaches, he uses modal verbs of high deontic value: “mustn’t be” («не должны»), “cannot be” («не могут»), indicating that the WTO dictates the rules. However, “sometimes reproached” («иногда упрекают») triggers the propositional assumption that Russia is not always reproached by the WTO.

By saying “this discussion will disappear by itself the moment the Russian Federation enters the WTO” («она [дискуссия] отпадёт сама собой, как только Российской Федерация вступит в ВТО»), Medvedev makes the propositional assumption that, once a country is a WTO member, divergences will disappear. By saying “disappear by itself” («отпадёт сама собой»), Medvedev implicitly reduces the reproaches to a by-product of nonmembership that do not require effort on Russia’s part. Therefore, here, Medvedev implicitly articulates the WTO’s looking into Russia’s unacceptable economic activities with double standards. This also implies that Medvedev constructs the WTO as a homogeneous entity. Long discussions are constructed as something that merely distinguishes members from nonmembers. Therefore, long discussions with Russia, as well as reproaches, are constructed not as seeking to improve Russia’s economic activities, but as double standards.

In “much longer than certain other very large economies” («гораздо больше, чем некоторые другие очень крупные экономики»), “much longer” [much more] («гораздо больше») triggers the propositional assumption that some other very large economies (apparently China) had been through the process, too. Another propositional assumption is that the process ended for those economies and they became WTO members. Medvedev does not specify why this happened; still, he unites these economies and Russia in the chain of equivalence to construct the WTO as a treacherous agent.

Another aspect of the WTO’s partial nature for Medvedev is that it does not follow its own rules. In “let alone saying that, today, within the World Trade Organization, there are countries whose economy cannot even be called market economy” («Я уже не говорю о том, что сегодня во Всемирной торговой организации присутствуют такие страны, чью экономику рыночной-то назвать нельзя»), the propositional assumption is that market economy is the prerequisite for WTO membership. By using a phrase of the highest epistemic modality, Medvedev creates the common ground that WTO being fixed with market economy is obvious for everybody: “let alone saying that” («я уже не говорю о том, что»). “Russia is not” («России – нет») triggers the propositional assumption that Russia’s economy can be called market economy, allowing Medvedev to articulate Russia with market economy. In Medvedev’s terms, therefore, if the WTO, as a nodal point, is fixed with market economy, then Russia should find its place within the chain of equivalence around the nodal point, whereas the countries without market economy should be distanced

from the WTO as Other. However, Medvedev claims that the situation is contrary to this: Russia is not a member, whereas the countries without market economy (like China) are WTO members. As a result, the WTO is constructed as Other for Russia, but also generally, due to its double standards.

In “therefore, I repeat once again” («поэтому, ещё раз повторяю»), “therefore” triggers the propositional assumption that the situation should be changed. The implication is that Medvedev’s voice has not been heard. By referring to the promises of the U.S. administration (“the promises which were once given to me, too, on behalf of the current U.S. administration” («те обещания, которые были когда-то и мне даны со стороны действующей американской администрации»)), Medvedev makes several assumptions. First, the existential assumption that the promises occurred and the propositional assumption is that they were made because the current U.S. administration agrees with Medvedev. An implication is that the U.S. is interested in Russia’s WTO membership. This brings the U.S. closer to Russia on the spatial-modal axis. It is implied that the WTO is not a homogeneous entity and its members may have diverging perspectives.

The U.S. is implicitly constructed as having a great influence within the WTO. However, this influence and closeness between the U.S. and Russia on the spatial-modal axis is downgraded by the low epistemic modality in which Medvedev speaks about the U.S.’s promises: “I hope /.../ the promises /.../ will be fulfilled” («я надеюсь, что те обещания /.../ будут выполнены»). “I hope” («я надеюсь») triggers the propositional assumption that not all U.S.’s promises have been, or generally are, fulfilled, and Medvedev is not certain whether the promises concerning the WTO will be fulfilled, either. This way, the U.S. is distanced from Russia along the spatial-modal axis. At the same time, Medvedev distances the promises along the temporal axis: “which were once given to me” («которые были когда-то и мне даны»), assuming that Medvedev and Obama had been talking about Russia’s WTO accession for some time already.

“To me, too” («и мне») triggers the propositional assumption that Medvedev was not the only one to have been promised the U.S.’s assistance with WTO accession. Such dispersion of promises, to some extent, distances the U.S. along the spatial-modal axis from Russia, making the U.S. commitment less focused. Such uncertainty about the U.S.’s promises indicates, above all, that the matter of Russia’s WTO accession is too complicated. All in all, both WTO and the U.S. as its influential member are, to various degrees, constructed as Other in this excerpt. This helps Medvedev to more effectively suppress the articulation of Russia with unacceptable economic activities and the latter with Russia’s complicated and long-dragging accession procedure into the WTO.

The fourth extract is from Medvedev’s remarks delivered in Brussels after the EU–Russia summit, during the meeting with members of the EU–Russia Industrialists’ Round Table (IRT), and Belgian business community representatives on 7 December 2010. IRT provides a platform for the discussion of the EU and Russia bilateral economic relations. Its members prepare questions and

suggestions for the discussion, while IRT, as an organization, gives recommendations to policy makers in the EU and Russia:

И конечно, прежде всего мне хотелось бы отметить тот самый успех, связанный с переговорами по ВТО, который на самом деле сегодня был достигнут. Я даже скажу шире, я хотел бы на этой площадке, где присутствуют представители крупного бизнеса Европейского союза, Российской Федерации, сказать, что я весьма признателен моим коллегам из Евросоюза, и Президенту Евросоюза, и Председателю Еврокомиссии за активное сотрудничество по этому вопросу в последнее время, которое увенчалось очень хорошими результатами, точно так же, кстати, как я признателен и нашим американским партнёрам, и Президенту Соединённых Штатов Америки за то, что было сделано в этом году, и за исполнение обещаний, которые мне лично давались, в установленные сроки. Далеко не все международные партнёры так себя ведут в определённых ситуациях. (Medvedev 2010d)⁶¹

In “and, of course, first and foremost, I would like to note that very success related to the WTO negotiations, which was really achieved today” («и конечно, прежде всего мне хотелось бы отметить тот самый успех, связанный с переговорами по ВТО, который на самом деле сегодня был достигнут»), the propositional assumption is that the topic of successful WTO negotiations is more important than any other topic in the discussion. The high level of epistemic modality in “of course” («конечно») and “first and foremost” («прежде всего») implies that the WTO remains a nodal point for Russia and its economy. “That very” («тот самый») and “really” («на самом деле») trigger the existential assumption that success exists, and Medvedev constructs its existence on the high level of epistemic modality. “Achieved” («достигнут») implies that difficulties have been overcome. Medvedev finds it important to stress that the success has “really” taken place. The implication here is that success can be interpreted differently by various participants and, in this case, Russia agrees that the WTO negotiations have indeed been successful.

Instead of merely referring to the achieved success, Medvedev decides to “even say broader” («я даже скажу шире») and shows how this success is articulated. First, Medvedev constructs the chain of equivalence of those who contributed to the success: “colleagues from the EU, President of the EU,

⁶¹ And, of course, first and foremost, I would like to note that very success related to the WTO negotiations, which was really achieved today. I will say even broader: I would like to say on this platform, where representatives of the EU and Russian Federation’s large enterprises are present, that I am deeply grateful to my colleagues from the EU, President of the EU, and President of the European Commission for the active cooperation on this issue which occurred recently and brought very good results. By the way, I am similarly grateful also to our American partners and the U.S. President for everything that has been done this year and for the fulfillment of the promises which were given to me personally within the determined deadlines. Not all international partners behave this way in particular situations.

President of the European Commission”, as well as “American partners and the U.S. President”. Medvedev differentiates between the members of the chain of equivalence. For instance, Medvedev thanks his EU partners first and only then, “by the way” («кстати»), mentions “also” («и») his U.S. partners to whom he is “similarly” («точно так же») grateful.

In this excerpt, “success” is articulated with “active cooperation” («активное сотрудничество»), “very good results” («очень хорошие результаты»), “everything that has been done this year” («то, что было сделано в этом году»), and “the fulfillment of promises” («исполнение обещаний»). Medvedev attributes active cooperation and very good results to the EU, while productive cooperation (this year) and fulfillment of promises to the U.S. In “active cooperation on this issue, which occurred recently and brought very good results” («активное сотрудничество по этому вопросу в последнее время, которое увенчалось очень хорошими результатами»), “recently” («в последнее время») triggers the propositional assumption that this active cooperation that brought success did not exist before. So, on the temporal axis, Medvedev constructs a crucial turning point that occurred recently and allowed for successful cooperation on Russia’s WTO membership after decades of Russia’s unsuccessful attempts. This turning point is, in turn, articulated with “everything that has been done this year” in the framework of U.S.–Russian relations and the fulfillment of promises by the U.S. Consequently, the implication is that success in negotiations on Russia’s WTO accession arose from U.S.–Russian relations, and not Russia–EU relations.

The deictic center in this excerpt is mostly formed by Medvedev. He constructs his EU partners as “my colleagues” («мои коллеги») and his U.S. partners as “our American partners” («наши американские партнёры»), thus constructing all of them close to himself and Russia on the spatial-modal axis. Medvedev stresses that the promises by the American partners were given to him “personally” («лично»), implying that the U.S. did not officially promise Russia its help. Thus, this excerpt demonstrates how positive relations between politicians can benefit their countries. Addressing business circles on the topic of successful WTO negotiations, Medvedev extends his thanks to politicians, implicitly articulating successful WTO negotiations with political activities by the U.S. and the EU rather than economic activities of Russia.

The propositional assumption in “not all international partners behave this way in particular situations” («далеко не все международные партнёры так себя ведут в определённых ситуациях») is that politicians can break their personal promises that are less binding than official state promises. Saying that the U.S. partners not only fulfilled their promises, but did that “within the determined deadlines” («в установленные сроки»), Medvedev constructs the U.S. partners as taking their promises seriously in all situations. Since Medvedev is at the deictic center, as the source of the epistemic true and the deontic right, the implication is that Medvedev and Russia fulfill their promises, too. The propositional assumption in “in particular situations” («в определённых ситуациях») is that there are situations in which international partners break

their private promises. Russia's WTO accession is one of such situations. An implication is that Medvedev (and, possibly, other Russian politicians) have had unfortunate experiences with unfulfilled promises.

An important value assumption in this excerpt is that all promises, including those given in person, have to be fulfilled. The fact that Medvedev not just thanks the U.S. partners for their assistance, but emphasizes their fulfillment of promises within the specified deadlines, implies that Russia takes promises very seriously. "Not all" («далеко не все» ["far from all"]) divides the majority of political partners into those who break their private promises and those who do not. Another propositional assumption in "far from all" is that Medvedev has mostly encountered breaching of private promises with respect to Russia (especially in difficult situations), implying that Russian politicians feel betrayed in many cases, as they take every promise seriously.

The fifth extract comes from Medvedev's meeting with the employees of agro-industrial complex of Kuban on 8 August 2011. Medvedev is answering a rice farmer's question whether, upon WTO accession, Russia will lose its rice industry due to the preponderance of imported rice. The question also asks about the advantages and disadvantages of Russia's WTO accession to the Russian agriculture:

Мы стараемся в ходе наших переговоров с руководством Евросоюза, Соединённых Штатов Америки, других стран, естественно, в максимальной степени отстаивать позиции наших аграриев. В принципе я считаю, что за последнее время нам это удалось, потому что те завышенные требования, которые предъявлялись к нашей стране, нами были отвергнуты. Некоторые страны (я не буду их называть, вы сами можете, как люди опытные, догадаться, о ком я говорю), включая соседние страны, сдались, что называется, без боя, и теперь у них ситуация совсем другая. И когда я смотрю на то, как там выглядит сельское хозяйство и даже поля (там тоже на вертолёте пролетал некоторое время назад), мне становится очень грустно, но это их проблемы, пусть они сами решают, бог им в помощь, что называется. Поэтому всё, что мы сделали, всё, что стоило нам денег, сил, средств, пота, если хотите, мы обязаны сохранить. (Medvedev 2011a)⁶²

In the first sentence of the excerpt, the deictic center in "we are trying" («мы стараемся») is formed by the Russian team (including Medvedev) involved in

⁶² In the process of our negotiations with the leaders of the European Union, the United States of America, and other countries, naturally, we are trying to the utmost degree to defend the position of our agrarians. In principle, I believe that we have achieved this recently, because those excessive demands which were made with respect to our country were refused by us. Some countries (I will not name them; you, as experienced people, can guess who I am talking about), including neighboring countries, have surrendered, as it is called, without a fight, and now their situation is utterly different. And, as I watch how the agriculture and even fields (I flew in the helicopter there, too, some time ago) look there, I feel very sad, but it is their problem. Let them solve it themselves. May God help them, as it is said. Therefore, everything that we have done, everything that cost us money, effort, resources, sweat, if you will, we must keep.

the negotiations; the deictic center “our” in “our agrarians” («наших аграриев») includes the Russian team and Russia as a whole, whereas the deictic center “our” in “our negotiations” («наших переговоров») is ambiguous: it either includes the negotiations team only or also the leaders («руководство») of the EU, the U.S., and other countries. This way, Russian WTO negotiations team, as a part of each of the three deictic centers in this sentence, implicitly unites Russia and its farmers with the leaders of the EU and the U.S.

Medvedev constructs the chain of equivalence around the negotiations on Russia’s WTO membership; this chain consists of Russia’s negotiations team, leaders of the EU, the U.S., and other countries. Leaders of the EU and the U.S. are differentiated and foregrounded as primary negotiators, with the EU, placed first, being more important than the U.S.. “Other countries” («другие страны») remain unspecified. Referring to the negotiations and the effort involved, Medvedev assumes their continuous nature (“in the process of” («в ходе»), “we are trying” («мы стараемся»)).

In “naturally, we are trying to the utmost degree to defend the position of our agrarians” («мы стараемся /.../ естественно, в максимальной степени отстаивать позиции наших аграриев»), “naturally” («естественно») expresses the highest level of epistemic modality. “To the utmost degree” («в максимальной степени») triggers the propositional assumption that, first, this degree exists. Secondly, the propositional assumption is that to defend the position of the Russian farmers fully is impossible. The implication is that the final decision is not for Russia to make. In “we are trying” («мы стараемся»), the commitment is not very strong on the deontic scale, the implication being that Russia cannot make demands. Hence, although Medvedev seeks to express strong epistemic and deontic commitment in “naturally” and “to the utmost degree”, both are downplayed by Russia’s implied subordinate role in the negotiations.

“To the utmost degree” implies that there is a point on the deontic scale, where the interests of the WTO and Russian farmers can meet and this point is flexible, in that Russia can move it to the extreme point (“the utmost degree”) where the WTO can no longer make any concessions. The implication is that there is also a point, at which the interests of Russian farmers are seriously threatened. This way, Medvedev constructs an opposition between the WTO and Russian farmers: the maximum position of Russian farmers is incompatible with the WTO demands; therefore, the less Russian farmers’ interests are observed, the more realizable Russia’s WTO membership is. Russia’s WTO negotiations team is constructed as a mediator between the WTO and Russian farmers: the value assumption in “we are trying” is that protecting the interests of Russian farmers is desirable, but also that the ultimate goal, Russia’s WTO membership, is desirable for Russia as well.

In “in principle, I believe” («в принципе я считаю»), Medvedev is constructed at the deictic center, whereas in “we have achieved” («нам это удалось») he unites himself at the deictic center with Russia’s WTO negotiations team and speaks on its behalf. Although “achieved” («удалось») implies

that effort was made, “in principle” («в принципе») conveys a rather average level of epistemic modality, which implicitly belittles the results. In “with respect to our country” («нашей стране»), the deictic center “our” comprises Russia’s WTO negotiations team, the farmers with whom Medvedev is communicating, as well as Russia as a whole, with Medvedev speaking on behalf of all and imposing the common ground. In “those excessive demands” («те завышенные требования»), “those” («те») triggers the existential assumption that these existed. In “which were made” («которые предъявлялись»), the past tense triggers the propositional assumption that these demands are not made at present. “Achieved” («удалось») is articulated with “refused” («отвергнуты»): therefore, the success of defending the position of Russian farmers is articulated with refusing excessive demands. “Recently” («за последнее время») triggers the propositional assumption that such success was impossible earlier. This implies that a turning point occurred on the deontic scale which changed WTO’s attitudes and made them more flexible.

However, “basically I believe that we have achieved” («в принципе я считаю, что /.../ нам это удалось») is rather moderate on the epistemic scale, as opposed to “were refused by us” («нами были отвергнуты»), which assumes a high level of epistemic and deontic modality: Medvedev and Russian WTO negotiations team, forming the deictic center (“by us” («нами»)) and being the origin of the epistemic true and deontic right, did what they considered crucial. Therefore, Medvedev does not articulate refusing WTO’s excessive demands with absolute success in defending Russian farmers. This discrepancy leaves room for the implication that something else needs to be done to protect Russian farmers fully.

Medvedev constructs two “utterly different” situations («совсем другая ситуация») related to agriculture in Russia, as opposed to that of “some countries” («некоторые страны»), including the “neighboring countries” («соседние страны») that form the chain of equivalence around the WTO. These unnamed countries are constructed as having “surrendered without a fight” («сдались /.../ без боя») and as facing a situation detrimental to their agriculture. “Surrendered without a fight” triggers the value assumption that a fight is necessary and surrender is not desirable. This legitimizes Russia’s fight against the WTO to defend its agriculture. “Surrendered without a fight” triggers the propositional assumption that a fight with the WTO is possible and the more a country fights, the more it can defend its interests. The necessity of the fight ultimately triggers the propositional assumption that WTO membership is necessary, either through surrender or fight, the latter being preferable to the former.

In this polyphonic utterance, Medvedev is considering multiple voices. First, he refers to “some countries” and “neighboring countries”, explicitly stating that he will not name them («я не буду их называть»), which implies his awareness that these countries might disagree. However, Medvedev still gives these examples and suggests that his audience is “experienced” in knowing who is being meant (“you, as experienced people, can guess” («вы сами можете, как

люди опытные, догадаться»)), the propositional assumption being that Medvedev is describing well known facts. This way, Medvedev is imposing the total common ground: farmers (referred to as “you” («вы»)) are constructed as agreeing with everything that Medvedev (being at the deictic center “I” («я»)) says. Referring to the difficult situation of farmers in other countries, Medvedev says “as it is said” («что называется»), thus imposing common ground and making the voice of general public (“as it is said” meaning that people generally say so) support his claim: the unnamed countries have only themselves to blame for their difficulties (“it is their problem” («это их проблемы»)). In addition, speaking like people generally speak takes Medvedev closer to his target audience and connects his audience and himself as the deictic center “I” (“я”).

Speaking about the difficult situation of the countries who “surrendered” («сдались»), Medvedev says “it is their problem” («это их проблемы»), in which “it is” («это») triggers the existential assumption that the problems exist, whereas “let them solve it themselves” («пусть они сами решают») triggers the propositional assumption that they need to be solved. Medvedev constructs himself as feeling “very sad” for the difficult situation («мне становится очень грустно»), but this does not translate into any action. In “let them solve it themselves” («пусть они сами решают»), the propositional assumption is that somebody else (including Russia) can also solve this. In “may God help them” («Бог им в помощь»), the propositional assumption is that only God can solve everything and help everyone. Two other propositional assumptions in “may God help them” are that Russia is not fighting for the countries in trouble because of WTO membership and that their surrender is ultimate. The implication is that, after a country becomes a WTO member, there are no further discussions on the terms of membership.

However, it should be noted that, in this excerpt, Medvedev’s evidence of the problems with agriculture in neighboring countries originates from what he saw during his flight in the helicopter: “as I watch how /.../” («и когда я смотрю на то /.../»). What Medvedev saw made him “very sad”. Hence, a rather subjective argument is imposed on the audience as the common ground. “Therefore” («поэтому») triggers the propositional assumption that the miserable agricultural situation in neighboring countries should teach Russia what it must do. In “everything that we have done, everything that cost us money, effort, resources, sweat, if you will, we must keep” («всё, что мы сделали, всё, что стоило нам денег, сил, средств, пота, если хотите, мы обязаны сохранить»), the value assumption is that the things into which money, effort, resources, and sweat are invested must be kept. Stressing the physical side of the argument, (“sweat, if you will” («пота, если хотите»)), Medvedev brings himself closer to his audience. In “we must” («мы обязаны»), Medvedev effectively unites himself, Russian farmers, Russia’s WTO negotiations team, and the rest of Russia at the deictic center behind a goal expressed on the highest level of deontic modality: keep what has been achieved.

The sixth extract is from Medvedev's remarks after meeting Obama on 13 November 2011, after Putin had been nominated as a presidential candidate by the United Russia:

Мы сегодня говорили с моим другом Бараком не только о погоде, но и о тех вопросах, о которых было только что сказано. И прежде всего я хотел бы поблагодарить Президента Обаму и его команду за активную заинтересованную поддержку усилий Российской Федерации по вступлению в ВТО.

Более того, такой поддержки нам до этого американская администрация не оказывала, и, наверно, поэтому мы с 1993 года вступали в эту организацию. А, как абсолютно точно было сейчас сказано, вступление России в ВТО полезно не только для России, не только для Соединённых Штатов и других стран, но и для всей системы торговых отношений в мире. (Medvedev 2011b)⁶³

In the first sentence, Medvedev reacts and refers to Obama's preceding remarks. Obama opened his address by saying that Medvedev was reported to have been enjoying the weather in Honolulu and described what they had been discussing during their meeting. Referring to the discussed issues as "which were just mentioned" («о которых было только что сказано»), Medvedev adheres to the common ground previously created by Obama. Hence, Medvedev implicitly constructs Obama as the voice of the deictic center "we" ("we talked" («мы говорили»)), formed by Obama and Medvedev. However, by using the passive voice in "were just mentioned" and avoiding explicit reference to Obama, Medvedev constructs this common ground as lacking specific authorship. Constructing them both at the deictic center in "we talked" («мы говорили»), Medvedev draws Obama very close to himself along the spatial-modal axis by casually calling him "my friend Barack" («мой друг Барак»).

"Above all" («прежде всего») triggers the propositional assumption that thanking Obama and his team for facilitating Russia's WTO accession process is more important for Medvedev than commenting on other issues discussed with Obama. However, "I would like to thank" («я хотел бы поблагодарить») is quite an average commitment on the deontic modality scale, implying that the U.S.'s "active, engaged support" («активная заинтересованная поддержка») has played a lesser role in Russia's WTO accession process than "the Russian Federation's [own] efforts" («усилия Российской Федерации»). The value

⁶³ Today, we talked with my friend Barack, not solely about the weather, but also about the issues which were just mentioned. And, above all, I would like to thank President Obama and his team for active, engaged support for the Russian Federation's efforts with respect to the WTO accession.

Moreover, such support was not provided to us before by the American administration, and maybe that is why we have been acceding to this organization since 1993. However, as it has now been absolutely rightly said, Russia's WTO accession is useful, not only to Russia, not only to the United States of America, and to other countries, but also to the entire system of trade relations in the world.

assumption in “active, engaged support” is that Russia’s efforts are desirable, since the goal is desirable. This way, Medvedev constructs Russia’s efforts concerning WTO accession as desirable for the U.S. The U.S.’s support is constructed as “active” («активная») and “engaged” («заинтересованная»). This triggers the propositional assumption that the U.S. seeks to benefit from Russia’s WTO membership. Hence, although “the Russian Federation’s efforts” implies that Russia is the one needing WTO membership the most (“efforts” triggering the value assumption that for what efforts are made is desirable), the U.S. is constructed as interested in the matter, too (“active” triggering the propositional assumption that the U.S. is making efforts to benefit itself).

In “such support was not provided to us before by the American administration” («такой поддержки нам до этого американская администрация не оказывала»), Medvedev differentiates the Obama administration and the chain of equivalence consisting of the previous U.S. presidential administrations. “Such support” («такой поддержки») triggers the propositional assumption that previous U.S. administrations provided their support for Russia’s WTO accession, too, but to a lesser extent, the implication being that they did not see the benefits of Russia’s WTO membership to the U.S. The deictic center in “us” («нам») and “we” («мы») is Russia, and it is constructed as remote from the previous U.S. administrations along the spatial-modal axis, while, in “more-over” («более того»), Medvedev stresses the Obama administration’s support.

In this excerpt, Russia’s WTO accession is articulated with the U.S.’s support and Russia’s efforts. The extent of the U.S.’s support is articulated with the success of Russia’s efforts. Still, it should be noted that this articulation is constructed on a rather low level of epistemic modality (“maybe” («наверно»)), implying that there are also other important factors in the success of Russia’s efforts. The implication is that Russia’s efforts with respect to WTO accession had not changed since 1993.

In “Russia’s WTO accession is useful not only to Russia, not only to the United States of America, and to other countries, but also to the entire system of trade relations in the world” («вступление России в ВТО полезно не только для России, не только для Соединённых Штатов и других стран, но и для всей системы торговых отношений в мире»), the existential assumption is that Russia’s WTO membership has benefits and the propositional assumption is these benefits extend to Russia, the U.S., other countries and the entire system of trade relations in the world. Without explicitly naming the benefits, Medvedev creates a solid common ground that they exist by referring back to Obama’s remarks (“as it has now been absolutely rightly said” («как абсолютно точно было сейчас сказано»)), emphasizing that Obama supports the claim and that the claim is “absolutely right” («абсолютно точно»), thus constructing this commitment on the highest possible level of epistemic and deontic modality. This way, Obama and Medvedev, the U.S. and Russia are constructed at the same point on the modal axis. By using the passive structure and avoiding explicit references to Obama (“as it has now been absolutely

rightly said”), Medvedev constructs the common ground as objective common knowledge.

Medvedev constructs the chain of equivalence around the benefits of Russia’s WTO membership, which consists of Russia, the U.S., other countries, and the entire system of trade relations. However, in this chain of beneficiaries, Russia and the U.S. are distinguished from other countries. Russia being foregrounded implies that it is still the primary beneficiary. In the chain of equivalence, countries are distinguished from the entire system of trade relations in world (“not only /.../, but” («не только /.../, но и»), the existential assumption being that the global system of trade relations exists and the propositional assumption being that this system functions independently of individual countries. “The entire” («всей») and “in the world” («в мире») imply that the system is very extensive. Therefore, Medvedev implicitly constructs two major beneficiaries of Russia’s WTO membership: individual countries and the global system of trade relations, the implication being that, although the former may oppose Russia’s WTO membership, the latter, which is more important, undeniably benefits from it. As a result, Medvedev fixes Russia with the WTO through inherent benefit to the abstract system of trade relations in the world, while all remaining divergences are implicitly constructed as a secondary issue.

6.5.1. Discussion

On the basis of the six excerpts analyzed in this context, it can be said that how Medvedev spoke on the topic of Russia’s WTO accession was context sensitive. For instance, at the meeting with the U.S. venture capital fund managers or EU–Russia press conference, the hegemonic force, represented by the WTO, substantially inhabited Medvedev’s talk, especially through the discrepancies between strong value assumptions and low commitments to these values on the modal axis. This reflected Medvedev’s awareness of Russia’s subordinate role in WTO-related decision-making. In contrast, addressing the local audience (i.e., Russian farmers), Medvedev still subordinated himself to the hegemonic force, but to a larger extent demonstrated Russia’s struggle with it. Medvedev’s position in all of the six extracts showed, on the one hand, the desirability of WTO membership for Russia and, on the other hand, the construction of the WTO (also, in some cases, the U.S.) as Other (to various degrees and in various ways in different utterances). The more intensively Medvedev constructed either the WTO or the U.S. as Other, the more distinctively Russia’s own voice was heard. The assumptions and implications in this context revealed that, for Russia, the WTO is a homogenous and rather oppressive entity and that the conditions on which a country entered the WTO remain unchanged even if a country is not content with them.

Most of Medvedev’s excerpts in this context exhibited, in addition to the desire for the nodal point (the WTO), irritation about waiting. Medvedev’s strategies of constructing Russia’s long wait for membership as illogical included

questioning the WTO membership of China and constructing the WTO as having double standards. Medvedev also referred to the abstract system of trade relations in the world, which would benefit from Russia's WTO membership. In the excerpts of this context, Medvedev tended to be abstract in defining Russia's efforts toward WTO membership and the benefits of this membership for Russia and the world. It remained unclear what concrete demands were made with respect to Russia's WTO membership and the agents who made them were distanced from Russia along the spatial-modal axis as (anonymous) Other.

In order to express his gratitude to Obama for the support of Russia's WTO accession, Medvedev created a difference between the Obama administration (constructed as close to Medvedev and Russia on the spatial-modal axis) and other U.S. administrations (distanced from Medvedev and Russia as Other). In thanking Obama, Medvedev revealed the great influence of their personal relations on the issue of Russia's WTO accession, a result of the general improvement in U.S.–Russian relations. Although on some occasions Medvedev, using average or low epistemic and deontic modality, sought to downplay the influence of Obama and his team on Russia's WTO accession, it remained clear that, without it, Russia's WTO membership would not have become a reality.

6.6. Context 5: Discursive definition of reset

On several occasions, Medvedev called the U.S.–Russian reset successful, attributing this to his good personal relations with Obama and Obama's ability to listen to Medvedev. Medvedev expressed his hope that reset would not be limited to strategic arms reduction, but would extend to European issues, the Middle East, climate issues, economy, and so on. The first two extracts in this context date from the time before Medvedev's first meeting with Obama: the first from Medvedev's remarks at the meeting with members of Russian–American public dialog group, while the second from Medvedev's article for the *Washington Post*. The third excerpt comes from Medvedev's interview for the domestic audience after his meeting with Obama; the fourth from Medvedev's interview to the Polish mass media before his visit to Poland; the fifth from the Russian TV program featuring Medvedev, the sixth from Medvedev's interview at the meeting with the active members of the United Russia party. The excerpts are examined in chronological order.

In the first extract from Medvedev's introductory remarks at the meeting with the Russian–American public dialog group “Russia–USA: A Look into the Future” on 20 March 2009 in the Kremlin, Medvedev expects his first meeting with Obama:

Думаю, что за последнее время накопилось много тем для обсуждения, не говоря уже о традиционной повестке дня, которая всегда была, есть и, наверное, будет оставаться в такой наиболее актуальной проблематике наших

отношений. Но по наиболее сложным вопросам нам тоже необходимо обмениваться соображениями. В любом случае тот удивительный термин, который после встречи господина Лаврова с госпожой Хиллари Клинтон, а именно «перезагрузка», стал гулять во всех практически аналитических комментариях к российско-американским отношениям, надеюсь, реально сможет отразить существо тех преобразований, которые все мы хотели бы получить. Мы рассчитываем на такого рода «перезагрузку» – надеюсь, что она произойдет. (Medvedev 2009a)⁶⁴

Medvedev constructs himself at the deictic center in «думаю» (“I think”). The medium degree of epistemic modality indicates that Medvedev is not expressing urgency about the undiscussed topics between Russia and the U.S., probably because of (and Medvedev makes this existential assumption here) “the traditional agenda, which has always been, is, and will, probably, remain among the most topical issues of [U.S.–Russian] relations” («традиционная повестка дня, которая всегда была, есть и, наверное, будет оставаться в такой наиболее актуальной проблематике [российско-американских] отношений»). “Not to mention” («не говоря уже») implies the self-evident nature of this agenda. In “remain among the most topical issues of our relations” («оставаться в такой наиболее актуальной проблематике наших отношений»), the existential assumption is that “the most topical issues” («такая наиболее актуальная проблематика») in U.S.–Russian relations exist, whereas “among the most” («в такой наиболее») triggers the propositional assumption that there are other issues in U.S.–Russian relations, too. This is reinforced by Medvedev’s use of the pronoun «такая» (“this kind of”) in «такая наиболее актуальная проблематика» (“this kind of the most topical issues”), which implies that Medvedev cannot delimit the most topical issues in U.S.–Russian relations.

“But on the most difficult issues” («но по наиболее сложным вопросам») implies that the traditional agenda is not one of the difficult issues that the two presidents need to discuss, apparently because of the permanence of the traditional agenda: it “has always been, is, and will probably remain /.../” («всегда была, есть и, наверное, будет оставаться /.../»). Despite the low epistemic modality in “probably” («наверно»), the traditional agenda implies a relative stability in U.S.–Russian relations (triggered by “always” («всегда»)). Since Medvedev does not specify any concrete topics, it is unclear whether this agenda decreases or increases the distance between the U.S. and Russia on the spatial-modal axis. Still, the deictic center in “of our relations” («наших

⁶⁴ I think that, recently, there have accumulated a lot of topics for discussion, not to mention the traditional agenda, which has always been, is and will probably remain among the most topical issues of our relations. But on the most difficult issues, we also need to exchange considerations. In any case, that amazing term, or “reset”, which, after the meeting of Mr. Lavrov with Mrs. Hillary Clinton, started wandering [circulating] in almost all analytical commentaries related to Russian–American relations, I hope will be able to really reflect the essence of the improvements we all would like to gain. We count on this kind of reset – I hope that it will take place.

отношений») is formed by the U.S. and Russia and this brings them close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. The existence of the traditional agenda clearly shows the continuity of ties between Russia and the U.S. even if the relations between the two countries shift.

However, in “we also need to exchange considerations” («нам тоже необходимо обмениваться соображениями»), the importance of the dialog between Medvedev and Obama, who are constructed at the deictic center “we”, is emphasized by means of high deontic modality in “need” («необходимо»). Still, “to exchange considerations” («обмениваться соображениями») does not imply finding any solutions, and what is stressed is the necessity of being aware of each other’s perspective. All in all, Medvedev creates the chain of difference with respect to what he can discuss at his initial meeting with Obama: first, the topics which have accumulated due to the drift in U.S.–Russian relations; second, the traditional agenda; third, difficult issues. It is unclear whether topics in these three groups overlap or whether the most topical issues are different from the most difficult ones.

By means of this chain of difference, Medvedev constructs U.S.–Russian relations in their past, present, and future. In contrast, in the remaining part of this extract, Medvedev is trying to relate to the term “reset”, invented by the Obama administration. In “in any case, that amazing term, or “reset” /.../” («в любом случае тот удивительный термин, /.../ а именно «перезагрузка» /.../»), “in any case” («в любом случае») triggers the propositional assumption that Medvedev does not know which topics he is going to discuss with Obama. The implication is that Obama sets the precise agenda of the meeting. In “in any case, /.../ “reset” /.../ I hope will be able to reflect the essence of the improvements we all would like to gain” («в любом случае /.../ «перезагрузка», /.../ надеюсь, реально сможет отразить существо тех преобразований, которые все мы хотели бы получить»), Medvedev does not construct the reset as the direct outcome of his negotiations with Obama.

Medvedev reinforces the abstract nature of reset by referring to it as an “amazing term” («удивительный термин»). This adjective, on the one hand, expresses a strong positive attitude and triggers the value assumption that it is desirable; on the other hand, however, this adjective is used to describe something related to a miracle and is, therefore, not particularly common in political discourse. Moreover, the term started miraculously “wandering [circulating] in almost all analytical commentaries related to Russian–American relations” («стал гулять во всех практически аналитических комментариях к российско-американским отношениям»). The propositional assumption, signaled by the number of comments, is that Russian–American relations are an important topic. “Almost” («практически») triggers the propositional assumption that some commentaries ignored or rejected the term. Medvedev does not refer to the author of the term: although Medvedev constructs the meeting of Hillary Clinton and Sergey Lavrov as the starting point of the term’s “wandering”, it is still implied that the term has appeared and is acting by itself.

In “/.../ I hope will be able to really reflect the essence of the improvements we all would like to gain” («/.../ надеюсь, реально сможет отразить существо тех преобразований, которые все мы хотели бы получить»), Medvedev articulates reset with improvements («преобразования»). The essence of these improvements («существо тех преобразований») is not specified, but constructed as the common ground in “we all would like to gain” («которые все мы хотели бы получить»). The deictic center “we” here is formed by Medvedev and the audience he is addressing, the authors of analytical commentaries to whom Medvedev is referring and, inclusively, Russia, the U.S., and everybody interested in U.S.–Russian relations. The propositional assumption is that everybody wants to see improvements in U.S.–Russian relations and all members of the deictic center are articulated in the chain of equivalence around these improvements (and, therefore, reset). In “we all would like to gain” («мы все хотели бы получить»), the value assumption is that the improvements constructed by Medvedev, embodied in the reset, are desirable, and the propositional assumption is that they have not yet taken place. “Would like” («хотели бы») expresses a rather low level of deontic commitment, implying that the U.S. and Russia can exist without these improvements.

In “I hope” («надеюсь»), the deictic center is formed by Medvedev. “I hope” («надеюсь») expresses a rather low level of epistemic and deontic modality and triggers the propositional assumption that Medvedev doubts whether reset will reflect the desired improvements. This is reinforced by “really” («реально»), which triggers the propositional assumption that reset cannot reflect desired improvements in real political actions. Therefore, here, Medvedev is in an implicit dialog with the analytical commentaries which articulate reset with improvements in U.S.–Russian relations. He undermines this articulation, by saying that this amazing but empty word has not yet lived up to its meaning. However, this way, Medvedev undermines his own articulation of reset with improvements in U.S.–Russian relations desired by everybody.

Furthermore, in “we count on this kind of reset – I hope that it will take place” («мы рассчитываем на такого рода «перезагрузку» – надеюсь, что она произойдет»), the deictic center is, in the first instance, formed by Russian politicians and Russia as a whole (“we count” («мы рассчитываем»)) and, in the second instance, by Medvedev himself (“I hope” («надеюсь»)). Medvedev, first, expresses the sentiment of his country and, then, his own as the current head of state. Both sentiments express a rather passive stance with respect to the reset: “we count on this kind of reset” («мы рассчитываем на такого рода «перезагрузку»») implies that Medvedev and Russian politicians expect actions in the framework of reset from the U.S. In the same vein, “I hope” («надеюсь») implies that Medvedev can only hope that a reset of the kind he wants happens. He does not mention any of Russia’s actions toward this end. This implies that Russia has been doing everything for the sake of U.S.–Russian relations and now is expecting reciprocal actions from the U.S.

In “I hope that it will take place” («надеюсь, что она произойдет»), the propositional assumption is that the kind of reset envisioned by Medvedev has

not yet taken and might never take place. The implication is, therefore, that reset may never live up to the expectations and that its fate depends on the U.S. “This kind of reset” («такого рода «перезагрузка»») triggers the propositional assumption that there can be different kinds of reset, although only the one constructed by Medvedev is desirable. It is, therefore, implied that only Medvedev (and, inclusively, Russia as a whole) can eventually decide whether reset has actually taken place or not. So, the U.S. is implicitly constructed as being responsible for the actual occurrence of reset and Russia as deciding whether it has happened or not. On the whole, however, it can be concluded from this excerpt that reset is the U.S.’s (Obama’s) project, with which Medvedev and Russia agree (and are thus interpellated into the role of the partner in improving U.S.–Russian relations), but only partly. Medvedev accepts the articulation of reset with improvements in U.S.–Russian relations circulating in the media, but also challenges it by arguing that it is way too early to consider this articulation stable.

The second excerpt is from Medvedev’s article *Building Russian–U.S. Bonds*, published on 31 March 2009 in the *Washington Post*, the day before Medvedev’s first meeting with Obama before the G-20 London summit. In the article, Medvedev expresses readiness to cooperate on the issues proposed by Obama (disarmament and Afghanistan), but also raises his own topics (creation of a global financial system with several regional reserve currencies and financial centers; creating a supranational reserve currency). Medvedev is welcoming the functioning of U.S.–Russian relations on the basis of equality, mutual benefit and reciprocal consideration of interests:

Убеждён, что России и США – сохраняющим особую ответственность в мировых делах – есть что предложить остальному миру. Эти возможности наиболее ярко проявляются в вопросах стратегической стабильности, ядерной безопасности, в целом ряде других областей. От характера российско-американских отношений многое зависит и в евроатлантической политике, «несущей конструкцией» которой могло бы стать тройственное взаимодействие – между Россией, США и Евросоюзом.

И, наконец, в пользу «перезапуска» наших отношений говорит сама история, в которой немало сильных эмоциональных моментов – от дипломатической поддержки, оказываемой Россией Америке в критически важные для неё периоды внутреннего развития, до совместной борьбы с фашизмом и периода разрядки. (Medvedev 2009b)⁶⁵

⁶⁵ I am convinced that Russia and the U.S., which retain special responsibility in world affairs, have something to offer to the rest of the world. These opportunities are most clearly manifested in the issues of strategic stability, nuclear safety, and in a whole row of other areas. On the nature of Russian–American relations, much depends on the Euro-Atlantic policy, the basic structure of which could be a tripartite cooperation between Russia, the United States, and the European Union.

In “I am convinced” («убеждён»), Medvedev constructs himself at the deictic center and expresses a very high level of epistemic modality in “Russia and the U.S. /.../ have something to offer to the rest of the world” («России и США /.../ есть что предложить остальному миру»). Being constructed at the deictic center, or the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right, Medvedev constructs himself as knowing what Russia and the U.S. can offer to the rest of the world and what the world needs. He constructs Russia and the U.S. as having special responsibility in world affairs. “Retain[ing]” («сохраняющие») triggers the propositional assumption that Russia and the U.S. have had a special responsibility in world affairs for a substantial period of time.

In “have something to offer to the rest of the world” («есть что предложить остальному миру»), Russia and the U.S. are differentiated from other countries, articulated in the chain of equivalence as “the rest of the world” («остальной мир»). In «есть что предложить» (“have something to offer”), the implication is that the rest of the world lacks something that the U.S. and Russia can offer together. The meaning of «есть что предложить» (“have something to offer”) stretches along the continuum and it remains unclear where precisely Medvedev places the joint input of the U.S. and Russia.

The expected mutual input of Russia and the U.S. is constructed as “these opportunities” («эти возможности»). The chain of equivalence constructed around these opportunities includes “the issues of strategic stability, nuclear safety” («вопросы стратегической стабильности, ядерной безопасности»), and “a whole row of other areas” («целый ряд других областей»). Within this chain of equivalence, issues of strategic stability and nuclear security are foregrounded, while other areas of cooperation remain unspecified. There is a discrepancy here: there is “a whole row” («целый ряд») of other areas in which U.S.–Russian cooperation is valued in world affairs, while only issues of strategic stability and nuclear security are constructed as opportunities of cooperation which are “most clearly manifested” («наиболее ярко проявляются»). The implication is, therefore, that opportunities of U.S.–Russian cooperation in other areas are less clear.

In “also, on the nature of Russian–American relations, much depends on the Euro–Atlantic policy” («от характера российско-американских отношений многое зависит и в евроатлантической политике»), “also” («и») triggers the propositional assumption that Euro–Atlantic policy is constructed separately from world affairs, so that it is not articulated in the chain of equivalence with the issues of strategic stability, nuclear security, and other areas in which U.S.–Russian cooperation can benefit the world. Euro–Atlantic policy is articulated with the nature of Russian–U.S. relations. The propositional assumption is that the nature («характер») of U.S.–Russian relations can span from negative to

And, finally, history itself speaks in favor of the reset in our relations; history contains a lot of strong emotional moments, from the diplomatic support provided by Russia to America during its critically important periods of internal development to the joint struggle against fascism and the period of détente.

positive. “Much depends” («многое зависит») implies, therefore, that the positive nature of U.S.–Russia relations improves Euro–Atlantic policy (although it remains implicit in what way), and vice versa. Hence, Russia is implicitly constructed as a significant player in the Euro–Atlantic policy and, through this, as an essentially European country. This demonstrates that the U.S. and Euro–Atlantic policy are very important for Russia’s identity construction. This might be the reason why U.S.–Russian cooperation in Euro–Atlantic policy is constructed separately from that in world affairs.

Medvedev then makes an attempt to articulate the Euro–Atlantic policy with “tripartite cooperation between Russia, the U.S., and the EU” («тройственное взаимодействие – между Россией, США и Евросоюзом»), so that this tripartite cooperation is constructed as the potential cornerstone of the Euro–Atlantic policy. As a result, through Euro–Atlantic policy, Medvedev articulates the nature of U.S.–Russian relations with the tripartite cooperation between the U.S., Russia, and the EU. Hence, U.S.–Russian relations are implicitly constructed as significantly influencing the EU and the positive influence of U.S.–Russian relations on the EU as necessary for tripartite cooperation to become the cornerstone of the Euro–Atlantic policy. In “the basic structure of which could be a tripartite cooperation /.../” («несущей конструкцией» которой могло бы стать тройственное взаимодействие /.../»), “could be” («могло бы стать») triggers the propositional assumption that, currently, the basic structure of Euro–Atlantic policy is not based on the tripartite cooperation between Russia, the EU, and the U.S. As the name itself implies, “Euro–Atlantic policy” («евроатлантическая политика») mainly focuses on cooperation between the EU and the U.S. Therefore, through positive U.S.–Russian relations, Medvedev implicitly aims at changing the basic structure of the Euro–Atlantic policy to include Russia as a central player.

Russia, the U.S., and the EU are articulated in the chain of equivalence around the basic structure of the Euro–Atlantic policy proposed by Medvedev. The three are constructed very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. Russia is foregrounded in this chain of equivalence, implying its prominence in the tripartite cooperation. This way, the tripartite cooperation between Russia, the U.S., and the EU («тройственное взаимодействие – между Россией, США и Евросоюзом») implicitly cites Medvedev’s security-related hegemonic move of the European Security Treaty, which is articulated with close relationships between Russia, the U.S., and the EU. However, Medvedev’s deontic commitment to his proposed tripartite cooperation as the basic structure of Euro–Atlantic policy, expressed through “could be” («могло бы стать»), is rather low.

In “and, finally, history itself speaks in favor of the reset in our relations” («и, наконец, в пользу «перезапуска» наших отношений говорит сама история»), “finally” («наконец») triggers the propositional assumption that everything mentioned earlier spoke in favor of reset, too. Medvedev articulates world affairs, the Euro–Atlantic policy, and history itself in the chain of equivalence around reset. “Speaks in favor” («говорит в пользу») triggers the value

assumption that reset is desirable; the deictic center in “our relations” («наших отношений») unites Russia and the U.S., constructing them very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. “History itself speaks in favor” («в пользу /.../ говорит сама история») triggers the propositional assumption that reset is a historically self-evident course of action. History is constructed here as a fixed uniformly understood collection of facts, which is not open to interpretation and, thus, as the most solid proof of the need for reset. Importantly, it is Medvedev who decides what history “itself” («сама») speaks and favors.

Reset is articulated with history, while the latter is articulated with “quite a few strong emotional moments” («немало сильных эмоциональных моментов»). Emotional moments form the chain of equivalence, implicitly containing, among other things, the diplomatic support provided by Russia to the U.S., joint struggle against Nazism, and the period of détente. It implies that Russia has been and wants to help the U.S. In “the diplomatic support provided by Russia to America during its critically important periods of internal development” («дипломатическая поддержка, оказываемая Россией Америке в критически важные для неё периоды внутреннего развития»), the propositional assumptions are that there has been a number of critically important periods of internal development in the U.S. and that Russia provided its diplomatic help on each (or some) of these occasions. The implication is, therefore, that the U.S. should be grateful to, and value, Russia for its help. This way, the U.S. is implicitly interpellated into articulating Russia with an indispensable world power.

By placing Russia and the U.S. at the deictic center in “our relations” («наши отношения»), Medvedev attempts to create common ground, by constructing Russia and the U.S. as experiencing many “strong emotional moments” («сильные эмоциональные моменты») in history the same way. The U.S.’s help to the Soviet Union or Russia is not mentioned in the list of strong emotional moments. It should be noted that Medvedev replaces the official translation of reset («перезагрузка») with a synonymous, yet more common, idiomatic Russian word «перезапуск», which is used in various contexts other than computers. This suggests that Medvedev tries to make the term “reset” more Russian.

In the third excerpt, Medvedev is answering a question at the interview for the domestic audience on 26 July 2009. The interviewer says that it seems that, even after Medvedev met with Obama, Russia and the U.S. have retained their positions on Georgia and NATO’s eastward expansion and asks whether any convergence is possible:

Я вообще не считаю правильным, чтобы отношения с Россией, если использовать эту американскую терминологию, весьма условную, «перезагружались» за счёт каких-то других стран. Нам нужны нормальные отношения, рабочие отношения, дружеские отношения с Соединёнными Штатами Америки, взаимовыгодные отношения – это самое главное, от них очень многое зависит. Но это не значит, что наши отношения должны привести к ухудшению наших отношений с другими странами или американских отношений с какими-то странами, будь то Украина или Грузия. Пусть они сами с ними разбираются, это их отношения – у нас свои отношения с Украиной,

непростые в последние годы. В то же время, от этих отношений очень многое зависит, потому что у нас очень близкие государства, братские, как принято говорить, народы и очень тесно связанные экономики. И мы, конечно, рассчитываем на то, что эти отношения в будущем будут лучше, чем сейчас, существенно лучше. (Medvedev 2009c)⁶⁶

In “I, on the whole, do not consider it appropriate” («я вообще не считаю правильным»), «вообще» can mean “on the whole” («в целом»), expressing an average deontic commitment, as well as “always, under any circumstances” («всегда, при любых обстоятельствах») and “at all, absolutely” («совсем, совершенно»), expressing a strong deontic commitment. Therefore, it remains unclear whether Medvedev’s deontic commitment in this case is average or strong. In “consider it appropriate [right]” («считать правильным»), the degree of deontic modality is medium; the propositional assumption is that Medvedev differentiates between what is appropriate (right) and inappropriate (wrong) in U.S.–Russian relations. Medvedev constructs himself at the deictic center and, thus, as the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right.

It is inappropriate and undesirable “that [American] relations with Russia are reset /.../ at the expense of some other countries” («чтобы отношения с Россией /.../ «перезагружались» за счёт каких-то других стран»). To “reset” («перезагружать») is used as a verb in the passive form here, but “relations with Russia” («отношения с Россией») imply that it is the U.S. that resets its relations with Russia. “At the expense” («за счёт») triggers the value assumption that this is undesirable and inappropriate. The propositional assumption here is that resetting relations with Russia damages the U.S.’s relations with some other countries. This implies, therefore, that “some countries” («какие-то страны») explicitly oppose the U.S.–Russian reset as a threat to their relations with the U.S.; thus, for these countries, Russia is the constitutive Other.

In “to use this American terminology, which is highly relative [conditional]” («если использовать эту американскую терминологию, весьма условную»), Medvedev explicitly states that “reset” is an American term and alienates himself from it. «Условный» (“conditional”, “relative”) means, first, that something is understandable only to those who agreed on it and, second, something that depends on a specific condition and, third, something that becomes different

⁶⁶ I, on the whole, do not consider it appropriate that [American] relations with Russia are reset (to use this American terminology, which is highly relative) at the expense of some other countries. We need normal relations, working relations, friendly relations with the United States of America, mutually beneficial relations – this is the most important thing, very much depends on them. But this does not mean that our relations should lead to a deterioration of our relations with other countries or American relations with any countries, be it Ukraine or Georgia. Let them deal with these countries themselves – those are their relations, we have our own relations with Ukraine, not easy in recent years. At the same time, very much depends on these relations because our countries are very close, our peoples are fraternal, as it is customary to say, and our economies are very closely related. And we, of course, expect these relations to be better in the future than they are now, substantially better.

under different circumstances. Hence, the implications are that reset does not have a precise meaning and that Medvedev differentiates between the conditions under which the term “reset” is true or not and, since Medvedev is constructed at the deictic center, it is him (and, by extension, Russia) who defines such conditions. Implicitly constructing the use of the term “reset” in the context of the U.S.’s relations with some other countries as invalid, Medvedev seeks to suppress the articulation of the U.S.–Russian reset with the deterioration of the U.S.’s relations with some other countries.

The reason why Medvedev uses what he constructs as highly relative American terminology can be seen in the fact that Medvedev answers a question citing Joseph Biden. However, the fact that, to answer Medvedev needs to use the terminology which he explicitly disapproves of, implies that Obama’s articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with reset has become hegemonic and is widely used also in Russia. Therefore, Medvedev accepts this hegemonic articulation, but, at the same time, tries to challenge it.

In “we need normal relations, working relations, friendly relations with the United States of America, mutually beneficial relations” («нам нужны нормальные отношения, рабочие отношения, дружеские отношения с Соединёнными Штатами Америки, взаимовыгодные отношения»), Medvedev constructs an opposition between the U.S.–Russian reset as articulated with the deterioration of the U.S.’s relations with some other countries and the U.S.–Russian reset as articulated with normal, friendly, and mutually beneficial U.S.–Russian relations. Here, Medvedev is constructing the new Self, uniting the Russia and the U.S. However, the propositional assumption triggered by “we need” is that Russia’s relations with the U.S. are not exactly what is needed. In “we need” («нам нужны»), the degree of deontic modality is rather high, implying that it is important for Medvedev to make his point. Medvedev constructs achieving such relations, or reset, as “the most important thing” («это самое главное»), on which “very much depends” («очень многое зависит»). The propositional assumption in «очень многое зависит» (“very much depends”) is that, although Medvedev’s envisioned reset is the most important thing, still, not everything depends on it.

In “but this does not mean that” («но это не значит, что»), Medvedev creates an opposition between Russia’s desired reset on the one hand and Russia’s and the U.S.’s relations with other countries (like Ukraine or Georgia) on the other hand. Still, in “that our relations should lead to a deterioration of /.../” («что наши отношения должны привести к ухудшению /.../»), the propositional assumption is that the reset desired by Russia can lead to a deterioration of either Russia’s or the U.S.’s relations with some other countries, and this likelihood is emphasized in «должны» (“should”). «К ухудшению» (“to the deterioration”) triggers the propositional assumption that, unless the reset desired by Russia takes place, both Russia’s and the U.S.’s relations with some other countries (like Ukraine and Georgia) are good. However, it is clear that Russia’s relations with Ukraine and Georgia have deteriorated for reasons

other than the U.S.–Russian reset. Hence, the U.S.–Russian reset envisioned by Russia is implicitly constructed as a zero-sum game for the U.S.

In “our relations should lead to a deterioration of our relations with other countries or American relations with any countries” («наши отношения должны привести к ухудшению наших отношений с другими странами или американских отношений с какими-то странами»), «наши отношения» (“our relations”) mean Russia’s desired reset. So, the deictic center here is formed by the U.S. and Russia, the two being constructed very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. However, in “to a deterioration of our relations with /.../” («к ухудшению наших отношений с /.../»), the deictic center is formed by Russia only, and, here, “our relations with /.../” are differentiated from “American relations with /.../” («американские отношения с /.../»). Hence, Medvedev implicitly constructs bilateral relations between countries as autonomous and self-sufficient, having no impact on bilateral relations with other countries.

In “let them deal with these countries themselves – those are their relations” («пусть они сами с ними разбираются, это их отношения»), “these countries” («они») are implicitly constructed as problematic, as they need to be dealt with («разбираться»). Ukraine and Georgia (and some countries) are implicitly distanced from Russia as Other, while the U.S. is distanced from Russia as “them” («они»). This triggers the propositional assumption that the U.S., in order to “deal” with Ukraine and Georgia, involves other countries, including Russia. In “those are their relations” («это их отношения»), the propositional assumption is that Russia has nothing to do with the U.S.’s relations with Ukraine and Georgia, implying that there are tensions, firstly, between the U.S. and Ukraine as well as Georgia, secondly, between Russia and these countries, and, thirdly, between the U.S. and Russia because of these countries.

In “we have our own relations with Ukraine” («у нас свои отношения с Украиной»), Medvedev creates difference, even opposition, between the U.S.’s and Russia’s relations with Ukraine. The implication is that the two kinds of bilateral relations do/should not interfere with each other. The need to separate the two is stressed by the double use of a personal pronoun at the deictic center formed by Russia: «у нас свои /.../» (“we have our own /.../”). The implication is that Ukraine and relations with Ukraine are significant to Russia’s identity construction. Still, in “not easy in recent years” («непростые в последние годы»), Ukraine is distanced from Russia on the spatial-modal axis. “In recent years” («в последние годы») triggers the propositional assumption that the relations were easier earlier. In “at the same time, very much depends on these relations /.../” («в то же время, от этих отношений очень многое зависит /.../»), Medvedev constructs Russia–Ukraine relations as important and articulates the importance of these relations with the proximity, fraternity between the peoples and very close economic ties between the two countries. The intensifier “very” («очень») is used three times (“very much depends” («очень многое зависит»), “our countries are very close” («очень близкие государства»), “our economies are very closely related” («очень тесно

связанные экономики»)), stressing the closeness of Ukraine and Russia on the spatial-modal axis, although, currently, relations between the two countries are not easy.

It remains unclear what actually depends on Russia–Ukraine relations. Since close economic ties come third after the proximity between countries and the fraternity between the peoples, this implies that identity construction is the primary reason for the great importance of Russia–Ukraine relations. However, Medvedev downgrades his argument by saying “as it is customary to say” («как принято говорить»), which implies that it remains unclear whether the customary statement that Russian and Ukrainian peoples are fraternal is true or not. In “and we, of course, expect these relations to be better in the future than they are now, substantially better” («и мы, конечно, рассчитываем на то, что эти отношения в будущем будут лучше, чем сейчас, существенно лучше»), «рассчитывать» (“expect”) implies that Russia remains passive and expects a change in position from Ukraine.

The fourth excerpt is from Medvedev’s interview to the Polish mass media on 6 December 2010, before his official visit to Poland. Medvedev argues that Russia–Poland relations have recently progressed to a new level (after Russia opened the archives of the Katyn massacre and Medvedev blamed Stalin for this massacre). However, Medvedev stresses that he does not want to describe this progress with over-used terms like “reset”. According to him, Russia and Poland do not need to reset anything, but rather open a way into the future, by building on what has united the Russian and Polish peoples and by assessing the hardest historical events to produce a new vision of Russia in Poland. Medvedev responds to a question about a historic transformation in relations between Russia and NATO, and the West more broadly, that everything is in Russia’s and NATO’s (and the West’s) hands:

Мы сумели «перезагрузить» (как принято выражаться, хоть, ещё раз повторяю, этот термин уже немножко поднадоел) отношения между Россией и НАТО. Предварительно мы то же самое сделали в отношениях с Америкой. Но помимо тех общих проблем, которыми мы сейчас занимаемся – Афганистан, борьба с наркотиками, терроризмом, угрозой безопасности мореплавания, то есть пиратством, борьба с распространением оружия массового поражения, – по всем этим направлениям у нас налажено сотрудничество. Но есть темы, которые нас способны ещё в большей степени объединить. Одна из них – это европейская противоракетная оборона. (Medvedev 2010a)⁶⁷

⁶⁷ We managed to reset (as it is customary to say, though, I repeat once again, this term is already a little trite) relations between Russia and NATO. Previously, we did the same in relations with America. But, apart from the shared problems that we are currently dealing with – Afghanistan, the fight against drugs, terrorism, the threat to the safety of navigation, that is, piracy, the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction – we have established cooperation in all these directions. But there are topics that can unite us to an even greater extent. One of them is European missile defense.

At the deictic center in “we managed to reset” («мы сумели «перезагрузить»») is Medvedev, Russian politicians, and Russia as a whole. “Managed” («сумели») triggers the propositional assumption that there were obstacles in the process, implying that a substantial distance between NATO and Russia on the spatial-modal axis was overcome. “Managed” («сумели») also triggers the value assumption that the NATO–Russian reset was and is desirable, because effort was made to achieve it. Since Russia is at the deictic center, it is Russia’s effort in achieving reset in NATO–Russian relations that is emphasized. However, Medvedev, at the same time, expresses explicit alienation from the term “reset”, stressing its overuse. The fact that Medvedev needs to repeat the same thing (“I repeat once again” («ещё раз повторяю»)) implies that his voice is not heard. In “as it is customary to say” («как принято выражаться»), Medvedev implicitly admits the hegemonic nature of the articulation of the improvement of Russia’s relations with the U.S. and NATO with reset. However, since Medvedev feels that he is not in control of this articulation, the implication is that this articulation shows the U.S.’s/West’s hegemony, not Russia’s.

Thus, Medvedev partly accepts but also seeks to challenge this hegemonic articulation by denouncing the term “reset” as “a little trite” («немножко поднадоел»). However, “a little” («немножко») as well as “a bit trite” («поднадоел») trigger the propositional assumption that Medvedev can continue using it. Although Medvedev is at the deictic center in “I repeat once again” («ещё раз повторяю»), it remains unclear whether he is the only person who finds the term a little trite. In “though” («хоть»), Medvedev creates an opposition between the customary phrase (“as it is customary to say” («как принято выражаться»)) and the tired reaction to its overuse. Hence, Medvedev implicitly condemns the compulsory nature of the hegemonic articulation. Notably, Medvedev himself is using this term to describe the improvement of Russia’s relations with NATO and the U.S., although the term was not used in the question Medvedev is answering. The implication is that, partly accepting and using the hegemonic articulation, although challenging it at the same time, Medvedev wants to be better understood by the audience, while still seeking to promote his own ideas.

In “previously, we did the same in relations with America” («предварительно мы то же самое сделали в отношениях с Америкой»), Russia alone is constructed at the deictic center and Russia’s effort as well as its positive outcome are stressed. By considering it necessary to mention the U.S.–Russian reset in the context of the NATO–Russian reset, Medvedev implicitly articulates the two with each other. In “previously” («предварительно»), the propositional assumption is that the U.S.–Russian reset served as preliminary step to the NATO–Russian reset. “Did the same” («то же самое сделали») refers back to “managed to reset” («сумели перезагрузить») and triggers the propositional assumption that the two resets occurred similarly.

With “but” («но»), used on two occasions, Medvedev creates an opposition between the NATO–Russian reset (and implicitly also U.S.–Russian reset, articulated with it) and the European missile defense. “Afghanistan, the fight against drugs, terrorism, the threat to the safety of navigation, that is, piracy, the

fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction” («Афганистан, борьба с наркотиками, терроризмом, угрозой безопасности мореплавания, то есть пиратством, борьба с распространением оружия массового поражения») are all articulated within the chain of equivalence around the NATO–Russian reset. They are constructed as “shared problems” («общие проблемы») with which Russia and NATO are currently dealing («которыми мы сейчас занимаемся»). Shared problems reduce the distance between Russia and the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis. However, European missile defense is implicitly constructed as not a shared problem, so the distance between Russia and the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis increases with respect to this issue.

In addition, the components of the chain of equivalence around the Russia–NATO reset are constructed as “directions” («направления»), in all of which cooperation («сотрудничество») between Russia and NATO is “established” («налажено»). The propositional assumption is that there are directions in which cooperation is or is not established. Missile defense belongs to the latter category. There are significantly more components in the former category than in the latter. Among “the topics that can unite us to an even greater extent” (темы, которые нас способны ещё в большей степени объединить»), only missile defense is specified.

In “we are currently dealing” («мы сейчас занимаемся») and in “can unite us to an even greater extent” («нас способны ещё в большей степени объединить»), the deictic center contains Russia and NATO, constructed close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. The propositional assumption in “can unite us to an even greater extent” («нас способны ещё в большей степени объединить») is that, currently, Russia and NATO are united. The value assumption is, however, that a greater unity is desirable, which, in turn, implies that there is still distance between the two on the spatial-modal axis. By assuming that this remaining distance can be reduced by greater unity, Medvedev constructs NATO and Russia closer to each other on the spatial-modal axis. However, “to an even greater extent” («ещё в большей степени») triggers the propositional assumption that even in the case of convergence on topics like missile defense, the absolute unity of NATO and Russia is impossible.

In “but, apart from the shared problems that we are currently dealing with” («но помимо тех общих проблем, которыми мы сейчас занимаемся»), the implication is that dealing with shared problems is not enough. Notably, in “can unite” («способны /.../ объединить»), the level of deontic modality is medium, while missile defense is constructed as merely one of such more unifying topics («одна из них»), all of which indicates that Medvedev does not construct missile defense as a crucial topic. However, since Medvedev finds it necessary to speak about missile defense and other such topics implies that Medvedev is more concerned about these topics and seeks to articulate NATO–Russian reset with them, while the articulation of the NATO–Russia reset with shared problems that are currently being dealt with is NATO’s articulation that Russia partly agrees with but also challenges. For this reason, Medvedev

alienates himself from the term “reset” in the context of the NATO–Russian reset, too.

The fifth utterance is from an annual Russian TV program *Results of the Year with the President of Russia* on 24 December 2010. One of the presenters says that, owing to the defeat of the Democratic Party in the midterm elections on 2 November 2010, it will be harder for Obama to advance his course in 2011 and asks Medvedev if there is any danger of the deterioration in U.S.–Russian relations. Medvedev responds:

Вы знаете, надеюсь, что эта угроза будет минимизирована. Понятно, в Америке есть люди, которые относятся с симпатией к так называемой перезагрузке отношений, а есть люди, которых колотит от этого. Они считают, что всё зло концентрируется в Российской Федерации. Такие люди там действительно есть, ну что делать. В общем, это следствие развитости демократии. Потому что к власти приходят люди с разными убеждениями. И они эти убеждения стараются проводить через законодательные органы. Но я надеюсь, что всё-таки американскому обществу и американскому истеблишменту достанет такта и выдержки для того, чтобы продолжить этот курс. И Президенту Обаме будет, может быть, труднее, но всё-таки он сможет справиться с этими проблемами. (Medvedev 2010b)⁶⁸

In “you know, I hope that this threat will be minimized” («Вы знаете, надеюсь, что эта угроза будет минимизирована»), the existential assumption is that “this threat” («эта угроза») exists. “Minimized” («минимизирована») triggers the propositional assumption that, within the circumstances described in the question, the threat will not disappear completely. Medvedev constructs a possible deterioration of U.S.–Russian relations as a threat. “Threat” places this situation far from Russia on the spatial-modal axis. However, medium deontic modality in “I hope” («надеюсь»), with Medvedev at the deictic center, implies that Medvedev does not consider this threat very serious.

Medvedev constructs the U.S. people as divided in their attitude toward the U.S.–Russian reset: “people who are sympathetic to the so-called reset of relations” («люди, которые относятся с симпатией к так называемой перезагрузке отношений») on the one hand and “people who are seething because of this” («люди, которых колотит от этого») on the other hand. The level of epistemic modality is high, as can be seen from “it is clear that /.../” («понятно, /.../»). The phrase “there are people /.../” («есть люди /.../») implies that there

⁶⁸ You know, I hope that this threat will be minimized. It is clear that, in America, there are people who are sympathetic to the so-called reset of relations, but there are people who are seething because of this. They believe that all evil is concentrated in the Russian Federation. There are such people indeed, well, what can you do? Anyway, this is a consequence of advanced democracy. Because people with different convictions come to power. And they try to pass these convictions through the legislative bodies. But I hope that, after all, American society and the American establishment will suffice tact and endurance in order to continue pursuing this course. And, for President Obama, it will be, perhaps, more difficult, but he will still be able to cope with these problems.

may also be other categories of people. Like in the previous excerpt, Medvedev uses the term “reset” to describe improvements in U.S.–Russian relations, although this articulation was not used in the question asked. Again, although the value assumption is that reset is desirable, Medvedev still challenges the term as “so-called” («так называемая»), implying that, although the term “reset” is frequently articulated with recent improvements in U.S.–Russian relations, Medvedev, in fact, does not conceptualize this progress the same way and uses the term merely to be understood by the majority of the interlocutors.

Medvedev articulates the reset with sympathy as well as rage and thus two contrasting positions on the spatial-modal axis. Those U.S. citizens who view reset with rage construct Russia as U.S.’s constitutive Other, believing “that all evil is concentrated in the Russian Federation” («они считают, что всё зло концентрируется в Российской Федерации»). In “well, what can you do” («ну что делать»), the propositional assumption is that Russia has nothing to do with such unfounded convictions. Thus, Medvedev places people of the U.S. who treat Russia with rage apart from Russia on the spatial-modal axis not because of their negative attitude per se, but rather because the attitude is unfounded.

The reason for the existence of people with such groundless beliefs in the U.S. is articulated with developed democracy in the U.S.: “anyway, this is a consequence of advanced democracy” («в общем, это следствие развитости демократии»). Thus, advanced democracy in the U.S. is constructed as allowing the people to have different views, both founded and unfounded. In “well, what can you do” («ну что делать»), Medvedev implicitly constructs himself and others as powerless in the face of democracy. This way, Medvedev, implicitly challenges the U.S.’s democracy.

Medvedev constructs problematic effects of democracy as a result of the fact that “people with different convictions come to power” («к власти приходят люди с разными убеждениями») and they “try to pass these convictions through the legislative bodies” («и они эти убеждения стараются проводить через законодательные органы»). The implication is that when people with unfounded convictions come to power, they seek to make other people adopt them. This way, Medvedev implicitly constructs the U.S.’s democracy as malfunctioning. However, “try to pass” («стараются проводить») triggers the propositional assumption that, within a democracy, enforcing one’s convictions is neither easy nor always successful. Nevertheless, Medvedev still constructs the people in the U.S. as having certain stable convictions (and one can do nothing about it («ну что делать»)), that do not change in the course of a democratic dialog.

“It is clear that /.../” («понятно /.../»), “/.../ indeed, well, what can you do” («/.../ действительно есть, ну что делать»), and “anyway” («в общем») signal structural closure, expressed in the highest level of epistemic modality, so that all other possible articulations of the U.S.’s people with reset and other articulations of the U.S. democracy are suppressed; for instance, the

articulations of Russia and, therefore, the U.S.–Russian reset with potential danger/threat to the U.S.

“But” («но») reflects an opposition implicitly constructed between American democracy and tact and endurance of the American society. “Tact” («такт») implies control of rage toward Russia, while “endurance” («выдержка») implies that reset will not be easy to continue and triggers the value assumption that reset is desirable, since effort needs to be made for its sake. “Will suffice” («достанет») triggers the propositional assumption that American society and its establishment actually can control their rage and have the endurance to struggle for a desirable result, but that the rage remains a threat. Just like at the beginning of the excerpt, Medvedev says “I hope” («я надеюсь») here, placing himself at the deictic center and, through medium deontic modality, indicates that, for him (and, through him, for Russia as a whole), even if American society loses tact and endurance with respect to the U.S.–Russian reset, it is not a very serious problem.

In “to continue pursuing this course” («продолжить этот курс»), Medvedev constructs reset as a course which has been started and can be continued. The implication is that, although changes in the political situation of the U.S. can influence the development of reset, in Russia, everything will remain the same. President Obama is articulated with reset (both in the question and in Medvedev’s answer) and opposed to “these problems” («эти проблемы»). The implication here is that these problems are the only possible impediments to reset. “More difficult” («труднее») triggers the propositional assumption that advancing the course of reset was difficult previously, too.

It should be noted that, although Obama is constructed as being capable of coping with “these problems” and, therefore, being able to continue pursuing the course of reset, he is not constructed as a leader who can solve the issue, since the primary role is attributed to the U.S.’s society and establishment. Hence, Obama, articulated with reset, is implicitly constructed in opposition to the U.S.’s society and establishment, implicitly articulated with lack of tact and endurance with respect to the U.S.–Russian reset. Notably, “perhaps” («может быть») triggers the propositional assumption that the situation might not become more difficult for Obama. In addition, the fact that Obama is constructed as being able to cope with the situation implies that the U.S.’s political system works.

The sixth excerpt is from Medvedev’s meeting with the active members of the United Russia party on 17 December 2011, when Putin was already nominated as the presidential candidate by the United Russia. The person asking the last question says that the legislative elections in Russia on 4 December 2011 demonstrated that Russian society demands further reforms, freedom, more opportunities, ability to choose the party they like and not to vote just to counterbalance another party. The person asking a question suggests that Russian society is becoming more complex and contains more interest groups, which, in turn, requires increased liberalization of the political system. The question asks if Russia is ready for this. Medvedev answers that the United

Russia party's dominance has precedents in other parts of the world. The United Russia needs to change Russia's political system to ensure the dynamic development of the country. Commenting on the elections, Medvedev said:

Я вчера разговаривал с Президентом Соединённых Штатов. Мы говорили о том, что мы сделали за последние годы, что у нас получилось, что не получилось, получилась ли эта «перезагрузка», или, как было написано на известной кнопке, «перезагрузка», reset это или что-то другое. Надо признаться, у меня с ним неплохие человеческие отношения, и мы друг друга неплохо понимаем, но я, конечно, ему вынужден был сказать одну вещь: вы можете как угодно оценивать наши выборы, это ваше дело, честно говоря, для нас это не имеет особого значения, мы – большая, сильная, суверенная страна, но все оценки должны быть корректными. После подведения итогов, после определённых решений можно сказать: у нас это вызывает какое-то смущение, нам непонятно, что это такое. Но когда на следующий день или через день начинается вот эта старая канитель, когда звучат отповеди в самых худших традициях «холодной войны», это возмутительно. Это уж точно не «перезагрузка». Мне пришлось вчера об этом моему товарищу сказать. И от каких бы это демократических чувств не исходило, от сердца или от какого-то другого органа, – это неприемлемо, мы это не будем принимать, и мы к этому будем соответствующим образом относиться. (Medvedev 2011)⁶⁹

In “I spoke yesterday with the president of the United States” («я вчера разговаривал с Президентом Соединённых Штатов»), Medvedev is at the deictic center. “I spoke” («я разговаривал») emphasizes Medvedev's active role, while Obama is implicitly distanced from Medvedev on the spatial axis, referred to merely by his position, “president of the United States” («Президент Соединённых Штатов»), omitting his name. Thus, Medvedev stresses the official nature of his relationship with Obama, not its personal dimension.

In “we talked about what we have done in recent years, what we succeeded in, what did not work out /.../” («мы говорили о том, что мы сделали за последние годы, что у нас получилось, что не получилось /.../»), Obama

⁶⁹ I spoke yesterday with the president of the United States. We talked about what we have done in recent years, what we succeeded in, what did not work out, whether this was reset that happened, or, as it was written on a known button, “overload”, whether this is reset or something else. I must admit that I have quite good human relations with him, and we understand each other quite well, but I, of course, needed to tell him one thing: you can assess our elections however you like, this is your business; to be honest, it does not really matter to us. We are a large, strong, sovereign country, but all the evaluations have to be correct (‘tactful’). After summing up the results, after certain decisions one can say: it causes some embarrassment in us, we do not understand what it is. But, when the next day, or, in a day, begins this old rigmarole, when reproofs in the worst traditions of the Cold War are heard, it is outrageous. This is absolutely not the reset. I needed to tell my fellow about it yesterday. And from whatever democratic feelings it emanates, from the heart or from some other organ, this is unacceptable, we will not accept it, and we will treat it accordingly.

becomes part of the deictic center in “we”, and the distance between Medvedev and Obama on the spatial-modal axis is reduced, also by the fact that Medvedev can call him and express both positive and negative opinions. However, the propositional assumption is that Medvedev and Obama only discussed the results of their recent, not future, cooperation, which implicitly distances the two presidents on the spatial axis.

Another propositional assumption here is that cooperation between Obama and Medvedev from 2009 to 2011 includes successful and unsuccessful actions. Medvedev cannot place reset in any of these categories: “whether this was reset that happened, or, as it was written on a known button, “overload”, whether this is reset or something else” («получилась ли эта «перезагрузка», или, как было написано на известной кнопке, «перегрузка», reset это или что-то другое»). Medvedev constructs an opposition between reset and overload («перезагрузка» and «перегрузка»), as well as between reset (spelled “reset” in the Russian text, too) and something else («что-то другое»). Since overload triggers the value assumption that it is undesirable in U.S.–Russian relations, the resulting value assumption is that reset in U.S.–Russian relations is desirable. Therefore, here, reset is articulated with a desired transformation in U.S.–Russian relations. So, Medvedev reiterates the hegemonic articulation to express his ideas, although the articulation was not reiterated in the question asked. Still, in “whether this is reset or something else” («reset это или что-то другое»), Medvedev challenges the hegemonic articulation by rearticulating the recent transformations in U.S.–Russian relations with something other than reset. The resulting construction of U.S.–Russian relations on the spatial-modal axis is fuzzy: on the one hand, since they are articulated with reset, the distance between Russia and the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis is reduced; on the other hand, however, since these bilateral relations are also articulated with overload/something else, this distance is increased.

In “I must admit /.../” («надо признаться /.../»), the implication is that Medvedev speaks about his good relations with Obama unwillingly and, thus, constructs himself as distanced from Obama on the spatial-modal axis. However, the fact that Medvedev cannot omit mentioning these “good [not bad] human relations” («неплохие человеческие отношения») with Obama, implicitly reduces the distance between Medvedev and Obama on the spatial-modal axis. This is especially emphasized in “we understand each other quite well [not badly]” («мы друг друга неплохо понимаем»): both Medvedev and Obama are constructed at the deictic center, and their ability to see each other’s point is stressed.

Still, with “but” («но»), Medvedev constructs an opposition between his good personal relations with Obama and political issues. In “but I, of course, needed to tell him one thing” («но я, конечно, ему вынужден был сказать одну вещь»), “needed” («был вынужден») triggers the propositional assumption that Medvedev was reluctant to tell Obama what he did. This, in turn, implies that, for Medvedev, good personal relations and mutual understanding with

Obama are important and desirable. “Of course” («конечно») expresses high epistemic modality, “needed” («вынужден») a high level of deontic modality.

In “all the evaluations have to be correct” («все оценки должны быть корректными»), the propositional assumption is that the U.S.’s evaluations of Russia’s elections are not correct. This is apparently the crucial “one thing” («одна вещь») that Medvedev needed to tell Obama. Notably, on the one hand, Medvedev seeks to stress that Russia is a “large, strong, sovereign country” («большая, сильная, суверенная страна») and articulates these qualities with the opportunity to disregard opinions of other countries (“is not of particular importance to us” («для нас это не имеет особого значения»)). On the other hand, in the same phrase, “particular” («особое») triggers the propositional assumption that the U.S.’s evaluations are still of importance («значение») for Russia, although it is a large, strong, and sovereign country. In “but all the evaluations have to be correct” («но все оценки должны быть корректными»), Medvedev implicitly seeks to control the evaluations of Russia’s elections by other countries. “Have to be” («должны быть») expresses the highest level of deontic modality and implies that this point is crucial to Medvedev. “Have to be” («должны быть») also triggers the propositional assumption that, currently, not all evaluations are correct enough.

In “you can assess our elections however you like, this is your business; to be honest, it does not really matter to us” («вы можете как угодно оценивать наши выборы, это ваше дело, честно говоря, для нас это не имеет особого значения»), Medvedev creates an opposition between “you” («вы») and “us” («мы») and seeks to construct “us” (the deictic center constituted by Russia) as independent of what “you” (the U.S.) thinks. “You” is constructed as far from the deictic center on the spatial-modal axis through “this is your business” («это ваше дело»), which “does not really matter” («не имеет особого значения»). The latter triggers the propositional assumption that Russia is indifferent to the U.S.’s evaluations of Russia’s elections. However, the construction of Russia and the U.S. as separate entities and, hence, Russia as a self-sufficient entity, is haunted by uncertainty, since Russia was not indifferent the U.S.’s evaluations of its elections. The reaction is, rather, constructed as an important message Medvedev inevitably needed to share with Obama.

In “you can assess our elections however you like” («вы можете как угодно оценивать наши выборы»), “however you like” («как угодно») triggers the propositional assumption that the U.S. can assess Russia’s elections both positively and negatively based on its own criteria that can differ from Russia’s (implied in “this is your business” («это ваше дело»)). Russia disregards the U.S.’s evaluation criteria because it is a “large, strong, sovereign country” with its own criteria; however, Medvedev is still struggling for hegemony over the evaluation criteria, articulating them with correctness that, in Russian, can also be understood as tactfulness. “Correct (‘tactful’)” («корректные») triggers the value assumption that, for evaluations, tactfulness is desirable and that what Medvedev proposes is desirable.

As to the ways of expressing the evaluations “after summing up the results, after certain decisions” («после подведения итогов, после определённых решений»), Medvedev prescribes tactful phrases like “it causes some embarrassment in us, we do not understand what it is” («у нас это вызывает какое-то смущение, нам непонятно, что это такое»). The implication in these phrases is that, even if, in fact, the situation is the opposite, the U.S. should say they do not understand what is happening with elections in Russia. Consequently, tactful evaluations are implicitly articulated with silencing straightforward negative evaluations. Notably, the propositional assumption here is that Medvedev admits that elections in Russia can evoke embarrassment and confusion in other countries; hence, he implicitly admits that there are problems with Russia’s elections.

Desirable tactful expression of embarrassment is opposed to undesirable “old rigmarole” («старая канитель») and “reproofs in the worst traditions of the Cold War” («отповеди в самых худших традициях «холодной войны»»). While Medvedev suggests that tactful evaluations should be expressed after the elections, the undesirable expression of evaluations starts “the next day or in a day” («на следующий день или через день»), or much sooner than expected. «Канитель» (“rigmarole”) is a tedious process prone to delays, triggering the implicit value assumption that such treatment of Russia’s elections is undesirable and leads nowhere.

In “when reproofs in the worst traditions of the Cold War are heard” («когда звучат отповеди в самых худших традициях «холодной войны»»), “in the worst” («в самых худших») triggers the propositional assumption that there was a range of reproofs during the Cold War. «Отповедь» (“reproof”) is the answer containing a sharp rebuff. The implication is that the U.S.’s evaluations of Russia’s elections are not reasoned arguments, but just sharp retorts, motivated by emotions. Consequently, the U.S.’s criticism of Russia’s elections is articulated with the Cold War, and the U.S. is constructed as Russia’s Other. In “it is outrageous. This is absolutely not the reset” («это возмутительно. Это уж точно не «перезагрузка»»), Medvedev expresses the highest level of epistemic modality (“this is absolutely not” («это уж точно не»)) to oppose reset to the Cold War and, hence, to the U.S.’s criticism of Russia’s elections, which is constructed as “outrageous” («возмутительно»). The propositional assumption is that reset can be anything but the U.S.’s sharp criticism of Russia’s elections. Hence, the suppressed articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with the Cold War strikes back and dislocates the reset discourse.

Still, after having constructed the U.S. as Russia’s Other, Medvedev brings Obama close to himself on the spatial-modal axis: “I needed to tell my fellow about it yesterday” («мне пришлось вчера об этом моему товарищу сказать»). Here, Obama is referred to as a “fellow” («товарищ») and Medvedev is once again reluctant (“needed to tell” («мне пришлось/.../ сказать») to spoil their mutual understanding. In “from whatever democratic feelings it emanates from, from the heart or from some other organ” («и от каких бы это демократических чувств не исходило, от сердца или от

какого-то другого органа»), the propositional assumption is that the U.S.'s criticism of Russia's elections is based on "democratic feelings" («демократических чувств») and the U.S.'s criticism is articulated with democratic sentiments. The propositional assumption is that democratic sentiments can be different and emanate from different organs, the heart or "some other organ" (which may as well mean obscenity, considering Medvedev's resoluteness in making his point). The implication is that, although, for Medvedev, the hegemonic nodal point of democracy is important, he challenges Western hegemonic articulation of the nodal point, seeking to rearticulate it with tact with regard to Russia. Here, at the deictic center is Russia, Medvedev included; in "we will treat it accordingly" («мы к этому будем соответствующим образом относиться»), the propositional assumption is that Russia will reproach the U.S.'s criticisms regarding Russia's elections. In "this is unacceptable, we will not accept it" («это неприемлемо, мы это не будем принимать») the level of deontic modality is the highest and Medvedev closes the structure – by articulating criticisms with tact, he suppresses all other articulations of criticisms (for instance, with democracy), claiming that Russia refuses to accept anything that is expressed without tact.

6.6.1. Discussion

In the first extract of this context, Medvedev constructed U.S.–Russian relations as developing independently of their political leaders and on the basis of the traditional agenda. Medvedev did not articulate reset with the outcomes of his first meeting and discussion with Obama. Medvedev was passive about Russia's actions in the framework of reset. From the very onset of his cooperation with Obama, Medvedev conceded to the U.S.'s (Obama's) project of the U.S.–Russian reset and accepted Russia's position as a partner. However, from the very onset, Medvedev envisioned his (and, by extension, Russia's) kind of the U.S.–Russian reset. In the second excerpt, Medvedev articulated reset with several prominent Russian discourses: Russia's importance and special place in world affairs, Medvedev's security-related hegemonic move of the European Security Treaty, and Russia as a helpful world power. In the third excerpt of this context, the U.S.–Russian reset was articulated with the deterioration of the U.S.'s relations with countries like Ukraine and Georgia.

In the fourth excerpt, devoted to NATO–Russian reset, Medvedev denounced the term "reset" because, through it, the U.S.'s/West's hegemony successfully interpellated Russia into its structure. Partly accepting this hegemony and reproducing the hegemonic articulation of reset with improvement of the U.S.'s / NATO's / the West's relations with Russia, Medvedev challenged it and promoted his own project, articulating changes in relations between Russia and NATO with solving the issue of missile defense. In the fifth excerpt, Medvedev sought to articulate opposition to the U.S.–Russian reset in the U.S. and establishment with the effects of advanced democracy. Through the use of a

medium level of deontic modality, Medvedev expressed Russia's relative lack of concern with whether the U.S. would actually continue pursuing the course of reset. The sixth excerpt was especially unstable with respect to Medvedev's construction of Obama and the U.S. in relation to Russia on the spatial-modal axis. The distance between Medvedev/Russia and Obama / the U.S. shifted within very short intervals. This implied that the U.S. was very important for Russia's identity construction, but, at the same time, the U.S. was Russia's important Other. The same uncertainty inhabited reset, which was constructed as being either reset, overload, or something else.

All in all, in this context, using the term "reset", Medvedev reiterated two major roles that the U.S. was playing in Russia's identity construction: constitutive Other and indispensable partner. Therefore, a coherent representation of reset was impossible, and the reset was constructed as both very much desired and heavily criticized. Consequently, after pressing the reset button, the history of U.S.–Russian relations, including tensions, was not erased. By using the term "reset", Medvedev accepted Obama's articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with reset, but still tried to challenge it. On many occasions, Medvedev felt that he was not in possession of the term "reset" and could not articulate it with his own meaning. As a result, Medvedev alienated himself from the term, denouncing it as "so called", "American terminology, extremely relative", trite, etc. Therefore, the struggle for hegemony over the nodal point of reset could be traced between Medvedev and Obama from the very establishment of this nodal point in U.S.–Russian relations.

6.7. Overall discussion of the empirical analysis of Medvedev's messages referring to the U.S.

In the first analyzed context (in which all six examined excerpts were from Medvedev's official addresses), Medvedev was promoting his security-related hegemonic move of the new global security architecture but highlighting the security of the Euro-Atlantic area. Hence, what he was in fact promoting was the European Security Treaty, fixed with the nodal point of the new global security architecture. The nodal point of the European Security Treaty was, in turn, surrounded by the chain of equivalence, in which Russia, the U.S., and the EU were articulated. The treaty was articulated with indivisibility of security on the Euro–Atlantic area, clear rules of behavior, a unified approach to solving conflicts, and the creation of reliable instruments of arms control. The treaty was referred to as "Pan-European" («панъевропейский»), implicitly uniting all Europe (including Russia) on the spatial-modal axis, erasing geographic and socio-political borders. This way, Medvedev was constructing a new Self, uniting Russia, the EU, and the U.S. At the same time, however, the distance between Russia and the U.S. as well as the EU on the spatial-modal axis was constantly changing. At the level of assumptions and implications, it was clear

that there were many divergences between Russia and the U.S. as well as the EU, but since, for Medvedev, agreement, unification, and trust between the three was desirable, the distance between them on the spatial-modal axis diminished. The U.S. was at the same time treated as anonymous Other, for instance, in relation to the military potential of Georgia after August 2008.

Medvedev tended to speak about the new global security architecture and the European Security Treaty at the highest level of epistemic and deontic modality, using many words that signaled structural closure (“clearly”, “absolutely clear”, “understandable for everybody”, etc.). Medvedev tended to construct himself at the deictic center and stress the importance of his agency in proposing and promoting the treaty. However, in several cases he severely undermined his project, and, as a result, the importance of his agency, by calling the European Security Treaty merely a topic that he found interesting, implying that Medvedev was actually satisfied with the status quo. Medvedev constructed the European Security Treaty as one of the means to ensure stability in Europe (which was constructed as missing), implying, at the background of Russia’s richness in political ideas, dispersion and lack of concentration on one major project.

In the second context of the analysis, the New START, by being constructed as an important step in disarmament and arms control, was articulated with indivisible security and, hence, with the European Security Treaty, being implicitly constructed as one step toward progress in this direction. Medvedev articulated the New START with the new global security architecture and implied that the U.S. and Russia could work on it the same way as on the New START. Thus, the New START, an agreement between two countries, was constructed as a global matter. In this context, Medvedev constructed Russia and the U.S. as “two such strong powers”, articulating Russia and the U.S. in the chain of equivalence and implying equality between the two. From the very onset, Medvedev sought to articulate the New START with missile defense, but did so primarily through restraint and the ability to make compromises rather than through correlations between limitation of strategic offensive arms and the corresponding missile defense capabilities. Medvedev stressed that agreements on both issues had to be achieved at the same time, establishing an inherent but uneasy connection between the two. Thus, missile defense was implicitly constructed as condition of possibility and impossibility of the New START.

Before the New START was ratified by the U.S., Medvedev sought to fix the New START with the synchronization of ratification, constructing the U.S. as Other, implicitly articulated with mistrust remaining from the Soviet times, as the U.S. failed to ratify a treaty of a similar kind. Medvedev constructed the ratification of the negotiated treaty as an obligation, which Russia would fulfill. Thus, the U.S.’s political system, in which the president needs to convince senators, was implicitly constructed as treacherous to the U.S.’s international partners, while Russia’s political system, in which negotiated treaties get ratified automatically, was constructed as trustworthy. The New START was articulated with ratification and, hence, with Obama who eventually managed to

achieve it and, through the New START, Obama was articulated with security, as opposed to the U.S. politicians who were against the treaty. In this context, Obama was constructed as a politician who could listen and hear as well as fulfill his promises. All of these qualities brought Obama close to Medvedev and Russia on the spatial-modal axis.

In the third context, Medvedev initially constructed the EPAA as the renunciation of the missile defense plans and articulated this with Obama's decision, articulated, in turn, with the protection of the U.S.'s interests. This way, Medvedev was seeking to suppress the articulation of the abolition of missile defense with Russia's interests. Medvedev sought to construct his influence on Obama regarding the decision as minimal by using a low level of epistemic modality, but it was evident at the level of assumptions and implications that Medvedev had actually had a significant influence on Obama. When it was clear that missile defense plans had been altered but not abolished, Medvedev, still praising Obama and articulating the EPAA with facilitating of the New START, started articulating missile defense with Russia's participation. His project was global missile defense system, in which Russia would be responsible for a particular sector. Although Russia was constructed as having no power to decide over missile defense, Medvedev was still seeking to tackle its articulation with Russia's exclusion from the plan. Medvedev articulated Russia's participation in missile defense with the vulnerability of the world. Thus, Medvedev integrated articulation of Russia with missile defense into Obama's discourse of facing global challenges together and rearticulated missile defense with Russia's security.

If Russia's efforts to fix the nodal point of missile defense with a place for Russia were to prove unsuccessful, Medvedev implicitly threatened to articulate missile defense with arms race. Medvedev constructed the deictic center (in which the entire world was united) as moving toward the threat on the modal and temporal axes. Thus, in this context, Medvedev articulated missile defense with threat and arms race with security (which undermined the promoted articulation of security with nuclear arms reduction). The U.S. and NATO were constructed as Russia's Other, who purposefully neglected Russia's concerns. Medvedev, in turn, sought to impose the common ground that missile defense potentially threatened Russia's security. To trust the U.S. and NATO to abandon its concerns, Russia needed to have the words on paper, which they, in Medvedev's construction, categorically refused. For Medvedev, it was important that Russia–EU relations would not boil down to missile defense, so he stressed their multidimensional nature. Medvedev constructed missile defense as imposed on the EU by the U.S., negatively affecting EU–Russian relations. This way, Medvedev rearticulated missile defense with the U.S. in opposition to the EU and Russia. In doing so, Medvedev constructed European countries as the U.S.'s vassals within the NATO framework. In turn, NATO as an organization was constructed as different from its individual member states and fixed with the U.S., both constructed as Russia's Other. Even after Medvedev announced Russia's retaliatory measures to the EPAA, he expected flexibility

from the U.S. and NATO, implicitly constructed as equal to the abandonment of the plan.

In the fourth context, Medvedev constructed Russia as seeking to become a full participant in international economic processes, fixed with WTO membership. In this context, Russia counted on the U.S.'s help to rearticulate Russia with WTO membership. In some cases, even as Medvedev constructed himself at the deictic center, at the level of assumptions and epistemic modality it was evident that the actual source of the epistemic true and the deontic right was not Medvedev/Russia. Russia was constructed as the fence-sitter of the WTO, neither included nor totally excluded. To claim WTO membership for Russia, Medvedev articulated Russia's economy with understandable rules (as opposed to the Chinese ones), in accordance with the WTO's requirements (thus constructing the rules of trade established by the WTO as hegemonic). However, at the level of assumptions and implications it turned out that the countries deciding on Russia's WTO membership articulated Russia with unacceptable economic activities. In response, Medvedev articulated Russia's WTO membership with a necessity and sought to suppress the articulation of Russia's WTO membership with a prize for good behavior.

The WTO and the countries making the decision on Russia's WTO membership were often constructed as Other, which allowed the construction of Russia's behavior as good and the organization's reproaches as invalid. Medvedev implicitly articulated the WTO with double standards. Medvedev fixed both the WTO and Russia with market economy, unlike China. This way, Medvedev demonstrated that China's WTO membership was invalid, in contrast to Russia's, serving as proof of the WTO's double standards.

In this context, the U.S. was constructed as having a huge influence in the WTO and being interested in Russia's WTO membership, but simultaneously as Other by belonging to the WTO (when the organization as a whole was constructed as Other). To achieve justice, Medvedev hoped that the promises given to him by the U.S. administration would be fulfilled. However, Medvedev implicitly disregarded these promises as hopeless. He later articulated the success of the WTO talks with the fulfillment of the U.S.'s promises and praised Obama for his help. Nevertheless, to fix Russia with the WTO, Medvedev articulated Russia's WTO membership with the entire system of trade relations (which was constructed as independent of individual countries) in the world, thus constructing all other matters (unresolved issues and divergences) as second-tier issues.

The fifth analyzed context dealt with the discursive construction of the U.S.–Russian reset in Medvedev's messages. When the term “reset” appeared, it became a nodal point in U.S.–Russian relations, which Obama successfully articulated with his meanings and integrated it into his security-related hegemonic move, while Medvedev generally failed to do so and reacted by alienating himself from the term. Medvedev “counted” on the fact that reset would happen, hoped for it, but did not particularly articulate it with anything, in order to later promote his articulation. This is, among other things, due to

Russia's general reaction to the U.S. and the West, which is reflected in the fact that Russia seeks to be self-sufficient and waits for initial steps/actions from the U.S./West and only then matches its response. Medvedev preferred sticking to the traditional agenda in U.S.–Russian relations and, in several cases, mainly by expressing a low level of deontic modality, indicated that Russia, as well as the U.S., can actually live without reset and the expected improvements. As the new nodal point appeared, he failed to articulate it with his concrete projects and promote his articulation as intensively as possible. His talk was too abstract: i.e., “history itself”, constructing reset is a historically self-evident course of action. Even at the end of his presidential office, Medvedev was not sure “whether this was the reset that happened, or, as it was written on a known button, “overload”, whether this is the reset or something else”. For Medvedev, reset could be anything but not the U.S.’s sharp criticism of Russia’s elections, reminiscent of the Cold War.

Still, Medvedev tended to accept the articulation of reset with improvements in U.S.–Russian relations and articulated reset with the special responsibility of Russia and the U.S. in world affairs and the Euro–Atlantic policy (by articulating the Euro–Atlantic policy with tripartite cooperation between the U.S., Russia, and the EU, Medvedev thus articulated Russia with Europe and the EU). This way, he integrated reset into his project of the European Security Treaty. However, the level of deontic modality, with which Medvedev was promoting his security-related hegemonic move, like in many other cases, was rather low.

Using phrases like “as it is customary to say”, Medvedev implicitly admitted the hegemonic nature of the articulation of the improvement of Russia’s relations with the U.S., NATO, and West in general with reset. At the same time, Medvedev sought to dissociate U.S.–Russian relations from reset, indicating that, although the term was frequently articulated with improvements in U.S.–Russian relations, Medvedev, in fact, did not conceptualize this progress the same way and used the term merely to be understood. At the same time, Medvedev challenged the articulation of the NATO–Russia reset with shared problems that were being dealt with (which was NATO’s articulation that Russia partly agreed with but also challenged by emphasizing other topics, like missile defense, that should have been but were not covered by the NATO–Russian reset). For this reason, although, at the level of value assumptions, reset was always constructed as desirable, Medvedev tended to alienate himself from the term in the context of the NATO–Russian reset, too.

All in all, in the five analyzed contexts, Medvedev implicitly sought to construct Russia as a self-sufficient country in foreign policy. In Medvedev’s construction, Russia would not be particularly disappointed if the U.S.–Russian reset was to be discontinued by the U.S., Medvedev’s security-related hegemonic move did not succeed or Russia’s efforts did not find a decent response in the world. All of this implied that Medvedev/Russia was actually content with the status quo. One implication was that there was no difference between Medvedev and Putin as Russia followed its political course. At the level of implications and assumptions it became evident that Medvedev conformed to

all of Putin's decisions and did not see the need to decisively change anything in Russia's foreign policy.

Obama's/the U.S.'s voice was mute in Medvedev's utterances; however, Medvedev tended to take over ideas promoted by Obama. In his remarks, he often relied on the common ground previously created by Obama. Medvedev was often in a dialogic relation with Obama's discourses/articulations and tried to integrate his own articulations into Obama's discourses, in order to be persuasive for the U.S. Medvedev even tried to be an optimist the same way as Obama, in order to find solutions for complicated issues. Medvedev constructed optimism as a present guarantee of a future agreement: being an optimist was articulated with being able to agree on the issues of interest (which actually cited Obama's discourse). Notably, articulations of national security with sustainable development and military strength with having limited opportunities had been promoted in Obama's nonproliferation discourse; however, in Medvedev's excerpts, they were presented as objective truths. If both countries were to adhere to these objective truths, they were to be united in them.

In many cases when Medvedev constructed Russia and the U.S. as united at the deictic center, the level of assumptions and implications showed that such a construction was extremely unstable and challenged, since the two were implicitly constructed at the remote ends of the spatial-modal axis. Existential assumptions tended to show that negative aspects of U.S.–Russian relations existed, for example, remnants of the Cold War, mistrust and stereotypes, frictions and confrontations in NATO–Russian relations, etc. Propositional assumptions mostly indicated that positive and desired aspects were absent from U.S.–Russian relations; however, propositional assumptions, as well as value assumptions, mostly indicated that agreement and genuine partnership between the U.S. and Russia was possible and desirable. Medvedev's low deontic commitment implied that getting over the Cold War would not be easy. Still, Medvedev sought to articulate U.S.–Russian relations with mutual understanding and to suppress the articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with the Cold War. Another difficulty was that NATO (and the U.S. as its prominent member) and Russia were constructed as posing security threats to each other (their relations being articulated with tensions and confrontations) and lacking genuine cooperation (articulated with equality, indivisibility of security, mutual trust, and predictability).

Proceeding from Medvedev's excerpts, it can be seen that Russia's relations with the U.S. are immensely important for and have a huge effect on Russia's relations with EU, NATO, the WTO. Medvedev explicitly claimed that normal relations between the U.S. and Russia were "the most important thing" on which "very much depends". Hence, Obama, due to his good personal relations with Medvedev, indeed helped Medvedev and Russia a lot in the framework of the U.S.–Russian reset. In praising Obama, Medvedev was consistently using high epistemic and deontic modalities, but added words like "relatively" and "basically" and, by doing so, somewhat downplayed his praise. Medvedev did thus on many other topics and occasions, which may imply Russia's generally

vulnerable reaction to the U.S., which did not allow Medvedev praise Obama and the U.S. fully. Medvedev only praised Obama fully when he constructed Obama as having renounced the missile defense plans.

To rearticulate the nodal point of missile defense, Medvedev articulated it with several Russian projects, which could be integrated into Obama's ones. However, being ultimately unable to articulate missile defense with Russia's participation and, thus, security, Medvedev promoted the articulation of security with nuclear arms race, which severely undermined the articulation of security with nuclear arms reduction, promoted under the New START, thus challenging the U.S.–Russian reset, articulated, among other things, with the U.S.'s and Russia's responsibility before the world community to reduce their nuclear stockpiles. Medvedev emphasized the topic of missile defense in the context of "historic transformation" in relations between Russia and NATO/West, implying that, although reset in Russia's relations with the U.S. and NATO had taken place, "historic transformation" would take place only when the issue of missile defense is solved in accordance with Russia's perspectives. This implies, therefore, that Medvedev renounced the term "reset" because the improvements in Russia–NATO/West relations, which could be considered as the initial stage of desired historic transformation, reinforced West's and not Russia's hegemony and that Russia was waiting for further development to ensure the solving of issues Russia considered essential.

In missile defense, WTO, and European Security Treaty contexts, Medvedev needed to constantly reiterate what he has said before (i.e., "I have said it many times", "I repeat once again"), which implied that his voice was not heard. The verb "achieve" was frequently used, implying that most actions required effort from Russia and the U.S./WTO/NATO (which both increased and decreased distance between Russia and these entities along the spatial-modal axis). However, to hear Medvedev's/Russia's voice was to actually act according to it. When Medvedev was tired of repeating, he started threatening. Analyzing what Russia says (listening to Russia was always constructed as crucial, at the highest level of deontic modality) was articulated with eventually doing what Russia says. In the question of missile defense, attention to Medvedev's proposal was implicitly articulated with positive response, the alternative with the beginning of an arms race.

Apart from missile defense, Medvedev's excerpts demonstrated that Russia reacted testily to criticisms on its domestic affairs (e.g., elections and economic activities). On this matter, Medvedev, in many cases, resorted to the highest level of the epistemic and deontic modality to create structural closure, articulating criticisms with tact and suppressing all other articulations of evaluations by claiming that Russia refused to accept anything that was expressed without tact. Here, the suppressed articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with the Cold War stroke back and haunted the articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with reset. Medvedev was even ready to sacrifice his good personal relations with Obama to demand tactful evaluations of Russia's elections by the U.S. All projects, including the European Security Treaty, the New START, Russia's

WTO accession, and the reset of Russia's relations with the U.S. and NATO were articulated with equality and respect among partners. On many occasions in most contexts, Medvedev indicated that Russia's attitude to the U.S. and NATO developed in response to their attitude to Russia. However, it was Russia that assessed the U.S.'s and NATO's attitude toward itself. Likewise, Medvedev and Russia were constructed to take seriously each promise they were given by the U.S.'s/West's politicians. Breaching of promises was articulated with betrayal.

It was mainly to contradict the U.S.'s criticisms with respect to Russia and to eliminate the U.S. from the spheres crucial to Russia that the U.S. was constructed as Russia's Other. For instance, Medvedev sought to tackle the articulation of the U.S.–Russian reset with the deterioration of the U.S.'s relations with countries like Georgia and Ukraine. Emphasizing that Russia had its own relations with Ukraine, Medvedev sought to keep the U.S. out of them. Absence of trust constituted another stumbling block in U.S./West–Russian relations. In reaction to the absence of trust, Medvedev tended to demand legally binding obligations. For instance, in the context of the European Security Treaty, “to achieve results” actually meant to draft a legally binding treaty, as opposed to a set of declarations. Likewise, unified approaches to solving conflicts needed to be fixed, not just developed. As a result, at the level of assumptions and implications, it turned out that cooperation in all other dimensions of U.S.–Russian relations apart from the New START Treaty was not expanding significantly due an implicit block preventing this wider cooperation despite Medvedev's strong commitment. Consequently, absence of trust served as major cause for dislocation of the new U.S.–Russian Self Medvedev was trying to construct in the framework of the U.S.–Russian reset.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has analyzed Barack Obama's and Dmitry Medvedev's presidential rhetoric in 2008–2012 with a special focus on the U.S.–Russian reset that the presidents were promoting. Although U.S.–Russian relations have deteriorated at the time of completing this dissertation and the reset is not mentioned in presidential rhetoric, the analysis remains topical, as it contributes to the theoretical and empirical research on the U.S.–Russian reset, or pragmatic cooperation between Russia and the U.S. that provides an alternative to the Cold War prism. The dissertation also proposes an analytical framework for the empirical analysis of political messages which combines analytical tools from Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory with the toolkit from critical discourse analysis (CDA) (deixis as theorized by Chilton (2004) and assumptions as theorized by Fairclough (2003)). The analysis presented above demonstrates that this method enables us to detect instabilities within arguments and discursive struggles at the level of textual excerpts and, thus, is a suitable way of examining multilayered political texts.

The empirical analysis in this dissertation proceeded from the poststructuralist discourse theory and focused on the analysis of political discourse, understood as relatively regular language patterns, or discursive structures, in the domain of politics. Language came to be conceptualized in terms of discourse after the linguistic turn only in the 1960s. To trace earlier connections between language and politics, the first chapter of the dissertation was devoted to the evolution of political rhetoric, understood in this thesis as an art of verbal persuasion. The brief discussion of political rhetoric allowed, among other things, to trace how rhetoric in the classical tradition reached the U.S. and Russia and developed its characteristic features in the domain of politics in these countries and influenced the political rhetoric of Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev, respectively.

The emergence of political rhetoric in democratic Athens during the 5th and 4th centuries B.C., when no distinction was made between orators and politicians, signals the purest connection between or even the indivisibility of language and political action. Many scholars believe that all rhetoric is political. Also, all verbal behavior can potentially qualify as argument, since a descriptive account “necessarily has offensive (critical) aspects insofar as it explicitly or implicitly seeks to undermine rival versions of events, and defensive (justificatory) aspects insofar as speakers attempt to shore up their accounts from the attack by rivals” (Condor *et al.* 2013: 267). This perspective parallels Bakhtin's dialogism, according to which each utterance exists as a response to what was said earlier and in anticipation of the reaction of the (potential) addressee. Rhetoric that appears to be supporting one viewpoint may contain meanings arguing for an opposite one.

Aristotle was the first to distinguish between political, forensic, and ceremonial rhetoric. He believed that the major aim of rhetoric was persuasion and identified three modes of persuasion: ethos, pathos, and logos. These were

further elaborated by Cicero and are studied to this day. Until the 16th century, rhetoric was developed in the Western tradition as a theoretical and methodological whole, until Petrus Ramus, an influential French educational reformer, limited rhetoric to style and delivery, assigning invention and arrangement to dialectic. Consequently, philologists and linguists today, in analyzing political rhetoric, often limit themselves to describing its stylistic features, without detecting the underlying arguments. Argumentation, however, is increasingly studied by different schools of discourse analysis. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012: 1) claim that “politics is most fundamentally about making choices about how to act in response to circumstances and goals, it is about choosing policies, and such choices and the actions which follow from them are based upon practical argumentation”. Therefore, Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) integrate CDA and argumentation theory to gain an empirically adequate and theoretically grounded critique of political discourse.

Classical rhetoric made its way to the early Russian state through Byzantium and this influenced Russian rhetoric. The development of Russian rhetorical tradition, in the more contemporary sense, was interrupted by the October Revolution of 1917. Until perestroika, political discourse in the Soviet Union amounted to the pronouncement of a prepared and verified written discourse, which did not allow for improvisation and expressed allegiance to the authorities. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian political discourse became more diverse and focused on solving political issues. Post-Soviet Russian political speech exhibits the values of development, democratic state, and economy; it is heavily affected by the style of scientific and business reasoning (Yashin 2010).

Dmitry Medvedev became Russian president, as a protégé of Vladimir Putin, in 2008. Although it can be said that Medvedev’s rhetoric and presidency were not very influential in domestic politics, he can still be credited for improving Russia’s international relations. Medvedev’s liberalism, grounded in legal and economic arguments, depoliticized Russia’s international behavior, or, at least, made it less ideologically and more pragmatically driven (Makarychev 2012: 5). At the same time, in the so-called Medvedev Doctrine formulated by Medvedev in August 2008 after the Russo–Georgian War, Medvedev explicitly stated that post-Soviet Russia would retain its spheres of special interest. Medvedev’s understanding of democracy amounted to state sovereignty, paternalistic attitudes, and technocratic administration (Morozov 2010). In Medvedev’s rhetoric, positively assessed achievements of the Russian nation included, along with the *unique culture*, also *territory* and *military potential*, which are associated with *imperial heritage* in modern public discourse (Malinova 2011). This far, Medvedev’s presidential rhetoric has found relatively little thorough academic analysis (e.g., Ivanova (2011), Mikheyeva (2010), Morozov (2010), Malinova (2011), Klyuyev (2016)). This is one of the gaps this thesis sought to fill.

Rhetoric in the Ramist tradition was introduced to the Harvard curriculum in the 17th century. By the mid-18th century, Ramist rhetoric was supplemented with rhetoric in the Ciceronian tradition, which became extremely useful during

the formation of the American Republic. Rhetoric was taught as a practical, civic art, connected with politics and ethics. Deliberative, or political, rhetoric has served an important role in the fundamental changes in the American society.

In 2008, Barack Obama was elected the U.S. president in the times of both economic and identity crisis. It has been argued that Obama won the elections thanks to his campaign oratory's promise of a fresh approach to politics (Berry and Gottheimer 2010: ix). Obama started the presidential race as an outsider, but created a connection to American history in his rhetoric and embedded himself in an American tradition by designing his rhetoric with echoes of Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King (Leith 2011: 2019).

In his foreign policy discourse, Obama promoted the idea that the U.S. should restore its image as a responsible and trustworthy world power and lead the world by example. Obama also advocated the idea that tensions should be negotiated and compromises found. Obama sought to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and made an attempt to withdraw the U.S. troops from Iraq and Afghanistan. In 2008, Obama communicated with Russia after almost two years of silence in U.S.–Russian relations that resulted from G. W. Bush's unilateral politics. Obama invited Russia's new president, Dmitry Medvedev, to forget the history of U.S.–Russia antagonism and start the relations anew. Obama's presidential rhetoric has received considerable attention from researchers (on topics like race and racism (Walters (2007), Teasley (2010), Temple (2010), etc.), the U.S. national identity (Sweet and McCue-Enser (2010), Hammer (2010), Coe and Neumann (2011), etc.), Afrocentricity (Stewart (2011)), terrorism (Sarfo and Krampa (2013)), Ellison (2013), etc.), etc. However, there are not many studies that focus specifically on references to Russia in Obama's first-term presidential messages and on the U.S.–Russian reset, which constituted another gap this thesis aimed to fill.

The rich repertoire of approaches to analyzing political text and talk includes rhetorical criticism (Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969)), various strands of discourse analysis, narrative analysis, cognitive approach (Lakoff and Johnson (1980)), discursive psychology, conversation analysis and ethnomethodology, political psychology, rhetorical political analysis (Finlayson (2007)), etc. Condor *et al.* (2013: 262) contend that summarizing the field of political rhetoric is difficult because there has been little dialog between researchers from different disciplines, like linguistics, political science, international relations, communication studies, political psychology, etc. It can be argued that intercultural dialog between scholars of political rhetoric is even more severely limited, often for political, ideological, financial, geographical or linguistic reasons. For instance, Gilbert (1999) has noted that, in social sciences, we can talk about “Russian academic isolation from published research in other parts of the world”.

Russian political rhetoric and approaches to its analysis are poorly covered in Western research. Although it draws on Western scholarship, Russian research on political rhetoric has its own dynamics. Chudinov (2005) classifies recent Russian research in political linguistics into ten general trends. For

example, one develops the theoretical basis, categories, and terminology of political linguistics (e.g., Bazylev (2002, 2005), Baranov (2003), Gavrilova (2004), Demyankov (2003), Romanov (2002), etc.); another investigates changes in the political vocabulary in the pre-Soviet, Soviet, and post-Soviet period (e.g., Osheeva (2004), Luchinina (2003), etc.); the third contains comparative studies, juxtaposing Russian political communication with that of other countries (especially the U.S.) in different periods (e.g., Kaslova (2003), Krasilnikova (2003), Shudegova (2002), Zyatkova (2003), etc.), etc. One of the particularities of Russian research on political text and talk is the investigation of *archetypal keywords* (e.g., Romanenko (2001) and Yashin (2010)), not frequently encountered in the West. Yet another Russian approach is Sheigal's (2002) attempt to build a semiotic model of political discourse.

The second chapter of the thesis elaborated on Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory. The main contribution of poststructuralist theories of discourse to the field of politics lies in their conceptualization of political power through the category of hegemony. From the poststructuralist perspective, hegemony is achieved by a successful fixation (which can only be partial) of socially and politically significant signifiers with particular meanings. As the signifier is untied from the signified, society has a proliferation of *floating signifiers*, which rival political forces seek to partially fix in relation to a particular configuration of signifiers: "discursive struggles about the ways of fixing the meaning of a signifier like *democracy*, for instance, are central to explain the political semantics of our contemporary political world" (Laclau 1995: 435). This view is in line with Foucault's conceptualization of power, according to which power is the outcome of a complex and almost indecipherable set of language practices within a culture (Herrick 2001: 249). Hence, power is fluid, flows from discourse and is dispersed in different social practices. It is productive, rather than oppressive, and it provides conditions of possibility for the social. Discourses contribute to producing the subjects we are and the objects we can know; hence, there are strong ties between power, discourse, identity, and knowledge. For Foucault, rules of discourse are always present and, as they govern knowledge, they constitute the essence of power.

Laclau and Mouffe's theory combines insights from various disciplines and the theories of Marx, Saussure, and Gramsci. It takes the Saussurean idea of the structural organization of the social, but, in contrast to Saussure, views structure as ultimately open, though seeking closure. Laclau and Mouffe borrow significant insights from Derrida in their conceptualization of structure. They derive the idea that an individual is an incomplete structure struggling for fullness from Lacan's psychoanalysis: in Lacan's view, each identity is always-already split and, therefore, needs constant acts of identification to deter this lack of fullness haunting it. The theory retains the Marxist idea of constant social struggles for power, but abandons Marx's economic and class determinism. The theory adopts Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony, or the manufacture of consent, suggesting that power needs to be articulated rather than simply imposed by force.

This thesis adopted Laclau and Mouffe's theory as the central framework for the analysis of the political messages of Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev. In the empirical analysis of this thesis, operational concepts from Laclau and Mouffe's theory (such as articulation, elements, moments, empty signifier, nodal point, chains of equivalence/difference, constitutive Other, constitutive outside, structural closure, dislocation, decision, interpellation, and hegemony / hegemonic move) were used. However, since Laclau and Mouffe's theory has no specific instructions for an in-depth linguistic study, it was combined with some aspects of the more linguistically oriented CDA, as both theories have comparable ontological and epistemological premises (Jorgensen and Phillips (2002: 147), Sjölander (2011), Rear (2013)).

One of the major differences between CDA and Laclau and Mouffe's theory lies in their definition of discourse. CDA distinguishes between discourse (including text, talk, gestures, and other semiotic systems) and other dimensions of social practice (e.g., institutions, disciplining and sanctioning techniques, etc.), arguing that the world is constituted by both discursive and extra-discursive factors (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002: 16). In CDA, discursive practices are distinguished from social practices. Social practices (e.g., in political discourse) entail discursive practices, so that some linguistic utterances turn into discursive practices as they become institutionalized and determine social relations (van Dijk 1997: 14). In contrast, this thesis assumes Laclau and Mouffe's perspective that discourse "cannot be reduced to a semantic region or aspect of the social totality, since it weaves together meaning and action in complex language games" that determine our social world (Torfing 1999, cited in Torfing 2002: 54). Laclau and Mouffe do not distinguish between the discursive and the non-discursive elements of the social. In Laclau and Mouffe's terms, discourse is inherently political and permeated by politics.

However, this overarching theory still needs to identify linguistic aspects of discourse that could be subjected to empirical study. This is where CDA offers useful methodological assistance. The CDA tools selected for the empirical analysis in this thesis were deixis (as theorized by Chilton (2004)) and assumptions (as theorized by Fairclough (2003)). These tools along with analytical procedure employed in the empirical part were discussed in the third chapter of the thesis. Indexical expressions are linguistic mechanisms which serve to make the interpreter relate to the positioning expressed by the speaker. Chilton's (2004) discourse ontology is a conceptual structure of three intersecting axes (space, time, and modality), along which people place entities present explicitly or implicitly in discourse. The deictic center lies at the intersection of the axes and constitutes the origin of the three dimensions. Other entities are defined according to their coordinates on the three axes. Along the spatial axis, speakers locate entities according to their proximity or remoteness from the Self, using pronouns, indexical cues, and background assumptions; e.g., *I*, *we*, *here* (the deictic center), *there*, *they* (the remote end of the spatial axis, where the Other is located). On the temporal axis, historical events are distanced from the deictic center in the direction of the past; predicted events in the direction of the future.

The modal axis entails degrees of certainty (epistemic capacity) on the one hand and a scale of morality/ obligation (deontic capacity) on the other hand: unquestionable beliefs are situated at the deictic center; those that can be contested are far from the deictic center. Therefore, the true is near the Self; falsity and moral or legal wrongness is with the Other. The scale of obligation is directional and reflects the Self's authoritative position in relation to the Other. The concept of deictic axes is mirrored in Hansen's (2006) dimensions of identity: spatiality, temporality, and ethicality. According to Hansen (2006: 41), "even abstract discourses constitute subjects by situating them within particular boundaries, by investing them with possibilities for change or repetition, and by constructing ethical relations". Since these dimensions are inherently interrelated, the concept of spatial-modal axis was employed in the empirical analysis when it was especially difficult to differentiate between the spatial and modal axes.

In Fairclough's (2003) methodology, the term *assumptions* covers the implicit processes of meaning-making in texts. Assumptions include presuppositions, logical implications, or entailments, and implicatures as theorized in linguistic pragmatics (Fairclough 2003: 40). Fairclough categorizes assumptions into existential (assumptions about what exists), propositional (assumptions about what is or can be the case), and value assumptions (assumptions about what is good or desirable). Many assumptions are implicit, but, in some cases, they can be *triggered* (Levinson 1983) by linguistic features in a text. For instance, existential assumptions can be triggered by definite articles and demonstratives (*the, this, that, these, those*) (Fairclough 2003: 56). Propositional assumptions can be triggered, for example, by *how*-questions and factive verbs; e.g., "I realized (forgot, remembered) that managers have to be flexible" assumes that managers have to be flexible, as it is something the speaker considers to be a fact by realizing, recalling, or remembering it (*ibid.*). Value assumptions can be triggered by words like *help*; e.g., "A good training program can help develop flexibility". The value assumption in this case is that flexibility is desirable (as, generally, what is helped is desirable) (Fairclough 2003: 56). Assumptions help the interpreter to recognize the value systems on which a text is based.

This theoretical/methodological toolkit was employed in the empirical analysis of Obama's and Medvedev's political messages. As the thesis was interested in, specifically, how the two presidents constructed the other country, the thesis only looked at topics of mutual interest. The empirical analysis was conducted in the following five contexts important in both Medvedev's and Obama's presidential rhetoric in 2008–2012: the New START Treaty; missile defense shield and NATO–Russian relations; Russia's WTO accession; discursive definition of reset; global nuclear nonproliferation (in Obama's analysis) and European Security Treaty (in Medvedev's analysis). Because the number of political texts in the five contexts was still too great for qualitative analysis, six excerpts were chosen for a close analysis from each context. Since the corpora of analyzed excerpts allowed me to identify general patterns in Obama's and Medvedev's reset rhetoric, adding more contexts or excerpts to the empirical part did not appear to be necessary. The choice was made to

include the whole range of articulations employed. All textual excerpts in the empirical part underwent the same analytical procedure: the same aspects were analyzed, depending on what was expressed. The results of the analysis only pertain to what the proposed method allowed to spot in the inevitably limited corpus of this qualitative research.

The fourth chapter was devoted to the discussion of the context of U.S.–Russian relations, since, in order to interpret textual cues and infer implicit information from texts, knowledge of specific events and the general socio-cultural context is necessary. The discussion of the relations between the U.S. and Russia proceeded, for the most part, from accounts on the processes of Russia's and the U.S.'s identity formation, since it is seen as the most productive way to explicate the booms and busts in these relations as well as contradictory moves in the U.S.'s and Russia's foreign policy. Russia's post-Soviet state identity was first looked at in relation to the identity of the West and NATO, the U.S. being a quintessential member of both. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, NATO assumed a new identity, promoting itself as international democratic community protecting civilization (while threats were articulated with instability, or absence of certain democratic cultural and political institutions articulated with security). NATO enlargement was constructed as accepting new members who shared the political structure and cultural values (Williams and Neumann 2000). This way, Russian opposition to NATO enlargement was silenced. As a result, Russia was left with the two options of identification: either to become a Western apprentice and accept NATO expansion or to become an anti-Western neo-imperialist state opposing NATO expansion. Since both alternatives were unacceptable for Russia, the only option was to construct Russia as a great power that pursues its national interests. This is parallel to what Tsygankov (2010) identified as the ideology of Statism in Russia's foreign policy (the other two ideologies being Westernism and Civilizationsim). Statists conceptualize Russia as a strong independent state, or *derzhava*, which is able to govern and maintain social and political order and whose Other is constituted by external threat to Russia's security.

Post-Soviet Russia's identitary tensions can be seen in the conceptualization of Russia as a subaltern empire that is undergoing a period of instability and insecurity (Morozov 2015). For centuries, Russia has internalized the Eurocentric world view, but was excluded from the Western socio-economic institutions due to the uneven development of capitalism, in which Russia participated as a peripheral country. Hopf (2012: 274) refers to Russia as “a semi-peripheral country”, “a position that allows it to simultaneously exploit its own periphery, while itself being exploited as a raw material appendage by the capitalist core”. As a subaltern, Russia feels threatened by what it views as an expansion of Western empire and its hegemonic position in the world. As a result, Russia resorts to defensive moves and, domestically, seeks to protect its cultural space from Western intervention, at the same time suppressing the so-called “fifth column”, perceived to represent the Western Other in domestic political affairs (Morozov 2015: 135).

In the U.S., after the collapse of the Soviet Union, those who supported Russia's transition still mistrusted Russia and feared that Russia could return to its imperial past. Thus, even though Clinton was optimistic about Russia's transition and engaged in an active cooperation with Yeltsin, he also led NATO expansion and negotiated various missile defense plans (despite Russia's opposition), and ignored Russia during the Balkan conflicts. Already then the relations between the two countries were "motivated less by common values and more by power calculations" (Roberts 2018: 242). After the collapse of the USSR, editorials of leading U.S. newspapers continued to construct Russia through the post-Soviet autocratic Russia narrative to reinforce the U.S.'s identity as a free state domestically and leader of the free world abroad. Negative views of Russia reflected the U.S.'s fear of autocratic political systems. This narrative did not change during the Medvedev-Obama reset (Tsygankov 2017). This lack of trust by the U.S. and also European states, who saw Russia as a decreasing security concern, but not as a member of the European community, did not leave Russia with many identification options. Russia-U.S. relations are, hence, of a mixed nature: cooperation on pursuing mutual benefits in the areas of common interest does allow for some accomplishments, but long-term aggravating factors like NATO expansion, missile defense, criticism of Putin's leadership trigger the exacerbation of the climate, in which deep disagreements (e.g., on Syria and Crimea) threaten to perpetually polarize the relationship (Roberts 2018: 251).

After the empirical analysis of the textual excerpts from Obama and Medvedev's political messages (conducted in chapters 5 and 6, respectively) it may be argued that both Obama and Medvedev made abundant assumptions and intensively constructed the deictic center and the coordinates of different entities on the deictic axes. A rich repertoire was achieved by both presidents by using these linguistic tools. For instance, in promoting his hegemonic move, in which he partially fixed the empty signifier security with the nodal point of global nuclear nonproliferation and constructed Russia as an essential partner on nonproliferation, Obama tended to construct Medvedev and Russia, together with himself and the U.S., at the deictic center, the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right. This way, Obama constructed the U.S. and Russia, together with himself and Medvedev, very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis, while other countries were implicitly distanced from the U.S. and Russia on the spatial-modal axis. Obama tended to speak on behalf of the deictic center consisting of the U.S. and Russia, thus speaking on behalf of both the U.S. and Russia and constructing common ground in the discourse he promoted. Obama also tended to construct Russia in the chain of equivalence with other countries around the nodal point of nonproliferation; however, within such chains of equivalence, Russia was treated as different from other countries. Such an interplay of difference and equivalence served as an effective means of creating common ground on the one hand and promoting the U.S.'s leadership on the other hand. To accelerate the dynamics of his hegemonic move, Obama tended to construct danger close to the world community on the temporal axis.

The self-evident nature of danger was emphasized by strong epistemic modality. This allowed Obama to underscore the indispensable character of U.S.'s leadership for security, expressed in a very strong deontic commitment. Obama tended to construct himself at the deictic center, stressing his crucial role and the hegemonic nature of his efforts.

Obama tended to use definite articles to make existential assumptions. Propositional assumptions were made to delineate, e.g., one particular sphere of cooperation, to explain what things (e.g., the New START) actually are, to distinguish between "top priorities" and "second-tier issues", etc. Many propositional assumptions served to demonstrate how otherwise suppressed counterarticulations were striking back and undermining the articulations Obama was promoting. One of such examples was the counterarticulation of U.S.–Russian relations with the Cold War (which Obama articulated with nuclear proliferation). It was suppressed by Obama's articulation of the U.S. and Russia with leadership on nonproliferation, but still struck back and haunted the hegemonic articulation Obama was promoting. For example, the propositional assumption that the U.S. and Russia, in their pursuit of the elimination of the danger of nuclear proliferation, did not actually intend to eliminate their nuclear stockpiles implied that nuclear stockpiles were necessary. Thus, the suppressed articulation of nuclear arsenal with security struck back and haunted Obama's articulation of nuclear weapons with danger.

To suppress counterarticulations and achieve structural closure, Obama often used words and phrases that signaled the highest level of epistemic and/or deontic modality, e.g. "obviously", "sacrosanct", "must", "it was simply a statement of fact", etc. Sometimes, to strengthen his point, Obama made his utterances intentionally polyphonic, including voices constructed to support his stance. To promote his articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with reset (as opposed to the articulation of the U.S. with unilateralism) more effectively, Obama tended to construct difference between the U.S. and NATO, U.S.–Russian relations and NATO–Russian relations, U.S.–Russian and Poland–Russian relations, etc. Obama also sought to actively promote the U.S.'s hegemony in all spheres. In all projects Obama was promoting, he implicitly stressed his important role and adherence of the U.S., Russia, and Medvedev (constructed at the deictic center together with Obama) to his ideas.

Obama tended to implicitly construct a difference between Medvedev's Russia and anti-Western Russia. For example, it was with the *right* Russia and the *proven partner* that Obama had negotiated the New START, whereas the *wrong* Russia could be the result of the U.S.'s failure to ratify the New START. Hence, the failure to ratify the New START was articulated with Medvedev's loss of political power. Obama was making the propositional assumption that something could be good for both countries (like the New START), the value assumption being that such a situation was desirable. In this case, Russia was constructed close to the U.S. along the spatial-modal axis. Obama did not construct Russia as a unified Other, and there was no zero-sum relationship between the U.S. and Russia. Rather, in Obama's construction, there was a real

Russia, with a potential to become a member of the Western family of nations, once it was moving in the *right* direction constructed by Obama. Still, at the level of assumptions, Russia and the U.S. tended to be implicitly constructed as simultaneously moving apart from each other as well as toward each other along the spatial-modal axis. As a result, there often was uncertainty within the deictic center formed by the U.S. and Russia, and, thus, within the new U.S.–Russian Self Obama was trying to construct. On the temporal axis, this new Self was stably constructed as having left the suspicions and rivalry of the past, cooperating at present and seeking to effectively cooperate in the future.

Medvedev, in his hegemonic move, sought to partially fix the empty signifier security with Russia's proposed global security architecture and its major step, the European Security Treaty. Medvedev articulated the treaty with multifaceted tripartite cooperation between Russia, the U.S., and the EU; indivisibility of security of Europe (otherwise security was constructed as divided); stability and trust in Europe (both of which were constructed as lacking); clear rules of behavior, a unified approach to solving problems, creation of instruments of arms control (implying that these aspects were absent from Russia's relations with the U.S. and the EU); equality and respect among partners (which were constructed as lacking with respect to Russia). Through the treaty, Russia was articulated as an indispensable player in the area of European security and, thus, a European power. In addition, the European Security Treaty would eliminate the concerns about the European missile defense shield, a stumbling block in Russia–U.S. and Russia–NATO relations. Promoting the European Security Treaty, Medvedev sought to suppress the counterarticulation of the treaty with an alternative to NATO; still, as he advocated for the dissociation of security from belonging to alliances, the propositional assumption was that there were more productive alternatives to ensure security of the European continent than NATO.

In promoting his security-related hegemonic move, Medvedev tended to construct himself at the deictic center to indicate that the topics he was discussing were important to him personally. Many words Medvedev used signaled structural closure or suppressing counterarticulations by conveying the highest level of epistemic and/or deontic modality. Medvedev tended to imply that there were obstacles on Russia's way to achieving results in security in the Euro–Atlantic area and Russia's WTO accession, and this implicitly distanced Russia from the EU and the U.S. or the WTO on the spatial-modal axis. Like Obama, Medvedev tended to delineate how processes should develop. For instance, Medvedev resorted to the highest level of deontic modality to articulate U.S.–Russian relations with mutual understanding and common goals and to suppress the articulation of U.S.–Russian relations with the Cold War (Medvedev articulated the latter with divided security and also with the adversarial relations between the U.S. and Russia). In doing so, Medvedev constructed the U.S. and Russia at the deictic center and, thus, as very close to each other on the spatial-modal axis. The value assumption Medvedev made in this case was that constant improvement in U.S.–Russian relations was

desirable and very important for Russia. This way, Medvedev sought to construct the new Self, uniting Russia with the U.S.

There were also excerpts in which Medvedev constructed the U.S. as an adversary. For instance, speaking about consolidating Russia's military resources in the North Caucasus, Medvedev implicitly constructed the conflict as being between Russia and the U.S. In this case, the U.S. and Russia were implicitly constructed at the two remote ends of the spatial-modal axis. This challenged the likelihood of the European Security Treaty, articulated with the unproblematic unity of Russia, the EU, and the U.S. on the spatial-modal axis (another new Self that Medvedev sought to construct). Additionally, to suppress the articulation of EU–Russian relations with missile defense, Medvedev made the propositional assumption that the U.S. was actually imposing missile defense on the EU and, thus, negatively affecting EU–Russian relations; this way, Medvedev implicitly articulated missile defense with the U.S. in opposition to the EU and Russia. In another instance, Medvedev implied that Russia treated the U.S. and NATO's arguments regarding missile defense as superficial and even sarcastic. This implied the two-facedness of the U.S. and NATO as Russia's Other as well as absence of trust in the U.S.–Russian and NATO–Russian relations. Medvedev tended to construct a difference between NATO as an organization, remote from Russia on the spatial-modal axis, and separate countries as NATO members, constructed close to Russia on the spatial-modal axis. In Medvedev's constructions, NATO as an organization was often fixed with the U.S., both being implicitly constructed as Other.

The analysis showed that there were many occasions on which Medvedev undermined his own utterances. For instance, urging the targeted addressees to examine his European Security Treaty, Medvedev stressed a specific point on the temporal axis in order to imply the danger of possible military conflicts in Europe. Medvedev constructed the implied danger as close to the deictic center, and the solution was articulated solely with collective effort, but Medvedev also undermined his construction by referring to the treaty as merely an idea that he found interesting. In addition, the cooperation on European security architecture was often constructed not as common ground, but as Medvedev's vision. Medvedev could use a medium level of deontic modality to express issues of great importance. He needed to express his hopes that, for instance, regarding missile defense, the U.S. and NATO would study his idea of sectoral responsibility attentively, which implied that Medvedev was worried that the U.S. and NATO would not take his idea seriously. With respect to Russia's WTO accession, Medvedev could construct the important point (Russia's strong desire to become a WTO member) as a side note, which is rather low on the scale of deontic modality. This all implied Russia's subordinate position in relation to the U.S., the EU, NATO, the WTO and the West in general (implicitly constructed as decision-makers on most issues) and also the fact that Medvedev was anticipating a negative response to his proposals and desires from these actors. This appears to support Morozov's (2015) idea that, as a subaltern empire whose voice is silenced, Russia (in this case represented by

Medvedev) has internalized its subordinate position in the normalized world order and experiences this position with bitterness.

There were also abundant instances in Medvedev's rhetoric of constructions that implied that Russia was acting to protect its honor in its foreign policy (as conceptualized by Tsygankov (2012)). For example, Medvedev constructed the European Security Treaty as the barometer that was to show the U.S.'s and NATO's attitude toward Russia. This implied that Russia's attitude toward the U.S. and NATO developed in response to their attitude to Russia. This, in turn, implied that Russia had been doing everything for the sake of these relations and was expecting reciprocal actions from the U.S. and NATO. Russia was constructed as a champion of European security and hoped that its efforts would find an appropriate response in the world (which generally meant the EU, the U.S., and NATO, in line with Russia's Eurocentric world view), but it was implied that it did not. Russia was constructed as always fulfilling its obligations (as opposed to the U.S. or the West). In most contexts, equality with the U.S. and other partners was constructed as crucial for Russia, while it was implied that this was lacking in its relations with the U.S. and, more generally, the West. Russia was constructed as reacting to negative attitudes by the U.S. with honor. Consequently, the fact that Medvedev implicitly stressed that Russia was content with the status quo in U.S.–Russian relations may imply that this was Russia's precautionary measure to keep its honor if the U.S. betrayed Russia by breaching its promises, which Russia took very seriously.

Medvedev tended to construct a logical and sober political course of Russia, seeking to detach it from the personality of its political leader and implying that there was no difference between Medvedev and Putin as Russia was following an objective political course. Similarly, Medvedev fixed Russia with the WTO through inherent benefit to the abstract system of global trade relations, while all remaining divergences between Russia and the WTO were implicitly constructed as a secondary issue. In the same vein, Medvedev constructed the U.S.–Russian reset in terms of a historically self-evident course of action.

Medvedev tended to articulate successful cooperation with the U.S. and NATO (sometimes also the EU) with legally binding documents, the implication often being that, in such a case, these actors would be more attentive to Russia's viewpoint. Another implication was that, unless there were legal obligations, U.S. and NATO would violate the agreed principles. This implied Russia's distrust of the U.S. and NATO and placed Russia at the remote end of the spatial-modal axis from them. This mistrust was mirrored in Obama's articulation of Russia with the trust and verify principle under the New START as well as the subjection of Russia to the WTO rules of trade, without which the fully-fledged U.S.–Russian economic cooperation was implicitly constructed as impossible. The U.S.'s and NATO's implied mistrust of Russia was expressed in their consistent reiteration of their commitment to Article 5 of the Washington Treaty when speaking about cooperation with Russia. Identitary tensions also occurred when both Obama and Medvedev articulated Russia's WTO membership with necessity and benefits for the global economy, but

Obama implicitly constructed Russia's WTO membership in the terms of WTO's ability to sanction Russia's behavior (Russia as a suspicious party that should be controlled and monitored), while Medvedev sought to dissociate Russia's WTO membership from it being perceived as a prize for good behavior.

It can be said that the empirical analysis of both Obama's and Medvedev's excerpts has demonstrated that the linguistic method chosen for this analysis serves its purpose. Not only has the method provided numerous insights into each examined excerpt, but it has also allowed me to juxtapose Obama's and Medvedev's rhetorical behavior, their strategies of persuasion and construction of their country's identity, their major assumptions in specific contexts which are in a dialogic relation with each other, their major implications, constitutive instabilities and discursive struggles within their utterances, and various other aspects.

The empirical analysis demonstrated that, in the five analyzed contexts, both Medvedev and Obama organized their discourses around certain nodal points (nuclear nonproliferation, European Security Treaty, the New START, missile defense, the WTO, the U.S.–Russian reset), which can be said to constitute historically contingent privileged points of a partial fixation of meaning. Both Obama and Medvedev (re-)constructed these nodal points by articulating them with certain moments in their discourses. Both in Obama's and Medvedev's discourses, absolute fixation of meaning (or turning all polysemic elements of discourse into moments fixed with nodal points) was impossible, and there was a no-man's-land in each discourse, which left room for contingencies and instabilities. Additionally, in an attempt at partial fixation of meaning in each of their discourses, Obama and Medvedev sought to suppress counterarticulations, which, with various degrees of intensity, haunted, and even dislocated, their discourses.

For example, as Obama articulated global nuclear nonproliferation with security and interpellated Russia as an (equal) partner in promoting nonproliferation on the global level, the articulation of Russia with danger haunted his discourse. Although he managed to suppress this articulation while he was persuading the U.S. Senate to ratify the New START, he could not integrate into the reset discourse the voices of CEE NATO allies, for whom the U.S.'s cooperation with Russia was fixed with the potential violation of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. As a result, at each further step in the U.S.–Russian reset, Obama needed to confirm his commitment to Article 5. Medvedev, in turn, reproduced the articulation of nuclear nonproliferation with security and enthusiastically rested on this articulation when speaking about Russia's and the U.S.'s special responsibility for global security. However, the issue of European missile defense shield served as the point of dislocation in Medvedev's security discourses: failure to articulate Russia with the nodal point of missile defense led Medvedev to resolutely articulate Russia's security with nuclear arms race.

In the analyzed excerpts, Russia tended to occupy the structural position of a constitutive outside of the U.S., NATO, and the international community Obama was constructing. Russia served as a demarcation of those entities, but

was, at the same time, not totally excluded from them, being constructed as a very important partner. However, on fewer occasions, it was evident that Russia, being fixed with threat, was also excluded as constitutive Other of the U.S. and NATO, providing these entities with clearer limits. In the case of Russia, it was clear that the U.S., as a very important constitutive outside, was excluded as constitutive Other much more often, being perceived as negating the identity of the Self, as a pure anti-Russian actor. This was also manifested by the fact that the entire corpus of Medvedev's messages referring to the U.S. contained almost twice as many texts as Obama's corpus of his messages referring to Russia. While Obama's references to Russia always concerned a specific topic and were used in a limited number of contexts, Medvedev's references to the U.S. could be found almost in each topic Medvedev addressed and in each context of his presidential rhetoric. This can also be interpreted in the terms of the desired broadening of U.S.–Russian relations that never happened: in contrast to Obama, Medvedev was ready for a dialog with the U.S. on an extensive range of issues.

Medvedev constructed the nodal points of missile defense, the WTO, and, especially, the European Security Treaty as desired entities for the fullness of Russia's identity. Being personally invested into the structure (Russia as included in key Western organizations and as a close partner to the U.S. and the EU), Medvedev excluded them (apart from the EU) as (constitutive) Other upon realizing that these entities were, in fact, reluctant to include Russia. It was especially evident in Medvedev's excerpts in the WTO context that Russia, although seeking to become a WTO member, at the same time excluded the WTO as Other in order to undermine WTO's criticisms of Russia's economic policies and lack of transparency. The more intensively Medvedev constructed either the WTO or the U.S. as Other, the more distinctively Russia's own voice was heard.

According to Laclau and Mouffe, no structure has a center that would fix the meanings of all differences within the system; rather, each structure attempts to construct its center. When a particular difference becomes the signifier of the absent communitarian fullness, or the center of the structure, a hegemonic relationship arises, as various political forces seek to define this empty signifier and articulate floating hegemonic nodal points in their own way, and, thus, influence the social order. The purpose of an empty signifier is to give a particular demand a function of universal representation. The empty signifier Obama and Medvedev sought to partially fix with their hegemonic moves to their advantage was security. Obama was gathering the world around global nuclear nonproliferation and, as a center of the international community, articulated nonproliferation with security. Medvedev was gathering the world around the new global security architecture, which was fixed with Russia's help, even if imposed. In both Obama's and Medvedev's excerpts, one center of the international community that the West (and the U.S., as its quintessential member) has hegemony over is democracy. In his utterances, Medvedev

consented to this, but still criticized the U.S.'s democracy, seeking, at this background, to validate Russia's democracy.

In Laclau and Mouffe's terms, in order to be hegemonic, an articulation needs to stand in confrontation with antagonistic articulations, creating equivalential relations and frontiers. Articulating security with nonproliferation, Obama constructed al-Qaida, nuclear terrorists, and countries aiming at developing nuclear weapons (Iran and North Korea) as an antagonistic political camp, excluding them as constitutive Other. He articulated these moments in the chain of equivalence around the empty signifier of the danger of nuclear weapons. Obama promoted his hegemonic move globally and, fixed with the nodal point of nonproliferation, the U.S.'s indispensable role in world community and its security. Having partially fixed security with nuclear nonproliferation, Obama could use this hegemonic articulation in his various projects. Since hegemonic articulation is inherently unstable, it needs to be constantly reiterated. This was precisely what Obama consistently did in various ways.

Medvedev sought to fix world security with the indispensable role of Russia by promoting his project of the new global security architecture. The metaphor *all-European security architecture* was proposed by George Bush in 1990, and it was in a discursive struggle with Gorbachev's *common European house*, which presupposed Russia's participation (Chilton 1996). Medvedev took over Bush's metaphor of *architecture* and fixed it with Russia's participation. A major step within this architecture was the European Security Treaty, articulated with close cooperation between Russia, the EU and the U.S. However, this project was problematic from the very beginning because of the lack of trust between the U.S. and the EU on the one hand and Russia on the other hand. Medvedev's hegemonic move did not seek to abolish NATO explicitly, while both Obama and Medvedev explicitly claimed that there was no trust between NATO and Russia. Medvedev excluded the U.S. (the crucial partner in his hegemonic project) as constitutive Other upon realizing that tripartite cooperation was unlikely. So, within Medvedev's hegemonic move, the U.S. belonged to opposite camps: the Russia–EU–U.S. tripartite cooperation and pure anti-Russian force, preventing the full realization of Russia's identity. In many cases, the U.S. was constructed in between the two extremes, in the position of Russia's constitutive outside.

As a result, the frontiers created by Medvedev's hegemonic articulation were very unstable (in the same excerpt, the U.S. could be constructed as close to Russia's Self and distanced from it as constitutive Other). Medvedev's hegemonic articulation did not stand in a stable confrontation with antagonistic articulations (European Security Treaty as an alternative to NATO) and was intensely haunted by them. The equivalential relations Medvedev created between Russia, the U.S., and the EU were haunted by the articulation of the U.S. with an adversary and U.S.–Russian relations with the Cold War. Medvedev could not integrate NATO/WTO's/U.S.'s criticisms of Russia into his hegemonic move because they would dislocate it by showing Russia's weaknesses and undermining Russia's articulations with indispensable world power, Euro-

pean country, indispensable economic power, strong state, etc. and, through this, potentially result in Russia's identity crisis. Therefore, Medvedev ultimately articulated straightforward criticisms with the Cold War and demanded tact, which he implicitly articulated with silencing the observers with respect to Russia's political system. Medvedev also constructed the U.S. as Other to eliminate the U.S. from Russia's spheres of interest.

It can be argued that Obama had original articulations of the key nodal points for each agenda discussed in the five analyzed contexts in the empirical part of this thesis: nuclear nonproliferation for the world community, the reset for U.S.–Russian relations, significant cuts in the U.S.'s and Russia's nuclear arsenals under the New START, the EPAA for the European missile defense shield, and the U.S.'s strong support for Russia's WTO membership. Obama's discursive moves were based on (re-)articulating nodal points in different ways. His decisions, employed to eliminate existing or potential dislocations, were abundant, varied, and, in many cases, original. However, the counterarticulations, which he was seeking to suppress, haunted and flouted his utterances. Each time when he constructed Russia as a valuable partner, he needed to consider the voices of his political opponents in the U.S. and CEE NATO allies. The U.S., as a quintessential NATO member, could not avoid being impacted by the absence of trust between NATO and Russia.

Medvedev tended to show support for Obama's ideas. On several occasions, to use Fairclough's terms, Medvedev's presidential rhetoric was implicitly intertextual, containing a summary of Obama's words, which was considered as the objective truth. At times, Medvedev's rhetoric was also explicitly intertextual. Otherwise, Medvedev sought to exclude other (contradicting) voices from his rhetoric, assuming common ground. In Obama's rhetoric, however, the voices of the European NATO members concerned about the Russian threat were heard, as was the Russian voice and its concern with Russia's national security. In return for his support of Obama's ideas, Medvedev gained mutually beneficial New START Treaty, Obama's decision to reconsider the earlier plan of European missile defense, and Obama's support for Russia's WTO accession.

Medvedev's most varied decisions concerned the articulation of the nodal point of missile defense. In Medvedev's construction, the European Security Treaty, fixed with security in the Euro–Atlantic area, was meant to either abolish missile defense or to make Russia a quintessential member of the framework. Medvedev articulated the success of the European Security Treaty with Russia's modernization and improvements in its political system, thus interpellating the West, who is critical of Russia's economy and political system, into supporting Medvedev's hegemonic move. Medvedev also articulated Russia's participation in missile defense with the vulnerability of the world, integrating the articulation of Russia with missile defense into Obama's discourse of facing global challenges together. Medvedev stressed the need to deal with missile defense with desire and will; he articulated missile defense with Russia's participation in the project. What is more, Medvedev articulated his and Obama's optimism with being ultimately able to agree on the issue.

These tendencies in the presidential rhetoric of Obama and Medvedev were reflected in their construction of the U.S.–Russian reset. The term *reset* became the point of partial fixation of meaning in U.S.–Russian relations, which Obama articulated with the priorities in line with his hegemonic move of global nuclear nonproliferation. Medvedev was interpellated into accepting these articulations. Obama also articulated the U.S.–Russian reset with the benefits for the world. This way, the U.S.–Russian reset gained a universal nature. In contrast, Medvedev *counted* on the fact that the reset would happen, but did not articulate it with anything in particular. Medvedev preferred sticking to the traditional agenda in U.S.–Russian relations which he never clearly defined and, in several cases, mainly by expressing a low level of deontic modality, indicated that Russia, as well as the U.S., could actually live without the reset and the expected improvements. Still, Medvedev tended to accept the articulation of the reset with improvements in U.S.–Russian relations and articulated the reset with the special responsibility of Russia and the U.S. in world affairs and the Euro–Atlantic policy. By signing of the New START, the U.S. and Russia were constructed by Medvedev as close to each other on the spatial-modal axis, and Obama (together with the U.S.) was tacitly interpellated into articulating the New START with indivisible security in the Euro–Atlantic area. This way, Medvedev integrated the reset and the New START into his project of the European Security Treaty.

However, the level of deontic modality with which Medvedev promoted his hegemonic move was rather low. At the same time, Medvedev sought to dissociate U.S.–Russian relations from the reset. Medvedev implicitly admitted the hegemonic nature of the articulation of the improvement of Russia's relations with the U.S., NATO, and West in general with the reset and admitted the U.S.'s/West's hegemony over the nodal point of reset. He sought to challenge this hegemony by referring to the reset as American terminology and indicating that, although the term was frequently articulated with improvements in U.S.–Russian relations, he did not conceptualize this progress the same way and used the term merely to be understood by his interlocutors. Medvedev also challenged the articulation of the NATO–Russia reset with shared problems. For this reason, although, at the level of value assumptions, the reset was always constructed as desirable, Medvedev tended to alienate himself from the term in the context of the NATO–Russia reset, too.

Overall, it can be said that, in the framework of the U.S.–Russian reset, Obama sought to construct Russia as a partner to restore the identity of the U.S. as a responsible, cooperative (as opposed to unilateral), and indispensable global power, while Russia constructed the U.S. as a partner to promote its identity as a European power and an indispensable global power equal to, and respected by, the West. At the same time, however, both Russia and the U.S. have a long tradition of constructing each other in adversarial terms as Other, whose exclusion allows to gain the fullness of or to experience the clear limits of either country's identity. Both Obama and Medvedev eventually fell back on reproducing this structure of U.S.–Russian relations, since they faced the

impasse in the struggle between their hegemonic articulations. As Obama promoted his articulation of U.S.–Russian reset in opposition to the U.S.’s unilateralism, his hegemonic articulation needed to stand in confrontation with the CEEC’s articulation of the U.S.’s openness to Russia (including the reduced need for missile defense, later the EPAA) with the U.S.’s weakened commitment to Article 5. Hence, Obama found it impossible to accept Medvedev’s hegemonic articulation of the U.S. and Russia with an equal status in terms of security, which entailed disregarding security concerns of the U.S.’s CEE allies. In turn, for Medvedev, and, by extension, Russia, it was impossible to accept Obama’s hegemonic articulation of the reset with Russia’s openness to the West, in the framework of which the EPAA was implemented, while the European Security Treaty was rejected. For Medvedev, overcoming of the Cold War was articulated with the indivisibility of security under the European Security Treaty, while implementation of the EPAA was articulated with a potential new arms race. Hence, the Cold War mentality, expressed in divided security and adversarial relationships, ultimately undermined Medvedev’s reset discourse. Thus, it can be argued that an anti-Western shift in Russia’s foreign policy discourse was the only option already during Medvedev’s presidency.

It may, therefore, be argued that the kind of detailed linguistic analysis employed in this dissertation allows us to trace the subtleties and nuances of how hegemonic moves are being reiterated in diverse ways, how decisions are employed to eliminate either existing or potential dislocation, how the suppressed counterarticulations are striking back and haunt and challenge the articulation/ utterance/discourse, how the identity, as an incomplete structure, is being constructed, but remains prone to instabilities. Within the framework of the empirical analysis of this dissertation, these phenomena were effectively traced through a linguistic analysis of assumptions and deixis, both of which require close qualitative analysis.

This dissertation aimed at operationalizing Laclau and Mouffe’s theory on the empirical level, since the linguistic analysis of specific excerpts is one of the ways to validate their abstract theory of the social. Hence, the empirical analysis in this thesis could only be qualitative, as close reading makes it possible to identify contradictions and instabilities present in the textual excerpts. Such a detailed analysis was important because many aspects in the analyzed excerpts could be interpreted in different ways. In the future, the results of this analysis could be compared to those achieved using other methods.

In addition, the empirical analysis showed that the boundaries between categories of analysis are, at times, either faint or nonexistent. It was at times impossible to determine whether some words expressed a high level of epistemic or deontic modality, since both modalities were intertwined in the same word. In the same way, the spatial axis often coincided with the modal axis and the concept of spatial-modal was used, since, for instance, words like “together” simultaneously trigger closeness on both the spatial and modal axes. It was also, at times, hard to differentiate between the chain of difference and the chain of equivalence, since there tends to be a degree of difference in each chain

of equivalence. The empirical analysis sometimes contradicted the assumptions of the methodology. For instance, in some cases, it turned out, in the analysis of Medvedev's excerpts, that the deictic center was actually not the origin of the epistemic true and the deontic right, but subdued to the will of the hegemonic force. In the case of both Obama and Medvedev, as they sought to make the deictic center include the U.S. and Russia, Russia's and the U.S.'s unity at the deictic center appeared problematic, since, at the level of assumptions and implications, drift, suspicions, and rivalry dislocated the new Self, uniting Russia with the U.S., that both presidents attempted to construct.

The possibility of applying the analytical concepts of Laclau and Mouffe's theory in linguistic analyses deserves further research. The existing analyses, largely by political and social scientists, build a solid foundation necessary to proceed with a linguistic study of selected corpora. The benefits of such an analysis have been demonstrated above. It is precisely owing to its abstract nature that Laclau and Mouffe's theory can be applied to analyze texts in different languages and socio-political contexts. The CDA methods employed in the empirical analysis of this dissertation are similarly widely applicable, as existential, propositional, and value assumptions are made in all languages. The construction of the deictic center and the coordinates of entities on the deictic axes in relation to the deictic center is similarly universal.

Although the structure of U.S.–Russian relations resembles a sine wave in its rises and falls, it can nevertheless be argued that Obama and Medvedev, in their political rhetoric in 2008–12, managed to implement a U.S.–Russian reset, a special period in U.S.–Russian relations. The reset discourse developed its characteristic articulations that can be drawn on by subsequent politicians in the U.S. and Russia. Needless to say, “our ability to engage in projects of social construction is always constrained and influenced by various other discursive structures within which we are inevitably embedded” (Browning 2003: 65). Thus, although, at some point in time, the U.S.–Russian reset could no longer advance due to persistent divergences in the relations between the U.S. and Russia as well as structural constraints of both countries' identification processes, the reset discourse is still an alternative to the Cold War discourse in U.S.–Russian relations. The concept of reset can, in many ways, be compared to Gorbachev's concept of perestroika (Kondratyeva 2015). Both concepts and metaphorical models based on them signal important social deficiencies and the need for political transformations (ibid.). The fact that neither concept is currently applied in active political communication does not exhaust their relevance for research. The reset is a period that offers invaluable insights for further academic study. For instance, the way the two presidents communicated *a fresh start* and achieved progress signals a strong relation between political rhetoric and political action. This dissertation demonstrates that political action rests on a highly effective political rhetoric, even if only for a brief period, in which nodal points are articulated in diverse, original, and flexible ways, which are based both on the existing discourses and fresh ideas and approaches.

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- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2008b. Встреча с представителями Совета по международным отношениям [Meeting with representatives of the Council on International Relations], Washington, D.C., 16 November.

- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2009. Выступление в Университете Хельсинки и ответы на вопросы аудитории [Speech delivered at the University of Helsinki and answers to the questions of the audience], 20 April.
- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2010a. Расширенное заседание коллегии Министерства обороны [Extended meeting of the Collegium of the Ministry of Defense], 5 March.
- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2010b. Статья Дмитрия Медведева «Миссия: партнёрство» [Article “Mission: Partnership” by Dmitry Medvedev], 6 April.
- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2010c. Выступление на церемонии вручения верительных грамот послами иностранных государств [Speech at the ceremony of delivery of credentials by the ambassadors of foreign countries], 18 October.

Context 2: Elaboration and ratification of the New START Treaty

- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2009. Интервью итальянскому телеканалу «РАИ» и газете «Коррьере делла Сера» [Interview with the Italian television channel RAI and newspaper Corriere della Sera], 5 July.
- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2010a. Встреча с лидерами четырёх политических партий, представленных в Государственной Думе [Meeting with the leaders of four political parties represented in the State Duma], 16 January.
- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2010b. Встреча с представителями общественных, академических и политических кругов США [Meeting with representatives of U.S. public, academic, and political circles], Washington, D.C., 14 April.
- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2010c. Выступление на совещании с российскими послами и постоянными представителями в международных организациях [Speech at a meeting with Russian ambassadors and permanent representatives at international organizations], 12 July.
- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2010d. Итоги года с Президентом России [Results of the Year with the President of Russia], 24 December.
- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2011. Дмитрий Медведев принял верительные грамоты десяти новых руководителей дипломатических миссий в России [Dmitry Medvedev accepted the credentials of ten new chiefs of diplomatic missions in Russia], 8 February.

Context 3: Missile defense and NATO–Russian relations

- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2009. Стенографический отчёт о встрече со студентами и преподавателями Питтсбургского университета [Verbatim record of the meeting with the students and instructors of the University of Pittsburgh], 25 September.
- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2010a. Подписан российско-американский Договор о сокращении и ограничении СНВ [The treaty between Russia and the U.S. on the reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms has been signed], Prague, Czech Republic, 8 April.
- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2010b. Интервью польским средствам массовой информации [Interview to the Polish media], 6 December.
- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2011a. Встреча с журналистами Северо-Западного федерального округа [Meeting with journalists of the Northwestern Federal District], Petrozavodsk, Russia, 24 November.
- Medvedev, Dmitry. 2011b. Заявление Президента в связи с ситуацией, которая сложилась вокруг системы ПРО стран НАТО в Европе [Statement by the president regarding the situation that has developed around the anti-missile defense system of NATO member states in Europe], 23 November.

Medvedev, Dmitry. 2012. Встреча с командирами ракетных полков 60-й ракетной дивизии [Meeting with the commanders of the missile regiments of the 60th Missile Division], Saratov Oblast, 21 February.

Context 4: Russia's accession into the World Trade Organization

Medvedev, Dmitry. 2010a. Встреча с руководителями американских венчурных фондов [Meeting with heads of U.S. venture capital funds], Gorki, Moscow Region, 25 May.

Medvedev, Dmitry. 2010b. Пресс-конференция по итогам саммита Россия–Евросоюз [Press conference after the Russia–EU summit], Rostov on Don, Russia, 1 June.

Medvedev, Dmitry. 2010c. Интервью американской газете «Уолл-стрит джорнэл» [Interview to the U.S. newspaper *The Wall Street Journal*], 18 June.

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Medvedev, Dmitry. 2011a. Встреча с работниками агропромышленного комплекса Кубани [Meeting with employees at a Kuban agroindustrial complex], Krasnodar, Russia, 8 August.

Medvedev, Dmitry. 2011b. Встреча с Президентом США Бараком Обамой [Meeting with the U.S. president Barack Obama], Honolulu, Hawaii, 13 November.

Context 5: Discursive definition of reset

Medvedev, Dmitry. 2009a. Начало встречи с участниками российско-американской группы общественного диалога «Россия – США: взгляд в будущее» [Beginning of the meeting with the participants in the Russia–U.S. social dialog group *Russia–U.S.: A Look into the Future*], Kremlin, Moscow, 20 March.

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Medvedev, Dmitry. 2011. Встреча с активом партии «Единая Россия» [Meeting with active members of the United Russia party], Gorki, Moscow Region, 17 December.

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SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Reset'i katsumus: Barack Obama ja Dmitri Medvedevi Venemaa ja USA viidete diskursusanalüüs aastatel 2008–2012

Käesolevas väitekirjas analüüsiti Barack Obama ja Dmitri Medvedevi retoorikat aastatel 2008–2012, pöörates erilist tähelepanu USA ja Venemaa suhete taaskäivitamisele (ingl *reset*), mida need presidendid edendasid. Kuigi käesoleva väitekirja lõpetamise ajal on USA ja Venemaa suhted halvenenud, jääb see analüüs aktuaalseks, kuna see panustab USA ja Venemaa suhete taaskäivitamise teoreetilisse ja empiirilisse uurimisse. Taaskäivitamine ehk USA ja Venemaa vaheline pragmaatiline koostöö pakub alternatiivi külma sõja retoorikale. Samuti pakub väitekirja poliitiliste sõnumite empiiriliseks analüüsiks uuenduslikku analüütilist raamistikku, mis ühendab Laclau ja Mouffe'i diskursusetooria analüütilisi meetodeid kriitilise diskursusanalüüsi (KDA) meetoditega (deiksis Chiltoni (2004) teooria järgi ja oletused Fairclough' (2003) teooria järgi). Käesolev väitekirja näitab, et see meetod võimaldab meil tuvastada ebastabiilsusi argumentides ja diskursiivseid võitlusi tekstilõikude tasandil ning seega sobib see mitmetasandiliste poliitiliste lausungite uurimiseks.

Poliitilise diskursuse all mõeldakse väitekirjas suhteliselt regulaarseid keele- ja diskursiivseid struktuure poliitika valdkonnas. Keelt hakati mõtestama diskursusena alles pärast 1960ndatel aastatel toimunud lingvistilist pööret. Seega, et uurida keele ja poliitika varasemaid seoseid, annab väitekirja esimene peatükk ülevaate poliitilise retoorika arengust. Retoorika tekkimine V ja IV saj eKr demokraatlikus Ateenas näitab keele ja poliitilise tegevuse seost või isegi lahutamatumust. Paljud teadlased usuvad, et kogu retoorika ongi poliitiline. Kogu keelelist käitumist võib pidada argumendiks, kuna kirjeldustel on paratamatult nii ründavad (kriitilised) aspektid, kuna selle eesmärgiks on otseselt või kaudselt õõnestada sündmuste konkureerivaid seletusi, kui ka kaitsvad (õigustavad) aspektid, kuna kõneleja kaitseb oma seletust konkurentide rünnakute eest (Condor *et al.* 2013: 267). Seda vaatenurka saab võrrelda Bahtini dialogismiga, mille kohaselt on iga lausung vastuseks varem öeldule ja eeldab (võimaliku) adressaadi reaktsiooni. Retoorika, mis näib toetavat ühte vaatepunkti, võib sisaldada tähendusi, mis väidavad vastupidist.

Aristoteles eristas esimesena poliitilist, kohtu- ja tseremoniaalset retoorikat. Ta pidas retoorika peamiseks eesmärgiks veenmist ning eristas kolme veenmisviisi: *eetos*, *paatos* ja *logos*. Neid uuritakse tänapäevani. Kuni XVI saj vaadeldi lääne traditsioonis retoorikat teoreetilise ja meetodilise tervikuna, kuni mõjukas prantsuse haridusuuendaja Petrus Ramus kitsendas retoorika stiiliks ja esitlusviisiks. Seetõttu piirduvad tänapäeval poliitilist retoorikat uurivad filoloogid ja keeleteadlased selle stiiliomaduste kirjeldamisega, ilma argumentide aluseks olevaid ajendeid tuvastamata. Tänapäevane diskursusanalüüs keskendub siiski üha enam argumentatsioonianalüüsile. Fairclough ja Fairclough (2012: 1) väidavad näiteks, et poliitika põhineb eelkõige valikute tegemisel ning et need valikud ja

nendest tulenevad tegevused põhinevad praktilisel argumentatsioonil. Seetõttu lõimivad Fairclough ja Fairclough (2012) KDAd ja argumentatsiooniteooriat, mille tulemuseks on empiirilisel adekvaatne ning teoreetiliselt põhjendatud poliitilise diskursuse analüüs. Käesolevas väitekirjas lõimitaksegi KDA meetodeid Laclau ja Mouffe'i teooriaga.

Klassikaline retoorika jõudis varajasse Vene riiki Bütsantsi kaudu. Vene retoorilise traditsiooni ning retoorilise hariduse katkestas 1917. aasta oktoobri-revolutsioon. Kuni perestroikani tähendas nõukogude poliitiline diskursus ettevalmistatud ja kontrollitud kirjaliku diskursuse kordamist, mis ei lubanud improvisatsiooni ning väljendas lojaalsust ametivõimudele. Pärast Nõukogude Liidu kokkuvarisemist muutus vene poliitiline diskursus mitmekülgsemaks ning keskendus poliitiliste probleemide pragmaatilisele lahendamisele. Nõukogudejärgset poliitilist kõnet mõjutavad demokraatlikud ja majanduslikud väärtused ning teadusliku ja ärialase arutluse stiil (Yashin 2010).

Dmitri Medvedevist kui Vladimir Putini soosikust sai Venemaa president aastal 2008. Kuigi võib öelda, et Medvedevi retoorikal ei olnud sisepoliitikas erilist mõju (Makarychev 2012: 5), saab teda siiski tunnustada Venemaa rahvusvaheliste suhete parandamise eest. Medvedev depolitiseeris Venemaa rahvusvahelise suhtluse või vähemalt vähendas selle ideoloogilisust ja suurendas pragmaatilisust (Makarychev 2012: 5). Samas aga oma niinimetatud Medvedevi doktriinis, mille ta formuleeris 2008. aasta augustis pärast Gruusia sõda, ütles Medvedev selgelt, et nõukogudejärgne Venemaa säilitab oma mõjutsoonid. Medvedevi presidendiretoorika rõhutas vene kultuuri, Venemaa territooriumi ja sõjalist potentsiaali, mida kaasaegses avalikus diskursuses seostatakse imperiaalistliku pärandiga (Malinova 2011). Akadeemiliselt on Medvedevi retoorikat suhteliselt vähe põhjalikult analüüsitud (nt Ivanova (2011), Mikheyeva (2010), Morozov (2010), Malinova (2011), Klyuyev (2016)). See on üheks uurimislüngaks, mida käesolev väitekirj püüdis täita.

Ladina traditsiooni retoorika jõudis XVII saj USAsse ja retoorikat õpetati praktilise kodanikukunstina. Poliitilisel retoorikal on olnud oluline roll Ameerika ühiskonna ühiskondlikes muutustes. Barack Obama sai USA presidendiks aastal 2008, nii majandusliku kui identiteedikriisi ajal. On väidetud, et Obama võitis valimised just tänu oma kõnekunstile (Berry ja Gottheimer 2010: ix). Obama alustas presidendikampaaniat autsaiderina, kuid lõi oma retoorikas seose Ameerika ajaloo (Leith 2011: 2019).

Oma välispoliitilises diskursuses rõhutas Obama, et USA peaks taastama oma maine vastutustundliku ja usaldusväärse maailmariigina ning olema maailmale eeskujuks. Samuti toetas Obama ideed, et parteidevahelisi pingeid tuleks maandada läbirääkimiste teel ja leida kompromiss. Obama püüdis Iisraeli-Palestiina konflikti rahumeelselt lahendada ning üritas tuua USA väed välja Iraagist ja Afganistanist. Aastal 2008 taasalustas Obama suhtluse Venemaaga pärast peaaegu kaheaastast vaikust, mis oli tekkinud G. W. Bushi ühepoolse poliitika tulemusena. Obama kutsus Venemaa uut presidenti Dmitri Medvedevit üles unustama USA ja Venemaa vaenu ning suhteid uuesti alustama. Obama retoorikat on palju uuritud (nt sellistel teemadel nagu rass ja rassism (Walters

(2007), Teasley (2010), Temple (2010) jt), USA rahvuslik identiteet (Sweet ja McCue-Enser (2010), Hammer (2010), Coe ja Neumann (2011) jt), afrotsentrilisus (Stewart (2011)), terrorism (Sarfo ja Krampa (2013), Ellison (2013) jt) jms. Sellest hoolimata keskenduvad vähesed uuringud konkreetsetl Obama esimese ametiaja tekstides sisalduvatele viidetele Venemaale ning USA ja Venemaa suhete taaskäivitamisele, mis on teine lünk, mida käesolev väitekiri püüdis täita.

Poliitilise teksti ja kõne analüüsimiseks on lai metoodiline repertuaar, mis hõlmab retoorilist kriitikat (Chaïm Perelman ja Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969)), diskursusanalüüsi erinevaid suundi, narratiivanalüüsi, kognitiivset lähenemist (Lakoff ja Johnson (1980)), diskursiivset psühholoogiat, vestlusanalüüsi ja etnometodoloogiat, poliitilist psühholoogiat, retoorilist poliitikaanalüüsi (Finlayson (2007)) jms. Condor *et al.* (2013: 262) väidavad, et poliitilise retoorika terviklik kirjeldamine on keeruline, kuna erinevate teadusharude, nt keeleteadus, politoloogia, rahvusvahelised suhted, poliitiline psühholoogia jms, vaheline dialoog on olnud napp. Võib väita, et kultuuridevaheline dialoog on veelgi piiratum, sageli poliitilistel, ideoloogilistel, rahanduslikel, geograafilistel või keelelistel põhjustel. Näiteks Gilbert (1999) märgib, et ühiskonnateadustes võib rääkida Venemaa akadeemilisest eraldatusest mujal maailmas avaldatud teadusuuringutest.

Venemaa poliitilist retoorikat ja selle analüüsi on lääneriikides vähe uuritud. Kuigi need põhinevad sageli lääneriikides tehtud uurimustel, on poliitilise retoorika uuringutel Venemaal ka oma dünaamika. Chudinov (2005) toob Venemaa poliitilises keeleteaduses välja kümme üldist suundumust. Näiteks, ühes töötatakse välja poliitilise keeleteaduse teoreetiline alus (nt Bazylev (2002, 2005), Baranov (2003), Gavrilova (2004), Demyankov (2003), Romanov (2002) jt); teises uuritakse muutusi poliitilises sõnavaras Nõukogude Liidu eelsel, aegsel ja järgsel ajastul (nt Osheeva (2004), Luchinina (2003) jt); kolmas hõlmab võrdlevaid uuringuid, mis kõrvutavad Venemaa erinevate ajastute poliitilist suhtlust teiste riikide (eriti USA) omaga (nt Kaslova (2003), Krasilnikova (2003), Shudegova (2002), Zyatkova (2003) jt), jne. Venemaa poliitilise teksti ja kõne üheks eripäraks on ka arhetüüpsete märksõnade uurimine (nt Romanenko (2001) ja Yashin (2010)), aga ka katsed luua poliitilise diskursuse semiootiline mudel (Sheigali 2002).

Väitekirja 2. peatükk käsitles Laclau ja Mouffe'i diskursusetooriat. Poststrukturealistlike diskursusetooriate peamine panus poliitikavaldkonda seisneb poliitilise võimu mõtestamises hegemoonia kaudu. Poststrukturealistlikust vaatenurgast saavutatakse hegemoonia ühiskondlikult ja poliitiliselt oluliste tähistajate eduka fikseerimisega (mis saab olla üksnes osaline) konkreetsete tähendustega. Kui tähistaja eraldatakse tähistatavast, siis lisandub vabalt liikuvaid tähistajaid, mida konkureerivad poliitilised jõud püüavad osaliselt fikseerida konkreetsete tähistajatega. Näiteks diskursiivsed võitlused tähistaja *demokraatia* fikseerimise viiside üle aitavad seletada kaasaegse poliitilise maailma poliitilist semantikat (Laclau 1995: 435). See seisukoht on kooskõlas Foucault' võimukäsitlusega, mille kohaselt on võim keeruliste ja peaaegu seletamatute keeleliste

praktikate tulemus (Herrick 2001: 249). Võim on vabalt liikuv ning tuleneb diskursusest ja sulandub erinevatesse ühiskondlikesse tavadesse. Diskursused aitavad kujundada seda, kes oleme ning asju, millest saame teadlikud olla, mistõttu võim, diskursus, identiteet ja teadmised on tugevalt seotud. Foucault' kohaselt on diskursusereeglid alati olemas ja suunavad teadmisi.

Laclau ja Mouffe'i teooria ühendab endas erinevatest distsipliinidest pärit teadmisi ning Marxi, Saussure'i ja Gramsci teooriaid. See lähtub Saussure'i ideest ühiskonnatasandi struktuuri korraldusest, kuid vastupidi Saussure'ile käsitletakse seda struktuuri avatuna, kuigi see taotleb sulgemist. Laclau ja Mouffe toetuvad oma struktuurimõttestuses Derridale. Lacani psühhoanalüüsist laenavad nad idee, et üksikisik on ebatäielik struktuur, mis püüdleb täielikkuse poole. Lacani arvates on iga identiteet alati juba lõhestunud ja seega vajab see pidevaid identifitseerimisi, et tõrjuda seda kummitavat täielikkuse puudumist. Laclau ja Mouffe'i teooria kasutab Marxi ideed pidevatest ühiskondlikest võimuvõitlustest, kuid hülgab Marxi majandusliku ja klassideterminismi. Laclau ja Mouffe'i teooria kasutab Gramsci (1971) hegemoonia ehk nõusoleku tootmise mõistet, mis eeldab, et võimu tuleb artikuleerida, mitte lihtsalt jõuga kehtestada.

Laclau ja Mouffe'i teooria on käesoleva väitekirja keskne raamistik Barack Obama ja Dmitri Medvedevi retoorika analüüsimiseks. Empiirilises osas rakendatakse Laclau ja Mouffe'i teooria keskseid mõisteid (nagu artikulatsioon, elemendid, hetked, tühi tähistaja, sõlmpunkt, samaväärsus/erinevusahelad, konstitutiivne teine, konstitutiivne välisus, struktuuri sulgemine, nihestumine (ingl *dislocation*), otsus, kõnetamine (ingl *interpellation*) ja hegemoonia / hegemooniline käik). Kuna Laclau ja Mouffe'i teooria ei paku konkreetseid juhiseid põhjaliku keeleteadusliku uuringu läbiviimiseks, ühendatakse see keeleteadusele lähema KDA mõnede aspektidega, kuna mõlemal teorial on võrreldavad ontoloogilised ja epistemoloogilised eeldused (Jorgensen ja Phillips (2002: 147), Sjölander (2011), Rear (2013)).

Üks peamisi erinevusi KDA ning Laclau ja Mouffe'i teooria vahel seisneb nende diskursuse definitsioonis. KDA eristab diskursust (sh tekst, kõne, žestid ja muud semiootilised süsteemid) ja ühiskondlike praktikate muid dimensioone (nt institutsioonid, distsiplineerimis- ja karistusviisid jms), väites, et maailm koosneb nii diskursiivsetest kui ka diskursusevälistest teguritest (Jorgensen ja Phillips 2002: 16). KDAs eristatakse diskursiivseid ja ühiskondlikke praktikaid. Ühiskondlikud praktikad (nt poliitilises diskursuses) hõlmavad diskursiivseid praktikaid, mistõttu mõned lausungid muutuvad diskursiivseteks praktikateks, kui nad saavad osaks institutsioonist ja hakkavad määrama ühiskondlikke suhteid (van Dijk 1997: 14). Seevastu käesolev väitekirja kasutab Laclau ja Mouffe'i lähenemist, mille kohaselt diskursust ei saa taandada "ühiskondliku terviklikkuse üheks aspektiks, kuna see ühendab tähendust ja tegevust keerulistes keelemängudes, mis määravad meie ühiskondliku maailma" (Torfing 1999, viidatud Torfing 2002: 54). Laclau ja Mouffe ei erista ühiskonnatasandi diskursiivseid ning mittediskursiivseid elemente. Laclau ja Mouffe'i jaoks on diskursus oma olemuselt poliitiline.

See laiem teoreetiline raamistik nõuab siiski empiirilise analüüsi jaoks diskursuse keeleliste aspektide tuvastamist. Selleks pakub kasulikke meetodeid KDA. Käesolevas väitekirjas on empiiriliseks analüüsiks valitud KDA vahenditeks deiksis (Chiltoni (2004) teooria järgi) ja eeldused (Fairclough (2003) teooria järgi). Neid KDA vahendeid ning analüüsi üksikasjalikumat läbiviimist käsitletakse peatükis 3. Indeksikaalsed väljendid on keelemehhanismid, mis aitavad tõlgendajal seostada ennast kõneleja asukohaga. Chiltoni (2004) diskursuseontoloogial on kolm ristuvat telge (ruum, aeg ja modaalsus), millele paigutatakse diskursuses otseselt või kaudselt eksisteerivad elemendid. Deiktiline kese (ehk mina) asub telgede ristumiskohas ja moodustab kolme mõõtme lähtepunkti. Teisi elemente määratletakse nende koordinaatide järgi kolmel teljel. Kõnelejad paigutavad elemente ruumiteljele lähtudes sellest kui lähedal või kaugel minast neid tajutakse olevat, kasutades asesõnu, indeksikaalseid määratlusi ja tausteeldusi, nt *mina*, *meie*, *siin* (deiktiline kese), *seal*, *nemad* (ruumitelje kaugeim ots, milles asub teine). Ajateljel paigutatakse ajaloolised sündmused deiktilisest keskmest mineviku suunas, ennustatavad sündmused aga tuleviku suunas. Modaaltelg hõlmab ühest küljest kindlusastmeid (epistemoloogiline modaalsus) ja teisest küljest moraali/kohustuse skaalat (deontiline modaalsus) – vaieldamatud tõekspidamised asuvad deiktilises keskmes, kuid need, mida saab vaidlustada, on deiktilisest keskmest kaugel. Seega on tõde mina lähedal, kuid valet ja moraalset hälvet või seaduserikkumist seondatakse teisega. Kohustuste skaala on suunaline ja kajastab mina autoriteetset asendit teise suhtes.

Deiktiliste telgede mõiste kajastub Hanseni (2006) poolt sõnastatud identiteedi mõõtmetes – ruumilises, ajalises ning eetilises. Diskursused kujundavad subjekte, asetades neid konkreetsetesse piiridesse ning konstrueerides eetilisi suhteid (Hansen 2006: 41). Kuna need mõõtmed aga põimuvad, siis kasutatakse empiirilises analüüsis mõistet *ruumi-modaaltelg*, kui ruumilist ja modaalselt telge on raske eristada.

Faircloughi (2003) meetodikas tähendab mõiste *eeldused* tekstide tähendusloome varjatud aspekti. Eelduste hulka kuuluvad pragmaatikas käsitletud elemendid nagu oletused, implikatsioonid ja implikatuurid (Fairclough 2003: 40). Fairclough liigitab eeldused olemuslikeks (eeldused sellest, mis on olemas), väitvateks (eeldused sellest, mis on juhtunud või võib juhtuda) ja väärtuseeldusteks (eeldused sellest, mis on hea või soovitatav). Paljud eeldused on varjatud, kuid mõnedel juhtudel võivad teksti keelelised tunnused neid välja tuua (Levinson 1983). Näiteks saavad olemuslike eeldusi nähtavaks teha määravad artiklid ja näitavad asesõnad (ingl *the*, *ee see*, *too*, *need*, *nood*) (Fairclough 2003: 56). Väitvaid eeldusi võivad nähtavaks teha näiteks küsimused nagu „Kuidas?“ ja faktiivverbid, väärtuseeldusi sõnad nagu *aitama* (Fairclough 2003: 56). Eeldused aitavad tõlgendajal tunda ära väärtussüsteeme, millel tekst põhineb.

Kirjeldatud teoreetilist-metodoloogilist meetodit kasutati Obama ja Medvedevi poliitiliste sõnumite empiirilises analüüsis. Kuna väitekirjas pöörati tähelepanu elkdõige sellele, kuidas need kaks presidenti konstrueerisid teineteise riiki,

uuriti väitekirjas üksnes vastastikku huvipakkuvaid teemasid. Empiiriline analüüs viidi läbi järgmises viies kontekstis, mis olid olulised nii Medvedevi kui ka Obama retoorikas aastatel 2008–2012: uus strateegilise relvastuse vähendamise leping (START); raketitõrjekilp ning NATO ja Venemaa suhted; Venemaa ühinemine Maailma Kaubandusorganisatsiooniga (WTO); suhete taasalustamise diskursiivne määratlus; üleilmne tuumarelvade leviku tõkestamine (Obama analüüsis) või Euroopa julgeolekuleping (Medvedevi analüüsis). Kuna poliitiliste tekstide arv oli nendes viies kontekstis detailseks kvalitatiivseks analüüsiks liiga suur, valiti igast kontekstist kuus katkendit lähianalüüsiks. Analüüsitavate katkendite valimisel püüti hõlmata kogu kasutatud artikulatsioonide ringi. Kõik empiirilises osas olevad katkendid läbisid sama analüütilise protseduuri – analüüsiti samu nähtusi, sõltuvalt iga katkendi sisust ja vormilistest väljendusvahenditest. Nagu kvalitatiivsetele uuringute puhul üldiselt, ei saa analüüsi tulemusel teha kaugeleulatuvaid üldistusi ning järeldused puudutavad üksnes analüüsitud korpust.

4. peatükk käsitles USA ja Venemaa vaheliste suhete konteksti. Selleks, et tõlgendada tekstis olevaid vihjeid ning varjatud teavet, on vaja tunda konkreetsete sündmuste konteksti ja ka üldist sotsiaalkultuurilist konteksti. USA ja Venemaa vaheliste suhete käsitlemine lähtus enamasti allikatest, mis analüüsivad USA ja Venemaa riigi identiteedi kujunemist ning aitavad mõista USA ja Venemaa vahelistes suhetes esinevaid tõuse ja mõõnasid. Venemaa identiteedi kujunemist analüüsiti ka Lääne ja NATO (mõlemas on USA tunnuslik liige) identiteedi kujunemise kontekstis. Pärast Nõukogude Liidu lagunemist konstrueeris NATO end rahvusvahelise demokraatliku kogukonnana ning oma laienemist uute liikmete kaasamisena, kelle poliitilised struktuurid ja kultuuriväärtused langesid kokku NATO demokraatliku kogukonna omadega (Williams and Neumann 2000). Niimoodi vaigistati Venemaa protest NATO laienemise vastu. Seega jäi nõukogudejärgsel Venemaal üksnes kaks identiteedi kujundamise valikut: saada Lääne õpilaseks ja nõustuda NATO laienemisega või saada tsivilisatsioonivastaseks jõuks ja olla NATO laienemise vastu. Kuna kumbki identiteedi kujundamise võimalus parajasti ei sobinud, tegi Venemaa valiku konstrueerida ennast suurriigina, mis tegutseb oma huvide nimel.

Nõukogudejärgse Venemaa identiteedi kujunemise raskusi võib tõlgendada vaadeldes Venemaad alluva impeeriumina (ingl *subaltern empire*), mis on läbimas ebastabiilsuse ja ebakindluse perioodi (Morozov 2015). Sajandite vältel on Venemaa võtnud omaks eurotsentrilise maailmapildi, kuid kapitalismi ebaühtlase arengu tõttu, milles Venemaa osales perifeerse riigina, jäi Venemaa Lääne sotsiaalmajanduslikest institutsioonidest välja. Hopf (2012: 274) viitab Venemaale kui „poolperifeersele riigile”. Alluvana tunneb Venemaa end ohustatuna sellest, mida ta tõlgendab Lääne impeeriumi laienemisena ja tema hegemoonilise positsiooni tugevdamisena maailmas. Selle tulemusel püüab Venemaa kaitsta oma kultuuriruumi Lääne sekkumise eest (Morozov 2015: 135).

Pärast Nõukogude Liidu lagunemist säilis USAs umbusaldus Venemaa suhtes, kuna kardeti, et Venemaa võib langeda tagasi oma imperialistlikku minevikku.

Ehkki Clinton suhtus Venemaa üleminekuprotsessidesse optimistlikult ja tegi aktiivset koostööd Jeltsiniga, juhtis ta ka selliseid protsesse nagu NATO laiendamine ja läbirääkimised mitmesugustes raketitõrjeplaanides (hoolimata Venemaa vastuseisust) ning ignoreeris Venemaad Balkani konfliktide ajal. Pärast Nõukogude Liidu kokkuvarisemist konstrueerisid juhtivad USA ajalehete Venemaad nõukogudejärgse autokraatliku Venemaa narratiivi kaudu, et tugevdada USA identiteeti kodumaal ja vaba maailma juhina välismaal. Negatiivsed hoiakud Venemaa suhtes kajastasid USA hirmu autokraatlike poliitiliste režiimide ees. See narratiiv ei muutunud ka Medvedevi ja Obama dialoogi ajal (Tsygankov 2017). USA ja ka Euroopa riikide poolne usalduse puudumine ei jätnud Venemaale palju identiteediga seotud võimalusi. Seetõttu on Venemaa–USA suhted ebastabiilsed: koostöö ühist huvi pakkuvates valdkondades lubab küll mõndagi saavutada, kuid õhkkonda mürgitavad pikaajalised ärritajad nagu NATO laiendamine, raketitõrje, Putini kriitika ning neist tulenevad sügavad lahkavumused ähvardavad USA–Venemaa suhteid (Roberts 2018: 251).

Peatükkides 5. ja 6. tehtud analüüsi põhjal võib väita, et nii Obama kui ka Medvedev kasutasid rohkeid eeldusi ja konstrueerisid aktiivselt deiktulist keset ja sellega kaasnevaid koordinaate. Nende keeleliste vahendite abil saavutasid mõlemad presidendid mitmeid eesmärke. Näiteks kui Obama edendas oma üleilmse tuumarelvade leviku tõkestamise hegemoonilist käiku ja konstrueeris Venemaad põhipartnerina, siis ta konstrueeris Medvedevit ja Venemaad koos iseenda ja USAga deiktiles keskmes, mis on epistemoloogilise tõe ja deontilise õiguse lähtekohaks. Sellega paigutas Obama USA ja Venemaa koos iseenda ja Medvedeviga ruumiteljele üksteisele väga lähedale, samal ajal kui teiste riikide ning USA ja Venemaa vahel hoiti ruumiteljel varjatud vahet. Obama rääkis USAst ja Venemaast koosneva deiktilise keskmel, rääkides seega nii USA kui ka Venemaa nimel ning eeldades hegemooniat projektis, mida ta edendas. Samuti konstrueeris Obama Venemaad koos teiste riikidega samaväärsusahelas ümber tuumarelvade leviku tõkestamise sõlmpunkti, kuid sellistes samaväärsusahelates koheldi Venemaad teistest riikidest erinevalt. Selline erinevus ja samaväärsuse koosmõju oli tõhusaks vahendiks ühest küljest üksmeele loomisel ja teisest küljest USA juhtrolli edendamisel. Oma hegemoonilise käigu dünaamika kiirendamiseks konstrueeris Obama ohu ajateljel mina lähedale. Ohu enesestmõistetavust rõhutas Obama tugeva epistemoloogilise modaalsusega. See võimaldas Obamal tõsta esile USA juhtrolli asendamatust, väljendades seda väga tugeva deontilise modaalsusega. Obama konstrueeris ennast deiktilises keskmes, rõhutades enda otsustavat rolli ja oma jõupingutuste hegemoonilist olemust.

Obama kaldus olemuslike eelduste tegemiseks kasutama määravaid artikleid. Samuti tegi ta mitmeid väitvaid eeldusi, nt mingi konkreetse koostöövaldkonna piiritlemiseks. Paljud väitvad eeldused näitasid, kuidas mahasurutud vastuartikulaatsioonid andsid vastulöögi. Üheks selliseks näiteks oli USA ja Venemaa suhete artikulaatsioon külma sõjaga, mille Obama USA ja Venemaa suhete artikulaatsioon tuumarelvade leviku tõkestamisega maha surus, kuid see andis siiski vastulöögi ning kummitas Obama edendatavat hegemoonilist artikulat-

siooni. Ka väitev eeldus, et USA ja Venemaa tegelikult ei kavatsenud tuumarelvade leviku ohu kõrvaldamiseks oma tuumarelvi hävitada annab mõista, et tuumarelvad on siiski vajalikud. Seega, tuumarelvistu maha surutud artikuleerimine julgeolekuga andis vastulöögi ja kummitas Obama tuumarelvade hegemoonilist artikulatsiooni ohuga.

Obama kaldus konstrueerima varjatud erinevust Medvedevi Venemaa ja läänevastase Venemaa vahel. Näiteks pidas Obama uue STARTi läbirääkimisi õige Venemaa ja tõelise partneriga, rõhutades, et USA suutmatust uut STARTi ratifitseerida võib luua vale Venemaa. Seega artikuleeris ta suutmatust ratifitseerida uut STARTi Medvedevi poliitilise võimu kaotamisega. Obama esitas väitva eelduse, et miski võib olla kasulik mõlemale riigile (nagu uus START), kusjuures väärtuseelduseks oli, et selline olukord oli soovitatav. Käesoleval juhul konstrueeris Obama Venemaa ruumi-modaalteljel USA lähedale. Obama ei konstrueerinud Venemaad kui ühtset teist ning puudus vastandus USA ja Venemaa vahel. Pigem konstrueeris Obama õiget Venemaad, mis võib saada lääneriikide perekonna liikmeks, kui see liigub Obama konstrueeritud suunas.

Medvedev, edendades oma hegemoonilist käiku, püüdis osaliselt fikseerida tühja tähistajat „turvalisus” Venemaa välja pakutud üleilmse julgeolekuarhitektuuri ning Euroopa julgeolekulepinguga. Medvedev artikuleeris lepingut mitmekülgse koostööga Venemaa, USA ja ELi vahel; julgeoleku jagamatusega Euroopa mandril (muidu oli julgeolek konstrueeritud jagatuna); stabiilsuse ja usaldusega Euroopas (muidu olid mõlemad konstrueeritud puudevana); selgete käitumisreeglitega, ühtse probleemide lahendamise viisiga ning kokkulepetega relvastuskontrolli vahendite loomisel (eeldus oli, et hetkel neid tegureid Venemaa suhetes USA ja ELiga ei esinenud); võrdsuse ja austusega partnerite vahel (mida konstrueeriti Venemaa suhtes puudulikuna). Lepingu kaudu artikuleeris Medvedev Venemaad Euroopa julgeolekuga, konstrueerides Venemaad Euroopa suurriigina. Euroopa julgeolekuleping pidi aitama lahendada raketitõrjekilbi küsimuse, mis oli komistuskiviks USA–Venemaa ja NATO–Venemaa suhetes. Euroopa julgeolekulepingut edendades püüdis Medvedev maha suruda selle lepingu artikulatsiooni alternatiiviga NATOle. Siiski, kui Medvedev üritas kaotada seose julgeoleku ja organisatsioonidesse kuulumise vahel, esitas ta eelduse, et Euroopa mandri julgeoleku tagamiseks on NATOst produktiivsemaid alternatiive.

Oma hegemoonilist käiku edendades kaldus Medvedev konstrueerima ennast deiktilises keskmes, et näidata, et tema poolt arutatavad teemad olid talle isiklikult olulised. Paljud Medvedevi kasutatud sõnad näitasid struktuuri sulgemist ehk kõikide teiste artikulatsioonide maha surumist, edastades kõige tugevamat epistemoloogilist ja deontilist modaalsust. Medvedev andis mõista, et Venemaad takistatakse julgeoleku saavutamisel Euro-Atlandi piirkonnas ja Venemaa ühinemisel WTOga ning see hoidis Venemaa ning ELi ja USA või WTO vahel varjatud vahemaad ruumi-modaalteljel. Nagu ka Obama, kaldus Medvedev soovitud arenguid piiritlema. Näiteks kasutas Medvedev kõige tugevamat deontilist modaalsust USA ja Venemaa suhete artikuleerimiseks vastastikuse mõistmise ja ühiste eesmärkidega ning surus maha USA ja Venemaa suhete

artikulatsiooni külma sõjaga. Nii konstrueeris Medvedev USA-d ja Venemaad deiktilises keskmes ning seega ruumi-modaalteljele üksteisele väga lähedale. Siinjuures tegi Medvedev väärtuseelduse, et USA ja Venemaa suhete pidev paranemine oli Venemaale väga oluline. Seega lõi Medvedev uut mina, mis hõlmas USA-d koos Venemaaga.

Samuti oli tekstilõike, milles Medvedev konstrueeris USA-d vastasena. Näiteks rääkides Venemaa sõjaliste vahendite konsolideerimisest Põhja-Kaukaasias, konstrueeris Medvedev varjatult konflikti Venemaa ja USA vahel, paigutades USA ja Venemaa varjatult modaaltelje kahte vastasotsa. See seadis kahtluse alla Euroopa julgeolekulepingu, mida Medvedev artikuleeris Venemaa, ELi ja USA probleemideta ühtsusega. Samuti õõnestas Medvedev mitmel korral oma lausungeid. Näiteks kui Medvedev kehtas sihtkuulajaid pakutud Euroopa julgeolekulepinguga tutvuma, rõhutas ta konkreetset punkti ajateljel, selleks et esile tuua võimalike relvakonfliktide ohtu Euroopas. Medvedev konstrueeris varjatud ohtu deiktilise keskmel lähedale ning artikuleeris lahendust üksnes ühise jõupingutusega. Kasutades aga varjatud ohust rääkimisel väljendit „minu arvates” («на мой взгляд»), õõnestas Medvedev oma konstruktsiooni. Eelduseks oli, et Medvedev näeb USA ja ELi eitavat vastust ette. See võib viidata Venemaa alluvale positsioonile Lääne suhtes, mille Venemaa on aastate vältel sügavalt omaks võtnud ning mis tekitab kibedust.

Saab öelda, et nii Obama kui ka Medvedevi lausungite empiiriline analüüs näitas, et valitud keeleteaduslik meetod täidab oma eesmärgi. See meetod mitte üksnes ei näidanud iga uuritud lausungi argumentatiivseid detaile, vaid see võimaldas ka kõrvutada Obama ja Medvedevi retoorilist käitumist, nende veenmis- ja oma riigi identiteeti konstrueerimise strateegiaid, nende peamisi eeldusi konkreetsetes omavahelises dialoogis olevates kontekstides, nende peamisi implikatsioone, lausungites esinevaid konstitutiivseid ebastabiilsusi ja diskursiivseid võitlusi ning mitmeid muid aspekte.

Empiiriline analüüs näitas, et viies analüüsitud kontekstis ehitasid nii Medvedev kui ka Obama oma diskursusi teatud sõlmpunktide ümber (tuumarelvade leviku tõkestamine, julgeolek, uus START, raketitõrje, WTO, USA ja Venemaa suhete taaskäivitamine), mille kohta saab öelda, et need kujutavad endast tähenduse osalise fikseerimise ajalooliselt eelistatud tingimuslikke punkte. Nii Obama kui ka Medvedev konstrueerisid need sõlmpunktid (uuesti), artikuleerides oma diskursustes neid kindlate hetkedega. Tähenduse täielik fikseerimine (ehk diskursuse kõikide mitmetähenduslike elementide muutmise sõlmpunktidega fikseeritud hetkedeks) oli võimatu nii Obama kui ka Medvedevi diskursustes ning kummaski diskursuses oli eikellegimaa, mis jättis ruumi tingimuslikkusele ja ebastabiilsustele. Peale selle püüdsid Obama ja Medvedev diskursustes tähenduse osalise fikseerimise katses maha suruda vastuartikulatsioone, mis erinevate tugevusastmetega kummitas nende diskursusi ning isegi nihutas need paigast.

Näiteks kui Obama artikuleeris üleilmset tuumarelvade leviku tõkestamist julgeolekuga ning kõnetas Venemaad (võrdse) partnerina, siis kummitas tema diskursust Venemaa artikulatsioon ohuga. Kuigi tal õnnestus see artikulatsioon

maha suruda, kui ta veenis USA senatit uut STARTi ratifitseerima, ei suutnud ta suhete taaskäivitamise diskursusesse lõimida nende NATO liikmete hääli, kellele USA paranev koostöö Venemaaga oli fikseeritud Washingtoni lepingu 5. artikli võimaliku rikkumisega. Selle tulemusena pidi Obama USA ja Venemaa suhete parandamise raames kinnitama oma pühendumust 5. artiklile. Medvedev reprodutseeris omakorda tuumarelvade leviku tõkestamise artikulatsiooni julgeolekuga ning toetus sellele artikulatsioonile, kui rääkis Venemaa ja USA erilisest vastutusest üleilmses julgeolekus. Sellest hoolimata oli Euroopa raketitõrjekilbi küsimus nihkepunktiks Medvedevi julgeolekudiskursustes – suutmatus artikuleerida Venemaad raketitõrje sõlmpunktiga pani Medvedevi artikuleerima Venemaa julgeolekut tuumavõidurelvastumisega.

Laclau and Mouffe'i jaoks tuleneb suhe entiteetide ja identiteetide vahel nende ebatäielikkusest. Identiteedi kujunemisel saab diskursiivsuse välja võrrelda konstitutiivse välisuse struktuurse positsiooniga, mis seab minale piirid, kuid mis samas ka asub minas, nihutab selle paigast ning näitab mina võimalikkust ja ajaloolisust. Analüüs näitas seda nii USA kui ka Venemaa puhul. Analüüsitud tekstilõikudes kaldus Venemaa hõivama konstitutiivse välisuse struktuurset positsiooni Obama konstrueeritud USA, NATO ja ka rahvusvahelise üldsuse suhtes. Venemaa oli nende üksuste piiri taga, kuid mitte neist täiesti välja jäetud, olles neile väga oluliseks partneriks. Harvemini ilmnes ka see, et Venemaa, mida fikseeriti ohuga, välistati USA ja NATO konstitutiivse teisena, seades nendele selgemad piirid. Seevastu Venemaa puhul oli selge, et USA asus tugevalt minas ja nihutas selle paigast ning väga mitmel korral välistati USA konstitutiivse teisena, mida peeti Venemaa-vastase tegelasena mina identiteeti eitavaks. See väljendus ka tõsiasjas, et kogu USAle viitav Medvedevi tekstide korpus sisaldas peaaegu kaks korda rohkem tekste kui Venemaale viitav Obama tekstide korpus. Kui Obama viited Venemaale olid alati seotud konkreetse teemaga ning neid kasutati piiratud kontekstides, siis Medvedevi viiteid USAle võis leida peaaegu igas Medvedevi poolt algatatud teemas ja tema retoorika igas kontekstis.

Medvedev konstrueeris US, NATOd, Lääne, WTO ja eriti EL sõlmpunkte Venemaa identiteedi täielikkuseks soovitud entiteetidena. Siiski välistas Medvedev neid (peale ELi) kui (konstitutiivset) teist, kui mõistis, et need tõrkusid Venemaad kaasamast. Medvedevi WTO konteksti teskilõikudest oli eriti ilmne, et Venemaa, mis küll püüdis saada WTO liikmeks, välistas samal ajal WTOd kui teist, selleks et õõnestada WTO kriitikat Venemaa majanduspoliitika ja läbipaistvuse puudumise kohta.

Laclau ja Mouffe'i järgi ei ole ühelgi struktuuril keset, mis fikseeriks kõikide süsteemis olevate erinevuste tähendusi. Pigem püüab iga struktuur konstrueerida oma keset. Kui konkreetne erinevus muutub üldsuse puuduva täielikkuse tähistajaks või struktuuri keskmeks, siis tekib hegemooniline suhe, kuna erinevad poliitilised jõud püüavad määratleda seda tühja tähistajat ja artikuleerida liikuvaid hegemoonilisi sõlmpunkte omal viisil ning mõjutada seega ühiskondlikku korda. Tühja tähistaja eesmärgiks on anda konkreetsele nõudmisele universaalse esindamise funktsioon. Kuna analüüsitud tekstilõigud

keskendusid välispoliitikale, näitab analüüs rahvusvahelise üldsuse struktuuri keset, mida Medvedev ja Obama oma hegemoonilistes käikudes konstrueerisid. Obama koondas maailma ümber üleilmse tuumarelvade leviku tõkestamise ja konstrueeris rahvusvahelise üldsuse keskmene tuumarelvade leviku tõkestamist, mida ta osaliselt fikseeris julgeolekuga. Medvedev koondas maailma ümber uue üleilmse julgeolekuarhitektuuri, mida ta artikuleeris julgeoleku ja ka Venemaa abiga. Nii Obama kui ka Medvedevi lausungites on demokraatia üheks rahvusvahelise üldsuse keskmeks, mille üle on lääneriikidel (ja selle tunnusliku liikmena USA) hegemoonia. Medvedev soostus sellega oma lausungites, kuid kritiseeris siiski USA demokraatiat.

Laclau ja Mouffe'i raamistikus peab hegemooniline artikulatsioon olema vastuseisus lepitamatult vastuoluliste artikulatsioonidega, looma samaväärsed suhted ning piirialad. Obama konstrueeris Al-Qā'idaht, tuumaterroriste ja tuumarelvade arendavaid riike (Iraan ja Põhja-Korea) lepitamatult vaenuliku poliitilise leeri ehk konstitutiivse teisena. Ta artikuleeris neid entiteete samaväärsusahelas ümber tuumarelvahüüdi tühja tähistaja. Obama edendas oma hegemooniakäiku ning tuumarelvade leviku tõkestamise sõlmpunktiga oli fikseeritud ka USA asendamatu roll maailma julgeolekus. Seega võis Obama tuumarelvade leviku tõkestamise hegemoonilist artikulatsiooni integreerida ka oma teistesse projektidesse. Kuna hegemoonia on oma olemuselt ebastabiilne, tuleb seda pidevalt uuesti artikuleerida. Just seda tegi Obama järjekindlalt ja kasutades erinevaid käike.

Medvedev püüdis maailma julgeolekut fikseerida Venemaa asendamatu rolliga, edendades oma uue üleilmse julgeolekuarhitektuuri hegemoonilist käiku. Medvedevi hegemooniline käik oli algusest peale probleemne ühelt poolt USA ja ELi ning teiselt poolt Venemaa vahelise usalduse puudumise tõttu. Medvedevi hegemooniline projekt ei püüdnud selgesõnaliselt NATOt kaotada, samal ajal kui nii Obama kui ka Medvedev väitsid selgesõnaliselt, et NATO ja Venemaa vahel puudus usaldus. Medvedev välistas USA kui konstitutiivse teise, kui mõistis, et kolmepoolne koostöö on ebatõenäoline ja isegi ähvardas tuumavõidurelvastumisega. Seega kuulus Medvedevi hegemooniadiskursuses USA vastasleeridesse – asendamatu partner Venemaa, ELi ja USA vahelises koostöös ning puhas Venemaa-vastane jõud, mis takistas Venemaa täieliku identiteedi teostumist. Paljudel juhtudel esines USA Medvedevi lausungites ka kahe äärmuse vahel, Venemaa konstitutiivse välisuse positsioonil.

Selle tulemusena olid Medvedevi hegemoonilise artikulatsiooni piirialad väga ebastabiilsed (samas tekstilõigus võis Medvedev USA-d konstrueerida nii mina lähedale kui ka Venemaa konstitutiivse teisena ehk minast eemale). Medvedevi hegemooniline artikulatsioon ei püsinud stabiilses vastasseisus lepitamatult vastuoluliste artikulatsioonidega ja need kummitasid seda tugevalt. Samaväärsussuhteid, mida Medvedev lõi Venemaa, USA ja ELi vahel, kummitas USA artikuleerimine vastasena. Medvedev ei suutnud oma hegemoonilist käiku järjekindlalt edendada ega lõimida oma hegemooniasse NATO/WTO/USA kriitikat Venemaa vastu, kuna see nihutaks viimase paigast, näidates Venemaa nõrkusi ja õõnestades Venemaa artikulatsioonide asendamatu maailmavõimuna,

Euroopa riigina, asendamatu majandusena, jms ning põhjustaksid sellega Venemaa võimaliku identiteedikriisi. Seega artikuleeris Medvedev lõppkokkuvõttes otsest kriitikat külma sõjaga ja nõudis taktitunnet, mida ta varjatult artikuleeris Venemaa poliitilise süsteemi kriitika vaigistamisega. Samuti konstrueeris Medvedev USA-d kui teist, et kõrvaldada USA-d Venemaale olulistest sfääridest.

Saab väita, et Obamal löi peamiste sõlmpunktide algupärased artikulatsioonid igaks viies analüüsitud kontekstis arutatud teemaks – tuumarelvade leviku tõkestamine, suhete taaskäivitamine ja uuesti STARTist tulenevad märkimisväärsed kärped USA ja Venemaa tuumarelvastuses USA ja Venemaa suhetele, EPAA (*European Phased Adaptive Approach* [Euroopa etappidega kohandatav käsitlusviis]) Euroopa raketitõrjekilbile ning USA tugev toetus Venemaa WTO liikmelisusele. Obama otsused põhinesid sõlmpunktide erinevatel viisidel (uuesti) artikuleerimisel. Need otsused olid mitmekesised ja paljudel juhtudel algupärased. Seevastu Medvedevi puhul on võimalik täheldada toetust Obama ideedele. Fairclough mõisteid kasutades oli Medvedevi retoorika mitmel korral varjatult intertekstuaalne, sisaldades kokkuvõtet Obama sõnadest, mida peeti objektiivseks tõeks. Mõnikord oli Medvedevi retoorika ka selgesõnaliselt intertekstuaalne.

Obama ideede toetamise eest sai Medvedev vastastikku kasuliku uue START-lepingu, Obama otsuse vaadata varasem Euroopa raketitõrje kava uuesti läbi ja Obama toetuse Venemaa ühinemiseks WTOga. Medvedevi kõige erinevamad artikuleerimistavad ja otsused puudutasid raketitõrje sõlmpunkti. Näiteks oli Euro-Atlandi piirkonna julgeolekuga fikseeritud Euroopa julgeolekuleping mõeldud kas raketitõrjet kaotama või tegema Venemaast raamlepingu keskse liikme. Medvedev artikuleeris Euroopa julgeolekulepingu edu Venemaa moderniseerimisega ja poliitilise süsteemi täiustamisega. Niiviisi interpelleeris Medvedev Läänt toetama tema julgeolekut puudutavat hegemoonilist käiku.

Need Obama ja Medvedevi retoorika tendentsid kajastusid ka selles, kuidas nad konstrueerisid USA ja Venemaa suhete taaskäivitamist. Mõistest *suhete taaskäivitamine* sai USA ja Venemaa suhetes tähenduse osalise fikseerimise sõlmpunkt ning Obama artikuleeris seda kooskõlas oma üleilmse tuumarelvade leviku tõkestamise hegemoonilise projektiga. Medvedevit kutsuti neid artikulatsioone omaks võtma. Samuti artikuleeris Obama USA ja Venemaa suhete taaskäivitamist võiduga kogu maailmale. Niimoodi sai USA ja Venemaa suhete taaskäivitamine universaalse loomuse. Medvedev seevastu arvestas asjaolu, et suhete taaskäivitamine toimub, kuid ei artikuleerinud seda millegi konkreetsega, et hiljem edendada oma artikulatsiooni. Medvedev eelistas pidada kinni tava-pärasest lähenemisest USA ja Venemaa suhetes ning madalat deontilise modaalsuse taset väljendades märkis mitmel juhul, et nii Venemaa kui ka USA saaksid elada ilma suhete taaskäivitamiseta. Uue sõlmpunkti ilmudes ei suutnud ta artikuleerida seda oma konkreetsete projektidega. Medvedev kaldus siiski võtma vastu suhete taaskäivitamise artikulatsiooni USA ja Venemaa suhete paranemisega ning artikuleeris suhete taaskäivitamist Venemaa ja USA erilise

vastutusega maailma asjades ja Euro-Atlandi poliitikas. Niimoodi lõimis ta suhete taaskäivitamise oma Euroopa julgeolekulepingu projekti.

Sellest hoolimata oli Medvedevi poolt kasutatud deontilise modaalsuse tase küllaltki madal. Samal ajal püüdis Medvedev eraldada USA ja Venemaa suhteid suhete taaskäivitamisest. Medvedev tunnistas varjatult Venemaa ning USA, NATO ja lääneriikide suhete paranemise artikulatsiooni hegemoonilist loomust, kuid mõõnis USA/lääneriikide hegemooniat selle artikulatsiooni üle. Ta püüdis seda hegemooniat vaidlustada, viidates suhete taaskäivitamisele kui Ameerika sõnale ja märkides, et kuigi seda mõistet artikuleeriti sageli USA ja Venemaa suhete paranemisega, ei mõtestanud tema seda samal viisil ning kasutas mõistet pelgalt selleks, et teda mõistetaks. Medvedev vaidlustas ka NATO ja Venemaa suhete taaskäivitamise artikulatsiooni ühiste probleemidega. Kuigi väärtuseelduste tasandil oli suhete taaskäivitamine alati soovituna konstrueeritud, kaldus Medvedev eespool toodud põhjusel ennast sellest mõistest NATO ja Venemaa suhete taaskäivitamise kontekstis distantseerima.

Kokkuvõtteks võib öelda, et taaskäivitamise raames konstrueeris Obama Venemaad partnerina, et taastada USA identiteeti vastutustundliku, koostöövalmis ja asendamatu üleilmse jõuna. Seevastu Medvedev konstrueeris USA-d partnerina, et edendada Venemaa identiteeti Euroopa võimuna ning lääneriikidega võrdse ja nende poolt austatud asendamatu üleilmse võimuna. Samal ajal aga esines nii Venemaal kui ka USAs teineteise kauaaegne konstrueerimise traditsioon vaenlasest teisena, mida välistades võib USA/Venemaa saavutada oma identiteedi täielikkuse või kogeda selle selgeid piire. Nii Obama kui Medvedev reprodutseerisid nende hegemooniliste artikulatsioonide võitluse tõttu lõpuks seda USA–Venemaa suhete struktuuri. Kui Obama edendas oma USA–Venemaa taaskäivitamise artikulatsiooni, mis surus maha USA artikulatsiooni unilateraalsusega, siis pidi Obama hegemooniline artikulatsioon võitlema artikulatsiooniga, milles USA–Venemaa lähestamine nõrgendas pühendumust NATO kollektiivse kaitse põhimõttele. Seega ei saanud Obama vastu võtta Medvedevi edendatud USA ja Venemaa hegemoonilist artikulatsiooni Euroopa julgeoleku küsimustes (NATO liikmete murede arvelt). Obama edendatud taaskäivitamise hegemooniline artikulatsioon oli Medvedevile ja Venemaale vastuvõtmatu. Medvedev artikuleeris EPAAd potentsiaalse tuumavõidurelvastumisega. Seega oli läänevastane pööre Venemaa välispoliitikas juba Medvedevi ajal ainukeseks võimaluseks.

Seega võib väita, et käesolevas väitekirjas rakendatud üksikasjalik keeleteaduslik analüüs võimaldab meil jälgida hegemoonia peensusi ja varjundeid ning seda, kuidas olemuselt ebatäielikku struktuuri nõelutakse ja kuidas paigast-nihutamist välditakse, kuidas maha surutud artikulatsioonid annavad vastulöögi ning kummitavad ja vaidlustavad artikulatsiooni/lausungi/diskursuse, kuidas identiteeti ebatäieliku struktuurina konstrueeritakse, kuigi see jääb ebastabiilsustele aldiks.

Käesoleva väitekirja eesmärgiks oli Laclau ja Mouffe'i teooria rakendamine empiirilisel tasandil, kuna konkreetsete lausungite keeleteaduslik analüüs on üks viise abstraktse teooria konkretiseerimiseks. Käesolevas väitekirjas tehtud ana-

lүүs saab olla üksnes kvalitatiivne, kuna vaid lähilugemine võimaldab tuvastada tekstilõikudes olevaid vastuolusid ja ebastabiilsusi. Selline üksikasjalik analüüs oli oluline, kuna analüüsitud tekstilõikude paljusid aspekte saab tõlgendada erinevatel viisidel. Tulevikus oleks tulus kõrvutada käesoleva analüüsi tulemusi muude meetoditega saadud tulemustega.

Samuti näitas empiiriline analüüs, et rakendatud analüüsikategooriate vahelised piirid on kohati kas ähmased või olematud. Vahel oli võimatu kindlaks teha, kas mingid sõnad väljendasid epistemoloogilise või deontilise modaalsuse kõrget taset, kuna mõlemad modaalsused olid samas sõnas omavahel põimunud. Samuti kasutati analüüsis mõistet *ruumi-modaaltelg*, kuna ruumi- ja modaaltelgi oli tihtilugu võimatu eristada. Kohati oli ka raske eristada erinevuste ahelat ja samaväärsusahelat, kuna igas samaväärsusahelas kaldub olema teatud määral erinevust. Empiirilises analüüsis õõnestati mõnikord metoodika teoreetilisi aluseid. Näiteks mõnel juhul selgus Medvedevi lausungite analüüsimisel, et deiktiline kese ei olnud tegelikult epistemoloogilise tõe ja deontilise õiguse lähtekohaks, vaid allutatud hegemoonilisele võimule. Peale selle, kui nii Obama kui ka Medvedev püüdsid muuta deiktulist keset, et see hõlmaks USA-d ja Venemaad, siis tundus Venemaa ja USA ühtsus deiktilises keskmises olevat probleemne, kuna eelduste ja implikatsioonide tasandil tõmbasid kahtlustused ning konkurents need riigid ruumiteljel üksteisest kaugele.

Laclau ja Mouffe'i teooria analüütiliste mõistete kohaldamine keelelistes analüüsides väärrib täiendavat uurimistööd. Laclau ja Mouffe'i teooriat saab kasutada erinevates keeltes ja ühiskondlik-poliitilistest kontekstidest pärinevate tekstide analüüsimiseks just selle abstraktse olemuse tõttu. Käesoleva väitekirja empiirilises analüüsis kasutatud KDA meetodid on sarnaselt laialdaselt kohaldatavad, kuna olemuslikke, väitvaid ja väärtuseeldusi tehakse kõigis keeltes. Sarnaselt universaalne on deiktilise keskmise konstrueerimine ning üksuste koordinaadid deiktilise keskmise suhtes ruumi-, aja- ja modaaltelgedel.

Kuigi USA ja Venemaa suhete struktuur meenutab oma tõusude ja langustega sinusoidi, saab sellegipoolest väita, et Obamal ja Medvedevil õnnestus oma poliitilise retoorikaga aastatel 2009–12 USA ja Venemaa suhete taaskäivitamine, mis teeb sellest perioodist erilise ajavahemiku USA ja Venemaa suhetes. Taaskäivitamist võib poliitilise kommunikatsiooni kontekstis võrrelda Gorbatsõvi perestroikaga, mis on lakanud olemast päevakajaline, aga mis on kujukas vahend ühe perioodi kirjeldamiseks (Kondratyeva 2015). Siiski, „meie võime osaleda ühiskondlikes konstrueerimise projektides on alati piiratud ja mõjutatud mitmetest muudest diskursiivsetest struktuuridest, millesse oleme paratamatult kaasatud” (Browning 2003: 65). Seega, kuigi USA ja Venemaa suhete taaskäivitamine rauges püsivate lahknevuste tõttu USA ja Venemaa suhetes, on see endiselt alternatiiviks külma sõja diskursusele. Suhete taaskäivitamise periood pakub väärtuslikku materjali edasiseks akadeemiliseks uurimistööks. Käesolev väitekirja näitab, et poliitiline tegevus tugineb tõhusal poliitilisel retoorikal, mille sõlmpunktid on mitmekülgselt, algupäraselt ja järeleandlikult artikuleeritud, põhinedes nii olemasolevatel diskursustel kui ka värsketel ideedel.

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