

From Crisis to Control: Shaping Security and Constructing Threats

A Discourse Analysis of Viktor Orbán's State of the Nation Speeches in
Hungary

Word count: 10 851
Author: Ebba Avelin

Abstract

Previous research has seen populist leaders emerge globally and focus on how they change security dynamics. The field is relatively new, and the relationship between populist leaders and security issues is an ongoing debate, whether tensions create populist leaders or generate insecurity. This thesis investigates how constructions of internal and external threats change security discourses over time. From the perspective of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, the construction of threats also shapes identities, of which Orbán and Hungary are positioned differently depending on the prevailing context. With the theoretical approach of securitization theory and the discourse analysis, the analytical tools "interpretative repertoires" and "subject positions" highlight the significance of analyzing the dynamics over a more extended period as the security discourse adapts to varying constructions of internal and external threats. Analyzing Orbán's "State of the Nation" speeches demonstrates the importance of broadening the time perspective as the security discourse changes in response to threat images. The results reveal that the construction of changing and continuous threats necessitates a constant need for protection.

Key Words: Security Discourse, Viktor Orbán, Interpretative repertoires, Subject positions, Threats

Table of Content

1: Introduction	5
1.1: Purpose of this Thesis and Research Question	6
1.2: Disposition	7
2: Previous Research	8
2.1: Populism	8
2.2: Populism in Security Studies	9
2.3: Research Gap	10
3: Theoretical Framework	11
3.1: Theoretical Prerequisites	11
3.2: Security Discourse	11
3.2.1: Military, Political, and Societal Sector	13
3.2.2: Limitations	14
4: Research Design	15
4.1: Method	15
4.1.1: Discourse analysis	15
4.2: Analytical Tools	16
4.2.1: The Subject and Subject Positions	16
4.2.2: Interpretative Repertoires	17
4.2.3: Interpretative Strategy	17
4.3: Material selection	18
4.3.1: Material limitations	19
4.3.2: Validity, reliability, reflexivity, and generalizability	20
4.3.3: Ethical considerations	21
5: Background	22
5.1: The Political Case of Hungary	22
6: Results	24
6.1: 2014: The path towards a new Hungary	24
6.1.1: The internal threat	25
6.1.2: The Changing Role of the State	26
6.2: 2018: Flexible constructions of identities	27
6.2.1: The Construction of the Hungarian Identity	27
6.2.2: Defending the Hungarian Identity	28
6.2.3: The External Threat	29
6.3: 2022: A New Security Landscape - Russia, Ukraine, and the Western Balkans	31
6.3.1: A Changed Construction of Identity	32
6.3.2: Evolving Discourses of Threat and Identity	33
6.3.3: Composition of the Internal and External Threat	34
7: Concluding discussion	36
8: Bibliography	39

8.1: Previous Research	39
8.2: Material and Background	40
8.3: Theory and Method	42

1: Introduction

In security discourses, issues are presented with high drama and with the highest priority. Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde describe it as “If we do not tackle this problem, everything else will be irrelevant (because we will not be here or not be free to deal with it in our way)” (Buzan et al., 1998: 24). Orbán ended his State of the Nation speech in 2014 with “Please do not forget, if we do not control our own lives, somebody else will” (Orbán, 2014). This raises the question: What is it that Orbán considers so threatening?

In times of crisis and global uncertainty, the issue of security has become increasingly prominent in political discourse. Traditional approaches to security have generally examined military elements, but additional phenomena must be considered when security is moved to the political agenda. Social security, collective identities, sovereignty, and ideology are just a few phenomena that traditional security studies do not incorporate (Buzan et al., 1998: 1, 22-23). These discourses and dynamic processes become particularly complex in political settings, where ideological differences and social tensions exist. Incorporating security discourses to examine security phenomena and actors beyond the military sector is essential.

In the sense of a security threat, an agent asserts a need for justification of the means required to address it and grants legitimacy to those to manage it (Buzan et al., 1998: 26; Hansen, 2006: 35). Various threats and identities will thus be constructed and understood within the context in which they are located. This means that security phenomena are affected by the political actors discussing "security."

Times of uncertainty have had a knack for favoring populist leaders. Crises require strong leadership, and populist rhetorical tricks together with political strategies can thus be used to present populist leaders as the savior of this decay (Batory, 2022: 1). During the last decade, populist advances have characterized prevailing security discourses around the world (Dutta and Abbas, 2024: 1). A prominent example of this is Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán. He has been in power since 2010 and has ruled the country with a populist agenda ever since (Sükösd,

2022: 173). Sükösd describes that public speaking has been crucial in Orbán's political career, where his rhetorical strategies have framed the political agenda and contributed to the dominance he now possesses over the politics of Hungary (Sükösd, 2022: 173). His State of the Nation speeches have been one of the most recurring and successful speeches in his political career, in which he assesses the political developments of the previous year while looking ahead to what the future has to offer (Sükösd, 2022: 173).

Given their significance, these speeches provide valuable conditions for investigating how Orbán's rhetorical strategies influence constructions of threats and identities over time.

1.1: Purpose of this Thesis and Research Question

Analyzing security discourses is highly relevant to peace and conflict studies. It highlights how security discourses are constructed over time, how they can affect domestic and foreign policy, and how they can affect the related dynamics. As the world witnesses a rise of populist leaders, examining how security issues can be securitized and legitimize the exercise of power is of utmost importance. It will thus contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamic processes between security and politics. Orbán has demonstrated high relevance as a case study for examining these dynamic processes. His political agenda has had consequences for the country's relations, domestically and abroad, making it a very relevant area to investigate (Sata, 2023).

Inspired by Sükösd, this thesis aims to examine the State of the Nation speeches found in Orbán's political career and how rhetorical and political strategies construct different threats and identities. Through a discourse analytical approach with the analytical tools "subject positions" and "interpretative repertoires," this thesis aims to prove that Orbán as an actor both shapes and is shaped by the politics he pursues. Finally, this thesis strives to contribute to the prevailing scholarly field to examine how populist politics and security issues are closely interconnected. This purpose has resulted in the research question: "How have Viktor Orbán's rhetorical strategies for constructing internal and external threats evolved, and how have these strategies changed the security discourse in Hungary?"

1.2: Disposition

After the introduction, purpose, and research question have been introduced, the previous research field will be established, followed by the research gap this essay aims to cover. Then, the theoretical framework is presented, followed by the research design, the content of which covers the method, analytical tools, material, ethical considerations, and limitations. A chapter on validity, generalization, reflexivity, and reliability is also available. After that, an empirical background is introduced to provide context for the analysis. The results are then presented, followed by a concluding discussion.

2: Previous Research

This chapter introduces previous research regarding right-wing populism and the importance of understanding its relevance in situated places. It also aims to enlighten the relatively new approach of connecting securitization and populist leaders in the public eye.

2.1: Populism

This thesis is a case of right-wing populism and the discursive construction of security threats. An enormous scope of research contemplates the different approaches to understanding populism. Cass Mudde and Kaltwasser (2017) discuss the three most significant approaches to understanding populism - the discursive approach by Ernesto Laclau, the organizational approach by Kurt Weyland, and the performative approach (also known as cultural) by Pierre Ostiguy. Muller (2016) argues that a theory of populism is not comprehensive enough as it lacks coherent criteria. Regardless of the approach used to grasp the constitution of populism, common knowledge in said research is that populism in politics is on the rise. Lendvai-Bainton & Szelewa (2021) argue that populism and nationalism, alongside authoritarianism, have played an essential role in creating new governing methods. They differentiate between populism as an academic concept and as a political strategy, meaning that as a strategy, it has worked to constitute authoritarian neoliberalism in both Hungary and Poland. Ekström, Patrona, & Thornborrow discuss a new approach to understanding right-wing populist communication in a situated context for a deeper understanding of the current definition of populism. Incorporating right-wing populists' way of speaking with behavior in mediated communication, they argue that populist styles are produced in a distinct socio-cultural context. Using the discursive approach, the authors say that right-wing populist leaders' communication is performative and thus understood in its specific political and sociocultural contexts. With its focus on a micro-level

approach, the authors claim populism must be understood as a mediated interaction that previous research has been able to grasp, as well as looking at populism in the form of style in a dynamic process rather than a static sphere (Ekström, Patrona, & Thornborrow, 2018).

2.2: Populism in Security Studies

A new scope of research has witnessed a scarcity of literature on populism in Security Studies, and multiple researchers argue that the connection between security issues and populism still has a noticeable scope to fill. Magcamit (2017) and Kurylo (2022) are trying to fill this gap with different approaches to populism. Kurylo (2022) dwells on the connection between securitization and populism and how their different aesthetics are achieved in the public eye. She argues that populism and securitization are closely related to societal security. She even goes as far as claiming that securitization is embedded in populism, where populism is a specific style of securitization. She thus builds on Homolar & Scholz's work (2019), whose argument is based on the idea that populism breeds insecurity rather than vice versa. She distances herself from previous scholars, such as Magcamit (2017), who instead argue for populism as a form of securitizing act used by populist leaders. Magcamit considers populists use securitization as a channel through which a strategy is formulated (2017). Béland (2020) instead argues that the political framing of collective threats is a central aspect of populism, leading to the need to examine populism as a form of discourse rather than an ideology. Perceived threats are strategically designed to exacerbate threat images while rallying popular support to protect citizens against the constructed threat. He argues that the relationship between populism and the politics of insecurity remains unexplored and points to the importance of examining how collectively perceived threats are constructed and shaped. Wojczewski (2020), on the other hand, describes populist discourse as shaping and constructing threats through securitization.

Dutta and Abbas (2024) write about how the last decade has witnessed rising waves of populism in Europe, America, and South Asia. Unlike Kurylo and Magcamit, the authors draw more attention to populist leaders as actors, precisely the gendered ways in which populist leaders constitute security. The authors reflect upon this relationship between populism and

securitization, just like Kurylo, but more in line with the connection between populism and masculine security in their comparative study of India and Hungary. The authors implement a critical discourse analysis as they analyze speeches comparatively while incorporating new articles following the same years to gain a better contextual understanding. Following their analysis of populism, securitization, and ontological security, they argue for a masculinity crisis as a security issue based on gender roles (Dutta and Abbas, 2024). Molnár, Takács & Harnos (2020) have introduced the combination of personalization of political actions with a charismatic leader, where indirect means have led to securitization via the political discourse. The authors instead argue that the personalization of politics, where the presentation of a threat and offering protection from it is concerning security threats, and the measures taken by the government to remedy this are mutually reinforcing.

2.3: Research Gap

This essay differs from the previous field of research by examining the relationship between how security discourses construct and are constructed by threats and identities. With a particular excerpt from a discourse psychology approach in the form of "interpretative repertoires" and "subject positions," new understandings are opened up regarding the role of actors in shaping and being shaped by security discourses and how this changes over time. It also identifies how threat images and identities are related to their situational context. This finding can, in turn, examine how Orbán positions the threatened in relation to the revealed threat images. It opens up new understandings of how this construction arises and changes over time. This unique focus on discursive processes over contextual and temporal change thus contributes to new understandings of the subject. Although populism is not the basis of this essay, it will contribute to the ongoing debate around the dynamic process regarding populist rhetoric and securitization processes and thus place it in a broader context. Further findings will open up how Orbán's rhetorical tricks are both affected and affect security discourses in a politically fragmented environment.

3: Theoretical Framework

3.1: Theoretical Prerequisites

Discourse analysis combines theory and method but can also include other discourse analytical perspectives (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000: 10). This section will thus explain how the method and the theoretical framework have been divided.

According to Stritzel, securitization can be defined as a discursive process through which the intersubjective understanding is to treat said threat as an existential one, which entails processes of sociolinguistic and sociopolitical nature (Stritzel, 2014: 4). Ostermann & Sjöstedt refer to securitization theory as of a Discourse-analytical School, which combines its interest of, in their case, foreign policy, with a discursively informed theoretical structure (Ostermann & Sjöstedt, 2022: 107). Together with the argument of Buzan et al. - “The way to study securitization is to study discourse” (Buzan et al., 1998: 25) this thesis approaches securitization theory as the discursive matter with a specific security interest. The theoretical approach is hereby argued to be discursive, and the method and its analytical tools will be further explained in the following chapter of “Methods.”

3.2: Security Discourse

Security is about survival, where an issue is dramatized and presented in a matter of life or death, posing an existential threat to a referent object (Buzan et al., 1998: 21, 26). In other terms, the referent objects are; “things that are seen to be existentially threatened and have a legitimate claim of survival” (Buzan et al., 1998: 36). The authors argue that the nature of security threats and thus the acknowledgment of security justifies measures to handle it and legitimizes the use

of force (Buzan et al., 1998: 21). This theoretical framework will look closer at the political sector, the societal sector and the military sector. Buzan et al. describe two more economic and environmental sectors (Buzan et al., 1998: 22-23). Only existential threats of political, societal, and military spheres have been discovered; hence, only these have been incorporated.

Vuori argues that security can reproduce political order to renew discipline and control societies in non-democratic governance, where a nation is secure to the extent that its core values do not need to be sacrificed (Vuori, 2008: 68-69). His reasoning will thus make it easier to examine Orbán as the sole actor whose policies are the basis of prevailing security discourse. Additionally, this can help trace security issues to specific sources rather than the actual origin. This means that if there are forms of "actorize" "the other," that is, trying to emphasize that the other side is a strategic voter and not just a cog in a machine. It can thus help actors push security problems with rhetoric, such as the other side having the potential or intentions to outwit us and, therefore, push security issues forward (Buzan et al., 1998: 44).

Holger Stritzel criticizes Copenhagen School and its securitization theory as emphasizing the grammatical and semantic side at the expense of social and linguistic relatedness. His alternative framework provides better guidance in empirical analysis while leaving it to the empirical studies to work out what parts of the framework are most important, making it more context-sensitive. He argues for an externalist position in understanding security; the rhetoric regarding security needs to be related and understood in its broader discursive context from which both the securitizing actor and text (speech acts and moves) gain power (Stritzel, 2007: 358-359). Introducing both power and intersubjective formation of a threat, he emphasizes that some actors are placed in positions of power, leading to a powerful position to speak of security. This means that a speaker's success also depends on the speaker's authority, which also means that the linguistic concept of power gets a stronger anchorage in social practice (Stritzel, 2007: 373). With the contribution of Stritzel, this theoretical framework becomes more context-sensitive, and Orbán's position as a ruler is situated in a position of power.

3.2.1: Military, Political, and Societal Sector

These sectors will act as theoretical guidelines. From a traditional theory, the military sector usually refers to the state as the referent object. However, as sovereignty has become located more broadly, the security content of the state has expanded. If the state is militarily threatened, the government and civic constituents are also threatened (Buzan et al., 1998: 52). The national state could also become the referent object if internal units (such as unionists or revolutionaries) challenge the state from within. This could cast them as a threat to state sovereignty, thus legitimizing the state's use of military force to secure its monopoly (Buzan et al., 1998: 52).

The political sector often describes sovereignty or ideology as existentially threatened. The sector includes nonmilitary threats, state sovereignty, and political units other than states (Buzan et al., 1998: 141). The main referent object of this sector is the territorial state, whereas the securitizing actor is usually the government (Buzan et al., 1998: 145 - 146). State sovereignty is usually defined as “ideas,” such as nationalism or political ideology, that hold the basis of political institutions. By threatening these, one could threaten the stability of the political order and thus question the existing structure of said government (Buzan et al., 1998: 150).

The societal sector upholds large-scale collective identities as the referent object and the level of collective identities and actions taken to defend such a “we identity” (Buzan et al., 1998: 120). The identities vary over time and place, but for this framework, the term societal means communities of which one identifies (Buzan et al., 1998: 119-129). A threat against identity is thus a construction of sorts; threatening “we” contributes to constructing “us.” The most common threat to social security is migration or competition in the forms of cultural and linguistic challenges that alter the identities of “us.” In some cases, state leaders refer to identity in different settings, such as nation and identity or state and sovereignty. In today's world system - nations are included in that specter (Buzan et al., 1998: 123).

These sectors are complex, and what seems to be the threat in one can easily spill over to the next. The sectors should not be understood as ontological separate realms (Buzan et al., 1998: 168). However, they have been described separately to facilitate an understanding of the constructions of threat images and what is considered threatened in the analysis.

3.2.2: Limitations

With inspiration from Sjöstedt, this thesis is delimited to analyzing the security discourse. Looking further into whether and how aspects turn into a successful securitization is beyond the scope of this paper (Sjöstedt, 2008: 10). Therefore, the concepts of this theoretical framework that further analysis will use are the securitizing actor, referent object, and securitizing moves (part of the security discourse) and how they are developed in the empirical case.

4: Research Design

4.1: Method

4.1.1: Discourse analysis

The social constructivist perspective emphasizes that the world is a social construction; knowledge is not a reflection of reality but rather a discursive construction representing it. These representations create the reality of how we see the world (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000: 15). Events that occur on specific occasions can thus be attributed meanings based on many different perspectives or discourses. These discourses point out other possible or relevant actions, which gives a discursive understanding of social consequences. Reality and knowledge are created through language use and interaction of human actions, leading to language as a tool, rather than a neutral instrument for communication, that constitutes the social world as well as social identities and social relations (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000: 16). Different interpretations of the world form the basis of our knowledge, and the aspect of power is getting specific knowledge recognized as correct (Bergström & Ekström, 2018: 255). Multiple discourses co-occur. Halperin and Heath use the example of discourses of politics and discourses of democracies that can take place simultaneously as authoritarian politics. Still, these discourses can alter the connotations in different directions (Halperin & Heath, 2017: 338).

There is a specific criticism of the discursive field: it can not provide unambiguous descriptions of reality, as it understands reality through language. However, this thesis is not interested in the objective truth but rather in the language that creates a representation of reality and strategically uses existing discourses to describe themselves and others (Johannessen et al., 2019: 213). The thesis intends not to define a concrete picture of reality but different representations. Therefore, discourse analysis is relevant to this thesis.

4.2: Analytical Tools

The analytical framework will work as a guide to uphold the transparency of this analysis. The analytical tools will be presented in this chapter.

4.2.1: The Subject and Subject Positions

According to Foucault, the subject is produced within discourse, meaning it has no meaning outside of it (Hall, 2001: 79). In other terms, Bergström & Ekström argue that the term "subject" corresponds to a subject position. A subject does not exist independently of current discourse, and our perceptions of who we are are shaped by the different subject positions given discourse provides (Bergström & Ekström, 2018: 264). Ostermann & Sjöstedt describe that subject and object are placed in relation to one another due to the different subject positions. Through discursive mechanisms, one can analyze texts and highlight the meaning associated with the different discourse components (Ostermann & Sjöstedt, 2022: 106). As different discourses co-occur, the different subject positions can differ between the subject in hand, and multiple identities arise. For example, one person can identify as a "woman" but also a "parent," "Christian," or an "activist." These different subject positions contribute to a person's actions, which are either enabled or restricted, and are the positions through which people live their lives (Bergström & Ekström, 2018: 264). Within discourse psychology, Davies and Harré argue that positioning in a discursive process can occur in two ways. The interactive positioning, where what one person says positions another, and reflexive positioning, where one positions himself (Davies and Harré, 2001: 264). To summarize, it is not the subject of interest in the discourse analysis but rather what happens to the discourse and its connotations when different positions occur.

4.2.2: Interpretative Repertoires

This next part will use “interpretative repertoires” inspired by Wetherell and Potter (1992) from discourse psychology's perspective on discourse. Discourse psychology emphasizes individuals as both produced by and producers of discourses, in comparison to Laclau and Mouffe, who argue for actors as mainly a product of discourse, which means that actors do not uphold a specific role as they only grow important by the fully constitutive discourse of our world (Bergström & Ekström, 2018: 267; Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000: 26).

Wetherell and Potter created interpretative repertoires as an analytical tool to define “a discourse within a discourse.” They are critical of using the word discourse as a holistic concept as an overall social discourse (Wetherell & Potter, 1992: 89-90; Bergström & Ekström, 2018: 267). Instead, interpretative repertoires are building blocks to manufacture versions of actions and self-social structures in practice. They allow a way of understanding the content of the discourse and how the content is organized by analyzing the use of language by concepts, terms, and other descriptions (Wetherell & Potter, 1992: 90). The language, using these specific terms, acts as a unit to manufacture multiple versions of social structure in conversations (Wetherell & Potter, 1992: 90-91). These definitions of interpretative repertoires imply that they occur simultaneously, meaning that actors have a more significant opportunity to choose between and start from different performances (Bergström & Ekström, 2018: 267).

4.2.3: Interpretative Strategy

The interpretation strategy is hermeneutic, where social phenomena are subjectively created and discursively constructed (Halperin & Heath, 2017: 47-48). Henceforth, this thesis will assume a discourse-oriented strategy, the most common for discourse analysis. The discourse is related to the social context, where the text derives its meaning from a broader discourse (Bergström & Boréus, 2018: 34). Since the interpretations are based on the securitization theory, the interpreter-oriented strategy will also be applied, meaning that specific guidelines are at the center of upcoming interpretations (Bergström & Boréus, 2018: 32). This is summarized as being

a form of interpretative analysis, to direct attention to the interaction between the content and the context in which the material is located (Johannessen et al., 2019: 225).

4.3: Material selection

The following material selection is based on the approach of a qualitative Single-N study (henceforth a case study) (Halperin & Heath, 2017: 17). The prevailing material has been limited to a certain extent. The collection of material has followed a combination of inductive and deductive approaches to capture complex phenomena based on empirical material instead of testing hypotheses. Here, securitization theory guides the analysis (Johannessen et al., 2019: 37; Halperin & Heath, 2017: 31). The research question is thus leading in that it questions the material as part of an interaction, which is also a strong reason why the questioning is focused on how the actor creates constructions of reality and groups and identities (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000: 116).

Viktor Orbán conducts the State of the Nation speeches as an annual tradition. Until 2020, the tradition was uninterrupted, but as the pandemic struck, the speech from 2021 had to be canceled (Sükösd, 2022: 173). In his State of the Nation speeches, he assesses political developments and looks ahead at the future. The speeches attract considerable media attention and are broadcast live, followed by public discussion and reactions from political opposition. It also leads to media discussions, where newspapers, news sites, and political opposition discuss the content (Sükösd, 2022: 173). The lavish event, whose arrangement means that the speeches are widely distributed and reaches both domestic and foreign audiences, thus enhancing Orbán's influence on the political scale.

The selection involves three eras of Orbán as Prime Minister and a solid material spread to distinguish a changed security discourse. As he was elected Prime Minister in 2010, he completed his first tenure by 2014, leading to this thesis's benchmark. After that, some of the material was omitted, leading to the following selected speech in 2018, after Orbán's second tenure. Lastly, the speech from 2022 will be analyzed. This speech means that another mandate period has been completed and demonstrates an equal distribution of material. With three

speeches from three mandate periods, the aim is to analyze how the security discourse has changed. With the help of analytic tools, the construction of threats and what seems to be threatened within the security discourse will be revealed, and how Orbán positions himself in relation to Hungary will be examined.

4.3.1: Material limitations

As the speeches are the sole empirical material, the analysis can be carried out as close to the original sample as possible without incorporating the sample the media chooses to publish. There is a designated audience to whom these speeches are directed. Journalists also listen to his speeches, which may influence the prevailing discourse. Subsequently, there is an orientation that places the discourse in a context whose surroundings are both producers and products of the discourse. This is inevitable, but by excluding the selection the media chooses to publish, there is a more excellent range to analyze the material that Orbán presents and the representation of reality that is conveyed.

Discourse analyses take a long time to complete, and there are no strong guidelines on proceeding with the material collection (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000: 117). There is also a word and time limit that controls the weight of the material. With Fairclough's support, a solid analysis of great detail can only include a few texts (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000: 140), meaning that only these three speeches are included. Another factor that affects the results is the language barrier. The speeches are performed in Hungarian and translated into English before being uploaded on the official website of the Hungarian Government and the official website of the Prime Minister of Hungary. It also means that the material has been considered truthful. On the other hand, it is not very relevant whether the texts are independent or biased since the language and its constitutive role are relevant.

Some metaphors, sayings, and other Hungarian expressions might get lost in translation. However, the translation into English allows for solid and feasible analysis in that the speeches have been translated in their entirety, and what is lost in translation has not affected the investigation to the extent that it is not feasible.

4.3.2: Validity, reliability, reflexivity, and generalizability

Stritzel argues that language and speeches are always unstable and situational, and the persuasion acts differ regarding contexts. One can not generalize said conclusions in any form (Stritzel, 2014: 23). Ostermann & Sjöstedt claim that discourse analysis does not intend to generalize its results and does not put much weight on generalizability but rather to understand specific constructions of a particular case (Ostermann & Sjöstedt, 2022: 104). This thesis draws on the conclusion by Stritzel, Ostermann & Sjöstedt. It does not intend to draw any generalizable conclusions but looks at Orbán and his State of the Nation speeches as situational and context-sensitive. The ambition is thus not to generalize the result but to give one out of many possible explanations for what changed in the security discourse from Orbán's point of view.

The material has been limited to the speeches made by Orbán, and no form of news reports or social media updates have been incorporated into the thesis. Since the security discourse from Orbán's point of view is interesting, incorporating other material would weaken this thesis's validity. The analytical tools have been used throughout the thesis to concretize the structure of the analyzed material, and the tools have been collected from discursive methods from a variety of sources. They are consistently used as an anchor between theory and method to examine the discursive changes within each described theme. Throughout the results, there will be a clear structure as to what the empirical material provides and when the author makes her own interpretations. This contributes to a specific analysis that can produce new explanations for this case (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000: 123). Analyzing the current discourse on multiple occasions will strengthen this thesis's reliability and support a thorough and meticulous study (Bergström & Boréus, 2018: 40).

As described, the social constructivist approach treats the world purely as produced by discourse, which implies that this thesis is also the result of a discursive construction. This work could thus be argued to give one version of the interpreted work and not the only reasonable production (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000: 111). Reflexivity in this context means that the researcher produces material she is also investigating (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000: 28). Interpreting the texts is one of the method's strengths. Still, it inevitably leads to researchers interpreting the material differently, often based on experiences and other factors. This leads to

the material being interpreted in new ways. New observations might emerge that have yet not been observed (Bergström & Boréus, 2018: 32). A strict incorporation of both theory and method will produce legitimate results of scientific knowledge (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000: 30, and the produced results are based on the methodological and theoretical interpretation. Throughout the investigation, there will be a transparent notion of when and where interpretations are made to produce valid conclusions.

4.3.3: Ethical considerations

The empirical material has been selected from the official website of the Hungarian government, the Website of the Prime Minister, and publications of the Cabinet Office of the Prime Minister. The speeches have already been translated into English on the websites and are open to the public. The actor is also a public figure. Because of this, no ethical considerations have been taken into account.

5: Background

This background chapter will focus on the period from 1989 until Orbán became Prime Minister. This division is based on the fact that it was first in 1989 that the socialist party, the "Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party" (MSZP), led by János Kádár, gave up its monopoly and began to discuss it with representatives of the democratic opposition (Bos, 2022: 23).

5.1: The Political Case of Hungary

Hungary was considered a liberal exception among other socialist countries, a role model of successful democratic consideration and political transitions (Bos, 2022: 21). The shift from communism to democracy took place during the so-called "round-table negotiations" between representatives from the democratic opposition and the communist party to peacefully transition into a constitutional democracy, after a deteriorated economic situation that called the MSZP under the rule of Kádár into a questioning of legitimacy (Sólyom, 2020: 358; Bos, 2022: 23). The basis grew from liberal democracy, and a Constitutional Court was established as the primary legal control body to ensure that fundamental rights were preserved (Jakab & Bodnár, 2022: 52-53). These constitutional changes were based on revising the previous socialist constitution from 1949. During the negotiations, representatives agreed that this would only be a "transitional constitution" before the work towards a new constitution was started. Despite a socialist foundation, significant liberal changes were discovered, enshrined in the constitution, and proved to be a clear mark against the policies of the former socialist party. A legal system, separation of powers, and pluralism of the parties could now be discerned in line with the basic principles of liberal democracy (Bos, 2022: 24).

Several different constellations have tried to implement the new constitution after 1989. The attempts have rarely resulted in any new results but instead led to significant tensions within

the country and between the cross-border coalition between socialist parties and democratic opposition. The transitional constitution started to look like the permanent one after years of new coalition governments that could not find a compromise in their legislative period. Instead, the tensions between the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) and the Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ) grew more extensive, and in 1996, the work on the constitution ended without results (Bos, 2022: 25).

Hungary has preserved a relatively stable system despite difficulties in establishing the new constitution. In terms of stabilization and following the transitional constitution with liberal tendencies, looking closer at free elections and party system, the development, however, resulted in a somewhat paradoxical direction, leading to a gradual transfer of power in favor of the executive government, a majority-encouraging effect of the electoral system, and an unstable party system led to a decreased fragmentation of coalitions (Bos, 2022: 26-27). Since 2010, the alliance of Fidesz and Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) has been in office, with Viktor Orbán as Prime Minister, where he has remained ever since (Lorenz & Bos, 2022: 4; Bos, 2022: 21). With Orbán as Prime Minister, the parliament adopted a new constitution within his first two years, arguing that Hungary never fully adopted a new constitution which remained a constant reminder of the country's communist past (Rupnik, 2012: 133; Krekó & Enyedi, 2018: 40). The new constitution limited the possibilities for fully democratic governance which made it more difficult for citizens to go around the Fidesz-controlled parliament (Schmidt, 2023: 66). The new constitution and the illiberal turn enhanced power centrality and thus weakened the balance of power and power sharing (Bozóki, 2012: 29). Since then, the new system has focused on several institutional changes, rewriting the constitution and making modifications. The Fundamental Law of Hungary was modified to meet the expectation of ruling power by composing a constitution that represented the dominance of ruling power, making democracy sufficiently challenging to reestablish (Schmidt, 2023: 66).

6: Results

The two interpretative repertoires are inspired by Wethrell and Potter (1992) to investigate what Orbán constructs as "the Threat" and "the Threatened" and how they change throughout the security discourse. The analysis will be conducted in the order in which the speeches have been presented and performed by Orbán. First, the speech from 2014 will be analyzed, followed by 2018, and finally, 2022.

6.1: 2014: The path towards a new Hungary

In 2014, Orbán had been prime minister for four years, and in his speech, he contemplated that his first year as Prime Minister was defined by a "regime change." He describes that until 2010, the country was ruled by a government that had ruined it: "The communists came back to power, or rather the socialists, along with their sidecar liberals. They came back to power and by 2010 they had brought the country to ruin" (Orbán, 2014).

He begins by putting together communists and socialists in the same constellation as liberals. He emphasizes that the liberals in this context have no executive power and only sit on the sidelines. On the other hand, the liberals are involved in destroying the country, which also shows a strong position that if they are in power, the country will fall apart. There is a certain distancing to the previous holders of power, as well as demonstrating that during these mandate periods, neither Orbán nor his government had any influence over the ongoing development. There is an interactive positioning occurring, where Orbán positions the previous government as at fault for the development in Hungary, and thus, indirectly, a reflexive positioning takes place (Davies and Harré, 2001: 264).

6.1.1: The internal threat

Orbán describes that even before 1990, there was this view of the government in a negative sense: "...the state always embodied the servants of oppression and the invaders, and so we always viewed the state as our greatest enemy" (Orbán, 2014). The threat is thus constructed in this aspect to come from within the country, where those in power have ruined the country through their rule. Through its linguistic semantics, the state is constructed as a threat to both "the country" and "us." In the first aspect, he emphasizes that the previous government has brought the country to ruins and distances himself both in relation to the country and the "state" as rulers. The second aspect frames the state by using subject positions as "invaders" and "oppressors," which constructs the state with a negative connotation. The use of language contributes to creating the state as an enemy through these subject positions that constitute both expectations and perceptions about the state. The use of "us" and "we" bring the content of prevailing discourse closer together, where there is now a shorter distance between the repertoires "The Threat" and "The Threatened."

Incorporating the positioning of the "state" that referred to as something other than "us" could, through the theoretical framework, inform the targeted audience that the "enemy" is a natural constituency rather than the product of a series of events (Buzan et al., 1998: 44). This, in turn, places the responsibility on "the other," in this case the state, as responsible for the consequences of the previous rule. This means that the state is incorporated as a strategic actor and accountable for the threat that the country is faced with and legitimizes the last perception of threat regarding the state (Buzan et al., 1998: 44).

This is successively revealed when Orbán describes that "Things had to be put in order so we could protect ourselves against catastrophes, criminals, speculators and fraudsters, in other words against the opponents of a secure and respectable way of life." (Orbán, 2014). It can thus be interpreted based on "had" to be put in order as a legitimization of the current government to distance itself from previous policy orientation even further, as well as present said issue as of higher priority (Buzan et al., 1998: 23). Here, "we" are positioned as a homogeneous group in relation to the opponents who are positioned in terms of "criminals," "speculators," "fraudsters" and "disasters." The previous connotation of negative terms can also be interpreted, whose

comprehensive concept of opponents now has different types of subject positions. In this sense, the opponents are constructed as the opposition to a safe and respectable way of life, which can be interpreted as the current government's intent to maintain a secure standard of living.

Strategically positioned between "us" and "them" presents "the other" from which the threat "we" must be protected. It also shows that the interpretative repertoire "the Threat" is a flexible resource whose discourse is constructed in connection with a social action (Winther Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000: 114). Through its rhetorical tricks, it can, therefore, be revealed that the construction of the world in this sense has been designed to accommodate alternative versions and that the effect here produced by prevailing discourse is that the interests of one group are promoted at the expense of another (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000: 115-116).

6.1.2: The Changing Role of the State

Furthermore, the word "state" is used flexibly in the speech. About the new change of government, Orbán describes "the mandate we receive from the people to govern the country together with the people and in the interest of the people" (Orbán, 2014). The interpretative repertoires have taught us that language is a dynamic process and that a specific interpretative repertoire can not place people in pre-arranged subject positions. Instead, the subject in question can use the interpretative repertoires to negotiate how they and others should be positioned (Bergström & Ekström, 2018: 269). In this emphasis, we see a clear example of such a negotiation. The state that was constructed to be the threat from within, whose image of threat legitimized a regime change, has, in a new sense, offered a subject position of a form of government in the interest of the people. This means that the interpretative repertoire is used as a flexible resource in situation-based contexts and, in this case, varies according to the social context (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000: 114-115). This proves that the linguistic construction of the state as a threat does not in itself have power. Still, prevailing discursive change shows that language is oriented towards action and underpinned by a will to achieve a purpose (Bergström & Ekström, 2018: 268). The interpretative repertoire is thus an available

resource that is used contrastingly (Wetherell & Potter, 1992: 93). It proves that language constitutes a meaning of the word "state" that changes in the discourse.

He finishes his speech by saying, "Let us show that we will follow our own path. Please do not forget, if we do not control our own lives, somebody else will." (Orbán, 2014). By emphasizing "our own path" while at the same time highlighting that we must not forget, it can be interpreted that Orbán reflexively positions himself as part of the people, and again distancing himself from what he has seen during his political upbringing and what is at stake. This is thus also an interpretation that he implies that together with the people, they face self-determination or determination by the political opposition.

6.2: 2018: Flexible constructions of identities

6.2.1: The Construction of the Hungarian Identity

It has been eight years since Orbán was elected prime minister and four years since the previous speech. The speech is permeated by the focus on how the Hungarian identity, culture, and independence must be maintained not to be lost. When Orbán turns to the vision of the future, he describes, "you know me well..." (Orbán, 2018) and "this is all I can offer you" (Orbán, 2018). In that, he describes that "I" can offer "you," a transparent form of both reflexive and interactive positioning (Davies and Harré, 2001: 264) takes place, where he, as a central actor and leader, takes responsibility for what the future may offer. He then describes, "I believe that we Hungarians have a future if we remain Hungarian: if we cultivate the Hungarian language, defend our Christian and Hungarian culture, and preserve independence and Hungarian freedom." (Orbán, 2018). By describing that Hungarians have a future if we remain Hungarian, he indicates that a particular responsibility is assigned to the Hungarian people to take care of the Hungarian identity. He describes that there is only a future if we remain Hungarian, which can be interpreted as a threat to this identity, where it must be *defended* while preserving independence and Hungarian freedom.

Identity is constructed through the available discursive resource, which means that identity creation is relational and unstable and is constructed in the process of one's self-image and that of others (Bergström & Ekström, 2018: 256). Here, it can then be interpreted that there is a closure, a process whose form involves choosing one version of the "I" over other versions. This attachment is temporary in that it is based on a notion of a common identity, which can, in turn, be changed and replaced by other attachments (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000: 107-108). This specific Hungarian identity can thus only be possible in relation to other forms of identities whose current identity is not considered to be (Bergström & Ekström, 2018: 256-257). However, Orbán's rhetoric constructs here that there is a danger to the Hungarian identity, whose specific characteristics are temporarily locked into the Hungarian identity as a whole. It is implied that the threat comes from a potential loss of national identity, cultural values, and independence. In this context, the construction of "we" is called societal uncertainty in the societal sector. It exists when societies define a development as a threat to their survival. Thus, the referent object is the Hungarian collective identity that risks being lost. There is an existential threat against the identity (Buzan et al., 1998: 123). However, there is still no clear connection to where this apparent threat appears, so continued analysis will examine this further.

6.2.2: Defending the Hungarian Identity

Orbán describes a quest to achieve important goals, in the form of independence, defense of borders, and migration, in times of discord and polarization, which divides the speech in a new direction. He mentions that the Hungarian case is guaranteed to win and that, among other things, courage, experience, and battle-hardened troops are in place. Here, the earlier threat that had not been clearly described reveals itself. There is a change within the interpretative repertoire "the Threat"; he says that the most crucial goal is now about defense and borders, independence, and migration. In the rhetoric used in Orbán's speech, political and national threat images are now brought together, where the threat from within (from the political opposition) and external aggression become challenging to distinguish. He emphasizes that "battle-hardened troops" are in place, interpreted as the country's territorial integrity that must be protected against external threats and aggression.

Furthermore, he describes that "...in these dangerous, migrant-battered times there is a national party which has seen better days, and which has now come up with the idea that Islam is the last hope for humanity." (Orbán, 2018). What is happening is a somewhat diffuse construction of said threat, where the danger to Hungarian identity comes both from outside and within the country and intertwines that it is mainly Hungarian identity that risks disappearing. Like the speech from 2014, he reminds the audience that Hungary deserves better and that the country is in the mood for a changed opposition, not a change of government (Orbán, 2018). Pointing to an opposition that advocates for not sharing the same political values in dangerous times creates an image that the political opposition threatens national identity and stability.

6.2.3: The External Threat

Orbán states that nowadays, it is not only the Hungarian identity facing a threat, but it also extends to a European Christian culture. He positions Hungary as a clear defender of maintaining the Christian and Hungarian identity because it risks being lost. The main threat is thus presented as migration, which he refers to as dangerous and hanging like dark clouds over Europe. Primarily, he positions Islam against Christianity, which is revealed in the emphasis on;

“Furthermore, the majority of immigrants will arrive from the Islamic world. If everything continues in this way, then the cities of Europe will clearly have majority Muslim populations – and London will not be an outlier, but a pioneer. If things continue like this, our culture, our identity and our nations as we know them will cease to exist. Our worst nightmares will have become reality. The West will fall, as Europe is occupied without realising it.” (Orbán, 2018).

Here, Hungarian culture and identity are positioned in relation to European identity, which is interpreted as a severe threat to Hungarian security and the whole of Europe. Thus, a new form of temporary closure in identity creation contributes to a common European identity. The Threat is then constructed to erase this identity by saying that the West will fall.

It can indirectly be interpreted as meaning that if Hungary follows in the footsteps of the rest of the West and eases its migration policy, the country will also fall. It also shows the dramaturgy of elevating the threat from politics to a security problem and describes what will

happen if the problem is not dealt with. It can thus be interpreted as legitimizing the defense of the borders to deal with migration flows, that is, the extraordinary measures to limit the threat (Buzan et al., 1998: 26).

The construction of "we" is referred to in the societal sector as societal uncertainty. It exists when societies define a development as a threat to their survival. The referent object is thus the Hungarian identity that risks being lost. The different sectors within the theory overlap in that within the governmental level, this form of threat construction can result in strict border surveillance or legislation, leading to the closely interconnected political and societal sectors. In contrast, the interpretative repertoire "the Threatened" appears central within the societal sector in this discourse, in that "we" in terms of identity are threatened (Buzan et al., 1998: 123). Orbán's construction of a migration threat has political consequences, and he also describes that national sovereignty can be challenged and lead to instability (Buzan et al., 1998: 141).

Within this discourse, there is also a use of language that is closely connected with the military sector, although not a military threat (Buzan et al., 1998: 57). He uses terms of defending our borders, the construction of fences, as well as both a physical and legal border defense, where migration is posed as a security issue that requires the protection of national borders.

“Facing that direction we are the last country in Latin – or Western – Christianity. We are standing firm. Our defence lines are sufficient to hold back the largest flows.” (Orbán, 2018). Through this description, Hungary and Orbán are positioned as the sole defenders of Christianity. As previously described, if the migration flow continues, "the West will fall." It can, therefore, be interpreted as legitimizing strengthening the defense of national security and independence. Here, another example has been noticed to show how the various interpretative repertoires and subject positions of the security discourse are used situationally and flexibly. Hungary is positioned both reflexively and interactively in that the reflexive positioning highlights Hungary as a defender of sovereignty and national security and, at the same time, through interactive positioning, highlights Western Europe, whose migration policy threatens Hungary's national identity, and is thus positioned as the enemy of Hungarian and Christian identity.

It shows that the closures in identity creation are temporary, where the description of external threats (migration) creates divisions in the temporarily locked Hungarian identity. A

connection to the theoretical approach is that language and practice are performative instead of constative and help shape the contextual environment and the discursive content. This means that threat and security are malleable constructions and threat images formed in the discursive environment rather than merely reacting to an objective situation. Here is thus a clear example that anything and anyone can be constructed as a threat (Sjöstedt, 2024: 174).

6.3: 2022: A New Security Landscape - Russia, Ukraine, and the Western Balkans

Orbán describes that due to the progress of the pandemic, the defense had to be reorganized, and the Hungarian state has managed this well, which indicates a changed attitude towards the state. The state has thus gone from being described as the greatest enemy to acting as an extended hand by the people to the people, to now discussing a position between "you" as the Hungarian people and "the state" as the Hungarian government. It can also be interpreted as a changing aspect of power between the people and the state where the construction of the state is in a position of power and has the right to speak out on specific issues. It legitimizes certain knowledge and de-legitimizes others, which points to the state having the right to speak with authority (Bergström & Ekström, 2018: 255, 258). It further leads to Orbán describing that "...Hungary has been attacked not only by the virus but also by the Left, in the hope of bringing down the Government." (Orbán, 2022). There is a continued internal threat image of the political left, which maintains a solid common thread. However, the state's role has been reconstructed throughout the speeches. By describing that Hungary has been attacked by both viruses and by the left in the same sentence, it is interpreted to bring both in a negative connotation. There is an association of both in a negative sense whose meaning harms the government and the country.

Furthermore, Orbán discusses the tension between Russia and Ukraine and describes Hungary as being surrounded by unstable regions, Ukraine, and the Western Balkans, including the United States, the EU, Russia, and Turkey. Here, the interactive positioning takes place in the form of describing the Western Balkans, Ukraine, and the countries and organizations as unstable

and "all this on our borders" (Orbán, 2022), which is interpreted as a distancing from the unstable situation that is now territorially close to Hungary. Thus, the threat is now on our borders, and the tension has come closer to Hungary, indicating that the rearming of military strength and defense is of utmost importance. It leads to clear relevance to the military sector, where there is now a military threat whose instability is close to "our" borders. It requires the rearmament of the defense and military to ensure national security. There are thus military security issues where the government's ability to maintain itself against, in this case, external military threats is framed on the security agenda (Buzan et al., 1998: 50).

Orbán describes that war must be prevented as a matter of utmost importance. A future scenario is described in the form that in the event of war, refugees will arrive from Ukraine "in their hundreds of thousands – even millions" (Orbán, 2022) and fundamentally change Hungary's political and economic situation. He describes this as "We are working for peace, but of course the designated state bodies have begun to prepare. We also have a playbook and an action plan in the event of war." (Orbán, 2022). The military threat is described in terms of immediate and geographical proximity, which legitimizes ensuring national security and defense. It suggests that the construction of the threat in this sense includes migration, politics, and military, which threaten the Hungarian identity on several fronts. In turn, it also leads to the interpretation that prevailing unstable situations highlight the state as necessary to ensure Hungarian sovereignty and national borders. It indicates the dynamic construction process, wherein social identities are formed within specific discourses, and the relationship between the people and the state is renegotiated through language and situation-based context. Both the linguistic construction of external and internal threats have thus also placed the state under threat, where political opposition is highlighted as wanting to overthrow the incumbent government, and external threats legitimize military rearmament, which brings increased responsibility to the state.

6.3.1: A Changed Construction of Identity

"...Europe's military strength must be at least comparable to that of Russia's; until it is, the security of the European peoples will be decided not by us Europeans..." (Orbán, 2022). Here,

Orbán and Hungary are positioned as part of the European identity, and he describes them as "us" Europeans and emphasizes that Hungary is also included in this power imbalance. However, Orbán stresses the importance of strengthening the national army as "...no ally in the world will take our place in defending our homeland." (Orbán, 2022). He acknowledges that to uphold the safety of Hungarian security and strengthen the military forces in times of war, Hungary must support the development of European military capabilities and joint defense forces (Orbán, 2022). It shows that, depending on the threat, Hungary as a country and Hungary as an identity are constructed differently, which leads to flexible positioning within the interpretative repertoires.

Another threat image is considered here, which shows identity as a discursive construction. There is a double positioning of both "Hungary as an identity" and "Hungary as a country" within the interpretative repertoire "The Threatened." Emphasizing the importance of securing national independence and, at the same time, being part of military cooperation shows that the interpretative repertoires are used flexibly and are both created and maintained by particular discourses (Bergström & Ekström, 2018: 280) and do not have a static meaning within the security discourse.

6.3.2: Evolving Discourses of Threat and Identity

Orbán's construction of migration as a threat image also follows previous trends in this speech. Throughout, Orbán describes that migration threatens Christian European identity and that this identity will be lost if migration is not stopped at the borders. He positions Brussels, nation-states, experts, and advisers as "they" and as what Hungary must be protected from, where the vision does not align with Orbán's. It leads to the reflexive positioning, where he means that the "threat," that is, "them," tries to make "us" accept "invasion - the flooding of Europe - as a nightly state..." (Orbán, 2022) and describes the migration policy as; "In some places they have already succeeded." (Orbán, 2022). Other European countries are thus positioned interactively, where Italy, France, and Germany have fallen victim to the threatening migration policy. It can thus be interpreted that Western Christianity has already been lost in some countries, according to Orbán. Because of this, "Without the Orthodox world, without an alliance with Eastern

Christians, we are unlikely to survive" (Orbán, 2022). The interpretative repertoires "the Threat" and "the Threatened" are used flexibly in the prevailing discourse and tend to open the boundaries for a changed content meaning. Previous descriptions have reported that an interpretative repertoire does not include any power but is a helpful resource. Here, they are used flexibly with the help of the different subject positionings.

This leads to the interpretation that the closure, whose temporary locking has positioned Hungary as part of the Western European identity, has now been dissolved. He describes the countries and national identity separately by saying, "... the Germans have declared themselves to be a country of immigrants" (Orbán, 2022). It shows that interpretative repertoires are flexible resources, and "the Threatened" still results in Christian Europe. Still, Western Christian Europe can no longer ensure survival without this alliance with Eastern Christianity.

Identities are constructed discursively, and Hungary is positioned differently depending on the available discourses. There is here room for action between "us" and "them," which also means that the interpretative repertoires "the Threat" and "the Threatened" are constantly redefined and positions Hungary as the sole defender of the Christian identity in relation to Western Europe. The Western countries discussed here can be interpreted as part of that threat and something the Hungarian people must be protected from, and no longer part of an alliance that worked to maintain the homogenous Christian European identity. He tends to fluctuate in the linguistic construction of identity, the meaning of which is dependent on migration and its politics.

6.3.3: Composition of the Internal and External Threat

Through a dynamic and adaptive security discourse, the changing role of the state has been revealed whose task to keep Hungary safe is at risk of being lost. "Please keep in mind that the Hungarian lines of defence will only remain on the border for as long as we are in government." (Orbán, 2022). It can be interpreted as external and internal threats constructed here with an inevitable end; the Hungarian identity will be lost as there is no turning back. "And once they have let them in, that act cannot be undone. We will have such an "open society" that even our grandchildren will groan under it - if they are still here at all." (Orbán, 2022). Here, the state is

reinforced as the primary defender of national identity and security, whose rhetoric positions the government as the sole defender of these interests. An interpretation is made that the use of language is oriented towards action and based on wanting to achieve a specific purpose (Bergström & Ekström, 2018: 268). There is a strategic use of the current political situation for a flexible use of identities and threat images to emphasize the temporary power the government holds and the importance of their remaining in power for the security of Hungary, bringing together the consequences of both the internal and external threats.

7: Concluding discussion

This thesis has examined the following question: “How have Viktor Orbán's rhetorical strategies for constructing internal and external threats evolved, and how have these strategies changed the security discourse in Hungary?”

The security discourse in Orbán's State of the Nation speeches has become more explicit and comprehensive. The result shows that changing and continuous threats in prevailing security discourses are woven into a joint one. Depending on the different subject positions, they are also extracted into different ones. The internal threat, discovered within the interpretative repertoire as "the Threat," is the political opposition presented continuously throughout Orbán's speeches. However, it changes through his use of the word state. In the past, the state, in the form of political leadership (whose policies did not coincide with those of Orbán), was presented as a *threat* until later findings showed that the political opposition *threatened* the state and the current government. It thus indicates a changed threat picture within the security discourse, but there is a continuous internal one within Hungary. However, the results suggest that *the way in which* the threat is constructed is changing. The external threat was revealed relatively clearly for the first time in 2018, which changed the security discourse. Here, the construction of migration is seen as a security threat that threatens Hungary as a country and Hungary as an identity. This portrayal has been discovered within the interpretative repertoire "The Threatened," where Hungary as a country and Hungary as an identity are distinguished as two distinct constructions within the interpretative repertoire (Wetherell & Potter, 1992: 91). In contrast, the external threat is woven into the internal threat, where Orbán describes that the political opposition wants to its advantage to see that migration and immigration are secured, a policy that indicates a continued threat from the political opposition. The internal threat and the external threat are incorporated into the same discourse.

Some additional actors prevail in Orbán's speech, which alters the security discourse. In the speech from 2022, the military threat is discussed in the form of the tension between Ukraine

and Russia while he positions Russia and the majority of other states and organizations as unstable regions. There is also an ongoing discourse around Russia as an individual actor. The significant change that is assimilated here is that he constructs identities relationally and culturally. When the tension is discussed concerning Ukrainian refugees, a similar connotation is used as when he talks about immigration, even though the subject positioning “refugees” is new in his speech.

The external threat, a military threat close to the Hungarian territorial border, pushes the security discourse in a different direction. He positions Hungary as part of an overall European identity, describing Russia's military strength as more significant than Hungary's. Therefore, the European composite defense force must continue to be supported. In this, however, the continuous construction of the threatened is revealed, where it is of the utmost importance to ensure the national defense simultaneously, which is a sign of the unstable identity constructions that are constantly remade and reformulated within the security discourse. It also indicates that his policy continues to centralize Orbán as a product of the discourse where his position as a defender safeguards the Hungarian identity. In contrast, the prevailing security discourse reinforces the defense of territorial borders.

The constructed security discourse shows a high complexity whose outcome strongly depends on contextual situations. On the one hand, the security discourse within the military sector has thus changed further in how Orbán positions the government to the people, political opposition, and Hungary to external threats. On the other hand, the results show that Orbán's rhetoric used military metaphors before 2022, again showing the dynamic and complex process the sectors originate from and how they continuously overlap and enter each other. At the same time, the interpretative repertoires exhibit that the societal and political sectors are woven together and can not be analyzed separately in prevailing empirical material. The contextual background achieved with the help of Stritzel's approach displays that the rhetoric around security needs to be related and understood in a broader discursive context where actors and speech acts gain their power (Stritzel, 2007: 367). This theoretical approach has thus been revealed in the analysis, as well as the importance of specifying actors who can talk about security and its placement in a position of power (Stritzel, 2007: 369). This discourse suggests that these dynamics influence Orbán.

Constructing Hungarian identity under continuous threat legitimizes Orbán's measures to protect the nation. The connection thus differs from the previous research and shows that dynamic processes in the form of security discourses are changeable and must be studied over time. The relationship between whether populism breeds insecurity or vice versa is mutually constitutive. Orbán's political rhetoric depends on constructing a continuing threatening image against the nation to strengthen his position as a central actor and leader for the country. Still, Orbán, as an actor, is involved and shaped by the discourse he participates in. It is evident in the analysis that continuous reinforcement of threats bolsters Orbán's position as a leader. He constructs the existential threat to the Hungarian identity and the country's borders of being eroded in the event of political opposition gaining power as well as admitting migrants.

Furthermore, findings have been discovered that have yet to be brought up. It has been under the interpretation that its discovery has not been under an *existential* threat or that the dramatic production has not picked it up from a political agenda to a securitized agenda. As it has now been two years since the speech's appearance, it would be relevant for further research to investigate how these desirability discourses have changed with even more situations that can guide Orbán's policies for the beneficial purpose.

8: Bibliography

8.1: Previous Research

- Béland, D. (2020). Right-Wing Populism and the Politics of Insecurity: How President Trump Frames Migrants as Collective Threats. *Political Studies Review*, 18(2), 162–177.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1478929919865131>
- Dutta, S., & Abbas, T. (2024). Protecting the people: populism and masculine security in India and Hungary. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 1–23.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13569317.2024.2337181>.
- Ekström, M., Patrona, M. & Thornborrow, J. (2018). Right-wing populism and the dynamics of style: a discourse-analytic perspective on mediated political performances. *Palgrave Commun* 4, 83 . <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-018-0132-6>.
- Homolar, A., & Scholz, R. (2019). The power of Trump-speak: populist crisis narratives and ontological security. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 32(3), 344–364.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09557571.2019.1575796>.
- Kurylo, B. (2022). The discourse and aesthetics of populism as securitisation style. *International Relations*, 36(1), 127–147. Sage Publications Ltd.
<https://doi-org.ludwig.lub.lu.se/10.1177/0047117820973071>.
- Lendvai-Bainton, N., & Szelewa, D. (2021). Governing new authoritarianism: Populism, nationalism and radical welfare reforms in Hungary and Poland. *Social Policy & Administration*, 55(4), 559-572. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spol.12642>.
- Magcamit, M. (2017). Explaining the Three-Way Linkage between Populism, Securitization, and Realist Foreign Policies: President Donald Trump and the Pursuit of 'America First' Doctrine. *World Affairs*, 180(3), 6–35. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26386896>.
- Molnár, A., Takács, L. & Harnos, É. (2020). "Securitization of the COVID-19 pandemic by metaphoric discourse during the state of emergency in Hungary", *International Journal of*

Sociology and Social Policy, Vol. 40 No. 9/10, pp. 1167–1182.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-07-2020-0349>

Mudde, C., & Kaltwasser, R. C. (2017). *Populism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York. Online edn, Oxford Academic, 23 Feb. 2017.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/actrade/9780190234874.001.0001>.

Müller, J. (2016). *What Is Populism?* University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/lund/detail.action?docID=4674419>.

Wojczewski T. (2020). ‘Enemies of the people’: Populism and the politics of (in)security.

European Journal of International Security. Published Online by Cambridge University Press. 2020;5(1):5-24. doi:10.1017/eis.2019.23

8.2: Material and Background

Batory, A. (2022). More Power, Less Support: The Fidesz Government and the Coronavirus Pandemic in Hungary. *Government and Opposition*, pp. 1–17. doi:10.1017/gov.2022.3

Bos, E. (2023). Functional Deficiencies of Democracy and Instrumentalization of Democratic Procedures in Hungary. In: Bos, E., Lorenz, A. (eds) *Politics and Society in Hungary*. Springer, Wiesbaden. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-39826-2_2. Pp: 21–49.

Bozóki, A. (2013). The Transition from Liberal Democracy: The Political Crisis in Hungary. *Mediations. Marxist Literary Group*. Vol. 26 Issue 1/2, 29-51

Jakab, A., & Bodnár, E. (2023). The Agony of a Young Constitutional Democracy. The Hungarian Constitution’ 1989 to 2019. In: Bos, E., Lorenz, A. (eds) *Politics and Society in Hungary*. Springer, Wiesbaden. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-39826-2_3. Pp. 51 - 66.

Krekó, P., & Enyedi, Z. (2018). Explaining Eastern Europe: Orbán's Laboratory of Illiberalism. *Journal of Democracy* 29(3), 39-51. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2018.0043>.

Lorenz, A., Bos, E. (2023). ‘(De-)Democratization, Party Competition and Structural Constraints in Hungary.’ In: Bos, E., Lorenz, A. (eds) *Politics and Society in Hungary*. Springer, Wiesbaden. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-39826-2_1. Pp: 1 - 20.

- Orbán, V. (2014). "Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's State of the Nation Address." *Website of the Hungarian Government*. Kormany.hu. Retrieved from:
<https://2010-2014.kormany.hu/en/prime-minister-s-office/the-prime-ministers-speeches/prime-minister-viktor-orban-s-state-of-the-nation-address>
- Orbán, V. (2018). "Viktor Orbán's State of the Nation Address." *About Hungary*. Abouthungary.hu. Retrieved from:
<https://abouthungary.hu/speeches-and-remarks/viktor-orbans-state-of-the-nation-address>
- Orbán, V. (2022). "Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's State of the Nation Address." *The Website of the Prime Minister*. Ministerelnok.hu. Retrieved from:
<https://2015-2022.miniszterelnok.hu/prime-minister-viktor-orbans-state-of-the-nation-address-5>
- Rupnik, J. (2012). Hungary's Illiberal Turn: How Things Went Wrong. *Journal of Democracy*, 23(3), 132–137.
- Sata, R. (2023). Performing crisis to create your enemy: Europe vs. the EU in Hungarian populist discourse. *Frontiers in Political Science*, Vol 5. Frontiers Media S.A.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpos.2023.1032470>
- Schmidt, A. (2023). 'Illiberal Turn in Hungary.' In Zięba, R. (eds) *Politics and Security of Central and Eastern Europe*. Contributions to Political Science. Springer, Cham.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-16419-4_4. Pp: 57–82.
- Sólyom, L. (2020). 'The Constitutional Court of Hungary.' In Armin von Bogdandy, Peter Huber, and Christoph Grabenwarter (eds). *The Max Planck Handbooks in European Public Law: Volume III: Constitutional Adjudication: Institutions*. edn, Oxford Academic. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198726418.003.0008>. Pp: 358–446.
- Sükösd, M. (2022). 'Victorious Victimization: Orbán the Orator—Deep Securitization and State Populism in Hungary's Propaganda State.' In: Kock, C., Villadsen, L. (eds) *Populist Rhetorics. Rhetoric, Politics and Society*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. Pp. 165-185.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-87351-6_7

8.3: Theory and Method

‘ ’

- Bergström, G & Boréus, K.(2018). ‘Samhällsvetenskaplig text- och diskursanalys.’ In Boréus, M & Bergström, G. *Textens makt och mening*. (red). Fourth Ed. Studentlitteratur AB, Lund. S. 17 - 45.
- Bergström, G & Ekström, L. (2018). ‘Tre diskursanalytiska inriktningar.’ In Boréus, M & Bergström, G. *Textens makt och mening*. (red). Fourth Ed. Studentlitteratur AB, Lund. S. 253 - 301.
- Boréus, K. (2015). ‘Diskursanalys.’ In Ahrne, G & Svensson, P. (red). *Handbok i kvalitativa metoder*. Stockholm. Liber AB. Pp. 176-183.
- Boreus, M & Bergström, G. (2018). *Textens makt och mening*. (red). Fourth Ed. Studentlitteratur AB. Lund.
- Buzan, B, Wæver, O, Wilde, de J. (1998). *Security: A New Framework For Analysis*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner.
- Davies, B & Harré, R. (2001). ‘Positioning: The Discursive Production of Selves.’ In Wetherell, M., Taylor, S, & Yates, S J. *Discourse Theory and Practice*. SAGE Publications. Pp. 261-271.
- Hall, S. (2001). ‘The Spectacle of the “Other.”’ In Wetherell, M., Taylor, S, & Yates, S, J. *Discourse Theory and Practice*. SAGE Publications. Pp. 325-344.
- Halperin, S., & Heath, O. (2017). *Political Research: Methods and Practical Skills*. Oxford University Press.
- Hansen, L. (2006). *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*. New York. Routledge.
- Jørgensen, M., & Phillips, L. J. (2002). *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*. SAGE Publications Ltd, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781849208871>.
- Johannessen, A., Tufte, A., P., & Christoffersen, L. (2019). *Introduktion till Samhällsvetenskaplig Metod*. Second Ed. Stockholm. Liber AB.

- Ostermann, F. & Sjöstedt, R. (2022). 'Discourse Analysis and Discourse Theories.' In Mello, P & Ostermann, F. *Routledge Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis Methods*. Routledge. Pp: 101-116.
- Sjöstedt, R. (2019). Assessing Securitization Theory: Theoretical Discussions and Empirical Developments. In M. Butler (Ed.), *Securitization Revisited: Contemporary Applications and Insights*. Routledge Critical Security Studies. Routledge. Pp. 28-46.
- Sjöstedt, R. (2008). Exploring the Construction of Threats: The Securitization of HIV/AIDS in Russia. *Security Dialogue*, 39(1), 7–29. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26299661>
- Sjöstedt, R. (2024), 'Foreign Policy Analysis and Securitization.' In Juliet Kaarbo, and Cameron G. Thies (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis*. Oxford Handbooks. Oxford University Press. Online ed, Oxford Academic. Pp: 172–188. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198843061.013.10>
- Stritzel, H. (2007). Towards a Theory of Securitization: Copenhagen and Beyond. *European Journal of International Relations*, 13(3), 357-383. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066107080128>
- Stritzel, H. (2014). *Security in Translation: Securitization Theory and the Localization of Threat*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Vuori, J. A. (2008). Illocutionary Logic and Strands of Securitization: Applying the Theory of Securitization to the Study of Non-Democratic Political Orders. *European Journal of International Relations*, 14(1), 65-99. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066107087767>
- Wetherell, M., & Potter, J. (1992). *Mapping the language of racism. Discourse and the legitimation of exploitation*. Columbia University Press, New York.
- Winther Jørgensen, M., & Phillips, L. (2000). *Diskursanalys som teori och metod*. Studentlitteratur AB, Lund.