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Reconciliation: Reproducing the Status Quo?

A Critical Discourse Analysis on the Politics of Reconciliation in Canada

Gerit Judith Rebekka Olschewski

Department of Global Political Studies
Peace and Conflict Studies
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Supervisor: Ivan Gusic
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Abstract

This study examines how the discourse of reconciliation in Canada's settler-colonial setting is constructing the identity of Indigenous populations and their actions of protest in the wake of the Wet'suwet'en conflict in February 2020 and what this prescribes for the relationship with the government and the Canadian population. Using the combination of Fairclough's critical discourse analysis and postcolonial theory of othering in a settler-colonial frame, two speeches by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau were selected to explore an underlying colonial discourse in the politics of reconciliation in Canada. The findings of the analysis show that Indigenous peoples are presented as negative actors, impacting the Canadian population and as unwilling partners in the government's self-glorified commitment to reconciliation. The consequence of this representation is the reproduction of the colonial "Other," which poses a paradox to understanding reconciliation as a framework to sustainable, long-lasting peace, and dismisses Indigenous alternatives to reconciliation between the two sides.

Key words: Critical Discourse Analysis, Settler Colonialism, Reconciliation, Indigenous, Canada

Table of contents

Abstract ..... **I**

1 Introduction **1**

1.1 Research Problem 1
1.2 Research Aim and Research Question 2
1.3 Relevance to Peace and Conflict Studies 3
1.4 Delimitations 4
1.5 Thesis Outline 4

2 Background **6**

2.1 Politics of Reconciliation 6
2.2 Coastal GasLink and Wet'suwet'en Conflict 7

3 Previous Research **9**

3.1 Reconciliation in a Settler-state Setting 9
3.2 Research Gap 10

4 Theoretical Framework **12**

4.1 Discourse Theory 12
4.2 Othering 13
4.2.1 Postcolonialism 15
4.2.2 Othering in Settler Colonialism 17
4.2.3 Othering in Democracies 19

5 Methodology **21**

5.1 Critical Discourse Analysis 21
5.2 Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model 22
5.3 Reflection on the Choice of Method 25
5.4 Material 26
5.4.1 Material Limitations 26

6 Analysis **28**

6.1 Textual Dimension 28
6.1.1 The Indigenous Peoples 29
6.1.2 The Government 32

6.2 Discursive Practice 34
6.2.1 Intertextuality 34
6.2.2 Interdiscursivity 36
6.3 Implications on Sociocultural Practice 37

7 Conclusion 40

7.1 Suggestions for further research 41

8 References 43

1 Introduction

1.1 Research Problem

In recent decades Canada has embarked on a path of reconciliation addressing the legacies of the country's colonial past, which have brought injustices and harm onto the Indigenous population. Reconciliation has been used as a framework for peacebuilding in divided societies by rebuilding relationships between groups with mutual respect. In Canada, the government is working on establishing a well-grounded relationship with the natives of the land. Since Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was elected in 2015, reconciliation and his commitment to it have become a signature move of his legislation.

At the beginning of 2020, the recent Wet'suwet'en protest in British Columbia set in motion another discussion on the issues of recognition, land rights, and reconciliation for the Wet'suwet'en's own community, but also nationwide. Demonstrations were held against a natural gas pipeline project, which had been approved for building by the band council chiefs of the Wet'suwet'en Nation, the leaders elected through the band council system of the Indian Act 1876. However, the traditional hereditary chiefs oppose the pipeline project as the construction would impede on their unceded (=land that was never legally signed away to the Crown or Canada) territory of the Wet'suwet'en Nation. Local protest sparked countrywide support from Mohawk Nations and other Indigenous groups after protesters on Wet'suwet'en land had been arrested. The nationwide outcry resulted in several railway and port blockades for two weeks. This prompted the government to respond to the issue and led to two speeches by Prime Minister Trudeau addressing the broader questions of Indigenous rights and reconciliation efforts in the parliament and in a press statement in February 2020.

Canada's approach to reconciliation with its native population, however, has also been met with criticism. As a settler-state, Canada not only has a colonial past but it has also been built on settler-colonial structures, primarily based on land accumulation. These structures continue to undermine the country and its relations with the natives. Politics of reconciliation have been applied to the Canadian context to move forward from the historic wrongs, but the liberal approach produces a paradox as it has been applied to a non-transitional setting. It addresses the legacies but not the underlying colonial structures, and instead of creating sustainable peace, it in turn tends to reproduce the colonial relations which the government claims are a thing of the past (Wakeham 2012).

1.2 Research Aim and Research Question

In this light, this study is concerned with the speeches Prime Minister Justin Trudeau held in response to the Wet'suwet'en dispute and the nationwide blockade protest, as part of his commitment to the path of reconciliation. The goal of this research is, thus, to critically engage with the discourses the Canadian government is (re)producing, and to analyze Trudeau's way of presenting the conflict and the Indigenous peoples involved, in the context of Canada's reconciliation approach. To achieve this, the study will look at the Canadian government's response to the Indigenous resistance through a discursive postcolonial lens on the settler-colonial setting, critically exploring and elaborating on the representation and construction of Indigenous peoples and their protest, as well as the government's self-presentation. Based on the above-stated aim, the research question is:

How can we understand the portrayal of the Indigenous peoples and their actions in the speeches in the context of reconciliation?

The following operational questions are guiding the analysis based on the theoretical framework and methodology:

1. How are the Indigenous peoples and their actions presented in the speeches?
2. How are the government and its actions presented in the speeches?
3. How is the relationship between the government and the Indigenous peoples presented in the speeches?

1.3 Relevance to Peace and Conflict Studies

By exploring how the discourse of reconciliation in the Canadian context reproduces colonial relations, this study seeks to demonstrate why a sustainable and mutual approach to reconciliation should also foster Indigenous ways to express their frustration with the government. As we will see in the following chapters, the concept has been used for transitions from authoritarian rule to more democratic forms of governance in divided societies (Lederach 2013), but the implications of the use in a non-transitional, liberal democratic society, such as Canada, shows that the framework in this context is problematic, as it is neglecting the underlying colonial structures. In the field of Peace and Conflict Studies, which aims to promote peace by preventing armed conflict, but also prevent structural and cultural violence (Galtung 1990), this research can be seen as an approach to discussing reconciliation in divided democratic societies, specifically in the settler-colonial context, to explore the difficulties and opportunities for sustainable and lasting peacebuilding. Exploring Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's speeches on a discursive level lets us look at the discourse (re)production of colonial relations within the discourse of reconciliation. This issue is relevant to Peace and Conflict Studies because the reproduction of the colonial relations harbors the hegemony of this asymmetry. Using a critical discourse analysis, this paper takes an opposing standpoint to the reproduction of the colonial relations and presents alternative Indigenous opportunities for peacebuilding.

1.4 Delimitations

This study focuses on the reproduction of the colonial discourse in the politics of reconciliation. These politics include a range of discursive practices as they started in the 1990s. By focusing the discussion on the most recent protests, the research restricts itself to two speeches by Prime Minister Trudeau, which were the government's public response to the Wet'suwet'en conflict. This way, it is possible to understand if the current government, in relation to such an event, is following the same patterns, considering Trudeau's commitment has been well established since he became prime minister. Limiting the research to two texts also allows for a clear analysis given the time and word limits of this bachelor thesis.

In Canada the three overarching groups for Indigenous nations are First Nation, Inuit, and Métis. For this paper, I made the decision to use the term "Indigenous" when referring to the native population of Canada as the groups are often referred to as a collective in the relevant context. This choice is based on the transnational use of the word and Trudeau's use of the word in the speeches. While the term is internationally coined through a criterial definition (ILO 1998), as well as through the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of *Indigenous* Peoples (UNDRIP), I am aware that using the word also reproduces a discourse that creates the Indigenous in a dependent relation to the settler since "indigeneity acquires its meaning not from essential properties of its own relations but to what is not considered Indigenous in particular social formations" (De la Cadena & Starn 2007: 4). Respectively, I use the group specific names, e.g. Wet'suwet'en, of the Indigenous peoples relevant for the discussion of the speeches, as well as referring to specific terms e.g. Aboriginal title in its originality.

1.5 Thesis Outline

This study consists of seven chapters. **Chapter one**, the introduction, has outlined the aim of this research and its relevance to the field of Peace and Conflict Studies, as well as presenting through what kind of theoretical and methodological tools the

aim will be achieved. **Chapter two** presents background information on the politics of reconciliation in Canada, as well as positions the research in the current context of the Wet'suwet'en conflict in British Columbia and the nationwide response. **Chapter three** follows with a discussion on previous research about the path of reconciliation in Canada and its implications in the settler-state setting. In **chapter four** I lay out the study's theoretical framework, which consists of discourse theory and theory of othering with a focus on a postcolonial approach in a settler colonial context as well as this adoption in a democratic setting. The complementary methodological framework follows in the **fifth chapter** and presents the choice of critical discourse analysis and additionally introduces the chosen material. **Chapter six,** the analysis of the data, is divided into subchapters that allow to answer the research question with the help of the operational questions, through the steps of text, discursive practice, and sociocultural practice analysis, laid out in the method. Finally, **chapter seven** concludes the findings, suggesting further research.

2 Background

The background chapter, firstly, gives context on the history of politics of reconciliation, specifically in Canada. Secondly, it situates the paper in the context of the Wet'suwet'en pipeline conflict, which occurred in early 2020.

2.1 Politics of Reconciliation

Reconciliation as part of sustainable peacebuilding creates a frame that focuses on rebuilding relationships in divided societies. Relationships between different groups are the basis of conflict. At the same time, they are the long-term solution for the conflict (Lederach 2013: 24ff). Reconciliation as a concept to resolve legacies of historical wrongs has its roots in places that are undergoing a transition from violent authoritarian regimes to forms of democracy. Thus, reconciliation assumes a break from a violent past to focus on rebuilding the relationship in the present and moving forward (Coulthard 2014: 22).

The path of reconciliation in Canada to address the injustices of settler colonialism began in the 1990s after several incidents of Indigenous resistance to treatment by the Canadian government occurred. The 78-day siege in Kanesatake (often referred to as Oka Crisis) was the final incident of around 30 years of "Red Power" activism, before the government decided on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) in 1991 and published its report in 1996, embarking on the path of reconciliation with an official "statement of reconciliation" in 1998 (Coulthard 2014; Wakeham 2012: 3). This path of reconciliation used the recognition of Indigenous peoples' rights and self-determination as a way to reconcile "[I]ndigenous assertions of nationhood with settler state sovereignty via the accommodation of Indigenous identity claims in some form renewed legal-political relationship with the Canadian state" (ibid.: 3). The new conciliatory discourse focused on recognition and accommodation within the state (ibid.). The

new politics of reconciliation were accompanied by the "age of apology" that swept the global scene over the past three decades, and settler-states, among them Canada, have participated to address and apologize for the violence against their native populations (Wakeham 2012: 1). At the time Prime Minister Harper (2008) gave a historic apology for the Residential School system, which led to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission addressing the harms, as well as to present calls for actions and recommendations to rebuild the relationship and offer opportunities for healing. Recently, Trudeau's government made way for the National Inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls crisis, which defined its conclusions as genocide (MMIWG 2019). These efforts come after a long history of injustices through state legislations such as the Indian Act of 1876, which regulated most of Indigenous life in Canada, as well as decided who was allowed to claim "Indian status," which was particularly patriarchal and gender discriminatory (Coulthard 2014; Satzewich & Liodakis 2017). While it has been amended several times throughout Canada's history, it still regulates different aspects of Indigenous life today.

2.2 Coastal GasLink and Wet'suwet'en Conflict

The Wet'suwet'en dispute deals with the construction of a natural gas pipeline through the territory of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation in northern British Columbia. The Coastal GasLink project is a 670-kilometer gas pipeline construction, which will transfer gas from Dawson Creek to Kitimat at the West coast (BBC 20.02.2020). The pipeline found support with band council leaders, who are elected through the band council and chief system, implemented by the government through the Indian Act 1876. However, the hereditary chiefs, the traditional leaders of the group, oppose the construction of the pipeline through their unceded lands of 22.000 square kilometers (Kestler-D'Armours 2020). The question of Aboriginal title, the inherent right to land to use and occupancy if ancestral claims can be proven, had been unresolved since 1997, when a Supreme Court case found that hereditary chiefs were the title holders. The case, however, never closed due to procedural reasons (ibid.).

The pipeline protest gained nationwide attention, and protesters established blockades on railways and port entries in support of the hereditary chiefs, after protest camps and so-called checkpoints at entry roads to the territory were resolved by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Pressure from all sides, and the nationwide economic impact, triggered government responses in February 2020. Main focus was the broader question of Indigenous rights and recognitions as part of the politics of reconciliation. The conflict also questions Canada's commitment to the UNDRIP implementation. While British Columbia is the only area that implemented UNDRIP into its legislation in November 2019, Premier Horgan argued that legislation would not apply retroactively to the case of the Wet'suwet'en conflict (ibid.). The UNDRIP (2007) requires any parties to obtain Indigenous peoples "free, prior and informed consent" in the case of infringement of their rights. "Free" also means to not seek to divide Indigenous peoples, which in this conflict would apply to hereditary and band council leaders (Kestler-D'Armours 2020).

As of May 2020, the government and the Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs have come to an agreement, signing a memorandum of understanding, starting a process of negotiations about recognition of title and rights of the First Nation over the next twelve months. However, band council leaders argue they have not been involved enough in the process and thus negotiations between all parties will continue as they try to establish how the agreement will affect their roles in the future (Martens 2020).

3 Previous Research

This chapter discusses previous academic literature. The focus is on the politics of reconciliation in the settler-colonial sphere and addresses forms of resistance, and at the end presents the departure point for this study.

3.1 Reconciliation in a Settler-state Setting

Several scholars have discussed different approaches to reconciliation by challenging the existing liberal politics of reconciliation and how it is applied in Canada (Coulthard 2014; Wakeham 2012; Alfred 1999; Matsunaga 2016). Findings range from reconciliation manufacturing a non-existent break from the colonial past to accommodate the new relationship, reconciliation dismissing emotions of anger and resentment as an expression of grievance and as part of healing, as well as demanding, rather, a performative response to reconciliation, in a way reproducing colonial power relations. Some scholars such as Taiaiake Alfred (1999) and Glen Coulthard (2014) turn away from the state and call for resurgence based within the communities and focusing on the reclaiming of land.

Liberal reconciliation originated as part of sustainable peacebuilding in divided societies, usually transforming a violent regime into a more democratic form of rule (Lederach 2013). Reconciliation thus assumes a post-violence stage promoting the new relationship (Bloomfield 2006). Generally, it is agreed that reconciliation should foster mutual relationships and recognizing Indigenous people in this relationship is vital for identity claims. When applied to already democratic societies such as Canada, scholars have found, reconciliation is establishing a break from previous injustices often linked to colonialism. However, the state is not actually transitioning, as the wrongdoings were always imbedded in democratic and political structures. Based on this artificial break, reconciliation and especially politics of recognition, are still undermining and reinstating colonial power relations (Coulthard 2014; Matsunaga 2016). Seeing recognition as fixating the

relation between the government and the Indigenous peoples draws heavily on Frantz Fanon's understanding of the colonizer-colonized relation reproduced through consent (ibid.).

Wakeham's (2012) study highlights that the "moving forward" strategy of reconciliation imposes closure on historic wrongs, but also forces closure on the present need for resistance. This assumption, as several scholars find, dismisses current forms of resistance, as well as the expression of "negative" emotions like anger and resentment as illegitimate responses (Wakeham 2012; Coulthard 2014). Wakeham (2012) goes as far as to conclude that Canada in the past has compared Indigenous protests such as the Oka Crisis to terrorist attacks, and in turn justified a counter-terrorist stance. Today, the government's focus rather relies on self-presentation as a peace-maker, producing a victim-victimizer reversal if Indigenous protests do occur and paradoxically enforcing impatience by shifting all responsibility onto the Indigenous nations to agree to the government's terms.

Scholars, such as Alfred (1999), find themselves turning away from the state's demands and reframing resistance and reconciliation in a way that fosters restitution to the Indigenous population, specifically in regard to land claims and rights, breaking out of colonial relations by assuming resistance as a precondition to reconciliation. Coulthard supports this claim by naming the direct actions of the Innu in Labrador-Quebec, the Mohawks of Kanesatake in Oka, and other groups that put themselves on the front lines to defend their land rights, which in turn had led to negotiations of Indigenous rights (2014: 167). Reconciliation cannot only impose the state's understanding of the concept on Indigenous peoples but it has to account for the underlying structures on which Canada is built, which is a web of capitalism, patriarchy, and "the totalizing character of state power" (Coulthard 2014: 14). Indigenous resistance to these structures needs to emerge from turning to their connection to the land and their cultures (ibid.).

3.2 Research Gap

Departing from the previous research findings, this study seeks to add the case of the current Canadian government dealing with the Wet'suwet'en conflict to the discussion of reconciliation in the settler-colonial context. While settler colonialism

and the colonial discourse in Canada have been widely studied not just in regard to the previously conducted research pointed out above, this research aims at addressing the (re)production of the colonial relations on a discursive level in the chosen data, underlining that the critique on the liberal approach to reconciliation is justified and points into the direction of rethinking the reconciliation approach in a settler-colonial setting.

4 Theoretical Framework

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework to be used in this study. Discourse analysis is a research approach that comes as a "complete package" of methodological and theoretical foundations. Therefore, the theoretical framework chapter will start out with a section on discourse theory, which later will be used in the method chapter to elaborate what a critical discourse analysis is. Additionally, as we learn from Fairclough and Jørgensen and Phillips (2002), discourse analysis is interdisciplinary in the way that it should include other theories and/or methodological approaches to analyze text. Here I use the construction and representation of the "other" and postcolonial theory in the settler-colonial setting to connect the analysis of discourse with my research problem.

4.1 Discourse Theory

> [Discourse] refers to groups of statements which structure the way a thing is thought, and the way we act on the basis of that thinking. In other words, discourse is a particular knowledge about the world which shapes how the world is understood and how things are done in it (Rose 2001: 134).

We make sense of the world through verbal and visual communication. Our access to reality is always through signs and language. From a social constructionist view, it is language that creates representations of reality. These representations are not just reflections of what already is, but they contribute to constructing reality (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002: 9; Riggins 1997: 2). The world is not accurately reflected in the mirror of language, which is why language itself and as a mean-making practice produces the world through the work of representation. In that sense, discourse is not neutral but active in the way that it creates and changes the world, our identities and social relations (Hall 1997: 28; ibid.: 1).

This understanding draws heavily on Michel Foucault who was concerned with not just meaning, which is created through representation, but the knowledge that is produced through discourse. Discourse is language and practice in the sense that discourse controls the way certain topics can be meaningfully talked about and how those ideas are put into practice in the social world (Hall 1997: 42-4). However, no text or visual image makes sense on its own, thus a discursive "event" relies on the context. Discourses are produced and articulated through many different visuals and text productions, as well as through the practices they allow. The meaning of an "event" depends on the meanings that other images and texts carry. This link is what is referred to as intertextuality. When a regularity of connections, patterns or concerns occur between meanings in a discourse, Foucault talks about discursive formation (Rose 2001: 136f).

Discourse is concerned with the power, that is "in power that our social world is produced, and objects are separated from one another and thus attain their characteristics and relationships to another" (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002: 13), which does not allow for alternative understandings. Knowledge, produced through discourse, which is a *constituting* tool of our social world and is also being *constituted* through it (Fairclough 1995), is thus inextricably webbed in relations of power (Hall 1997: 47). This is what lies at the intersection of power/knowledge, and here Foucault follows the general social constructionist principle that knowledge is not a mirror of reality. Through power, constructions of claims are perceived as true (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002: 13f; Rose 2001: 138). Truth then is a product of discourse.

As constituting and constitutive elements discourses are in a constant struggle to claim the "truest" truth, or what would factually be accepted. Certain discourses are nevertheless dominant in this struggle because they are located in powerful institutions. (Universal) truth is unattainable but then it must be explored how *effects of truth* are created and sustained in discourse (ibid.: 13f).

4.2 Othering

> What is socially peripheral is often symbolically centered (Babock 1978: 32, in Hall 1997: 237).

Complementary specific theory is needed to situate what kind of discourse is (re)produced in the given material in order to analyze the data in this research on a discursive level (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). The aim and research question lead to theory of othering and how othering is used in asymmetric relationships between different groups asserting domination. As established above, discourse creates meaning. Through discourse, we make sense of the world. Consequently, we also create meaning for ourselves and who we are. How we use language and language itself constructs identity (Wodak 2012: 216).

Identity construction of e.g. the settler and the Indigenous, or colonizer-colonized, is based on a self-other relationship upon contact with each other. Self-identification in this case occurs through giving meaning to what does not resemble "Us". The meaning of our identity develops in the context-dependent use of words, resulting in a dialectic relationship between the two. Wodak argues that "identity construction always implies inclusionary and exclusionary processes, i.e. the definition of *oneself* and *other*" (ibid.). The "Other" then is everything we are not. The "Other" is perceived in an opposition to "Us". The construction of "Us" and "Them" has always been of relevance to our understanding of our being and our sense of the world, dating back to Plato. In modern social sciences the "Other" refers to everybody that the "Self" perceives as either mildly or radically different (Riggins 1997: 3).

This binary opposition is rarely neutral. Wodak poses the questions: "Who decides on language, who sets the norms?" (2012: 217). Discourse, as stated above, is embedded in power and consequently one pole in this self-other relation is usually the dominant one, most likely the majority "Us", and it is the majority who decides on the representation of the minority "Them" (Derrida 1974, in Hall 1997: 235). Thus, we have arrived at the notion of power in language and discourse. Language is used to define the boundaries between "Us" and "Others," the differences and the similarities are evaluated in the interest of identity construction. (Wodak 2012: 217). The difference we need for the creation of meaning can only be constructed in dialogue with the "Other". The "Other", even though termed everything we are not, is essential to this dialogic relation with "Us." If we were to stop talking about the "Other," we would have to stop talking about "Us." Defining subjects as different becomes the basis of the symbolic order we have in our social world. In this classificatory system then, everything that is deemed different, symbolically

out of place, is excluded. The difference in this dialogic relationship becomes a strangely powerful tool in the social world (du Gay, Hall 1997, in Hall 1997: 235f; Riggins 1997:6).

4.2.1 Postcolonialism

The relationship between the "self" and the "other" has been central to imperial Europe. Notions of the superior European and the inferior colonized were main drivers of a colonial discourse (Satzewich & Liodakis 2017: 53). Postcolonial theory is based on an intellectual movement during the formation of newly independent nation states which were former colonies (ibid.: 53). Generally, postcolonialism focuses on issues regarding the legacy of racism, reasons for persistence, and why new forms of racism arise in the former colonies. The theory, while a diverse body of work, mainly derives inspiration from power approaches and understandings by Foucault, poststructural deconstructionist like Derrida, as well as psychoanalytical theories which will be presented further down below (ibid.). The oppositional concept of "self" and "other" is central in the process of decolonization by resisting the European hegemonic cultural ideas and practices (ibid.: 54).

Central ideas of postcolonialism developed through the concern with the self-other relationship in the Orient (Middle East) and in European colonies such as Algeria (Said 1978; Fanon 2008). The production of the East as inferior and Europe a superior in the studies termed *Orientalism* created a binary opposition of the European self and the Oriental other, which allowed for domination from the West in the Orient (Loomba 1998: 47; Satzewich & Liodakis 2017: 54). On the one hand the oriental discourse pushed for a positive self-image of the West as rational, progressive, and democratic, while on and on the other hand, confirming their moral superiority, the negative image of the East as irrational, backward and despotic (Eriksson Baaz 2005: 43). The oriental discourse allowed for colonial domination by the European imperial powers of e.g. France and Britain. For Said, this draws heavily on Michel Foucault's power/knowledge argument by seeing the discourse on the Orient as produced in an "uneven exchange with various kinds of power" (Said 1978, in Williams & Chrisman 1994: 133,138f), which promotes a form of

"racialized knowledge of the Other" through representation (Hall 1997: 260). The description of the "other" is connected to elements of Western societies such as the insane, women and the poor, consequently creating an alien identity, a problem to the dominant majority rather than a fellow citizen (Said 1978: 207). The association of femininity to the Orient saw the place and the people as weak and incapable of thinking or acting for themselves or itself. Preconceived negative assumptions from certain parts of the Western society poured over into the construction of the Orient (Quinn 2017: 42). Additionally, the other is seen as static, which denies any possibility for change. The West portrays itself as progressive and transformative. This contrasting assumption locks the Orient in place and sees it as not taking part in the "real-time" world, clearly distancing "them" from the "us" (Mills 2004: 98-100). The Orient is seen as the passive counterpart to the active West. The work of active "discipline" in colonial rule was, however, sometimes met with resistance, which termed the colonized as difficult, not accepting of what the West had to offer (Pratt, in Mills 2004: 102). This identified negativity of the colonized country and the colonized people reaffirms the positive self-presentation and maintains an unequal dynamic (ibid.). This dynamic of the colonial discourse is explained through what Said calls the "latent" Orientalism and the "manifest" Orientalism. The former is the unconscious belief and assumptions that the West is superior to the East, which justifies the domination as well as allowing for the East to be studied. The latter then, "manifest" Orientalism, can be found in the institutions behind colonial rule, like universities and structures of government. The change in knowledge about the Orient occurs exclusively in manifest Orientalism (Quinn 2017; Said 1978). This draws back on the discourse theory: discourse is produced and reproduced in powerful institutions and in turn shapes the social world and social behavior.

The domination through this asymmetric dynamic also played out on the psychological level. Frantz Fanon recognized that domination not only happened on the surface, in the country, but that it occurs on the level of self-consciousness. It is part of the recognition and acknowledgement process of the other (Spanakos 1998: 148). On this level, the colonizer was not only able to recognize the other, but it made it possible through the binary relation to also define the other. Fanon gives the example "for not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man" (1967: 110, in Spanakos 1998). I have touched upon this

relation already in 1.4 as part of my delimitations, but this explains how the Indigenous can only be Indigenous or native to the land in the dependent relation to the settler that has come to the land and thus creates this binary definition upon contact with the natives. The colonizer-colonized, consequently, have no value on their own, but only in the presence of the other (Fanon 2008: 163ff). But the colonial system "privileges the colonizer with a hegemonic [authority] in valuation" (Spanakos 1998: 149), the colonizers culture and ideas of civilization and progress are centered in this system and the colonized defined through the relation to hegemonic understanding, moves to the periphery of the system (ibid.). Although, as established in 4.2, the interdependent relation is inevitable for identity construction of center and periphery.

Liberation from this system of oppression is acquired through self-consciousness of the colonized and the self-realization leads to resisting the system. Fanon in this instance argues for a violent revolution to be the only way to liberate from relations that are structurally dependent (ibid.: 150). The use of violence is seen as positive, if it allows for the colonized to create his own identity, free from the dependence of the binary relation imposed by the colonizer (Devare 2017). However, this approach has been criticized for assuming that revolution is solely masculine. The approach marginalizes women and adopts the Western view of women and femininity as weak (Young 1996, in Spanakos 1998: 155). Using this theory in the context of this study, it is to point out that contradictory to this assumption, in Indigenous cultures, women often have leading positions. Similarly, resistance movements e.g. Idle No More have been led by groups of women (Idle No More 2012, in Coulthard 2014).

4.2.2 Othering in Settler Colonialism

The constructions of self and other outlined above stem from the context of imperial colonialism and the experiences in the Middle East, as well as African states, e.g. Algeria (Said 1978; Fanon 1967). Canada is a settler-state. Settler colonialism bases itself on similar relations between the self and the other but adds the dimension and certain strategies for settling on the land of the natives with the goal of building a new state.

In the classic colonial setup, the colonizers went after the resources, exploiting the colonies to enhance the metropole of the empire, e.g. Britain or France, and enhancing the empire's power. To acquire resources the native populations were dehumanized and exploited for labor. Imperial colonialism had an end date, which meant, at one point the colonizers would leave for their metropoles again. Here we see a relationship of exploitation (Wolfe 1999), though there are long-lasting consequences after colonialism as a practice ends in the states.

In contrast, settler colonialism produces a relationship of annihilation. Settler colonialists' primary motive is the accumulation of territory, to be able to build a settler nation away from the homeland. The land is seen as a key resource for settlers, thus the Indigenous peoples that are inhabiting the land are seen as an obstacle. In that sense, settler colonialism moves to destroy the existing structures to replace them with new ones (Wolfe 2006: 388). Wolfe explains this relationship of annihilation as "the logic of elimination", which refers to in its negative aspects to the "summary liquidation" of Indigenous people (ibid.). The elimination, in its positive aspects for the colonizers, is an organizing principle of settler-colonial society which is accomplished through "miscegenation, the breaking-down of native title into alienable individual freeholds, native citizenship, child abduction, religious conversion, resocialization in boarding schools or churches," and other strategies in order to advance capitalism and settler-state formation (ibid.: 388-390). Settler colonialism is a complex formation which continues over time and, as Wolfe explains, is "a structure rather than an event" (ibid.: 390).

As a structure, settler colonialism can be divided into three strategic phases: *confrontation* (physical genocide), *incarceration* (biological/environmental genocide), and *assimilation* (cultural genocide). The first phase includes epidemics through European diseases, frontier warfare, and massacres. The second phase focuses on removals of Indigenous peoples from their land, creation of reservations, and environmental changes. The third, and last phase, includes residential schools and other forms of child removals, religious conversion and other "organizational" actions, which are established in policies to manage the native population (ibid. 1999: 28-34). These stages of settler colonialism, nonetheless, only work on the basis of seeing the natives as other, inferior and uncivilized. The last stage of assimilation poses a contradiction. Assimilation helps with the shift from colony to nation-state. That means to civilize the native and create the *imagined community*.

However, Indigenous peoples can never be fully assimilated to the Western culture because it would contradict the binary self-other relationship established by the Europeans and question the superiority of the white population in the settler state, which is, as pointed out above, the center of colonial power relations and colonial domination.

As I have argued in the beginning of the thesis, applying postcolonial theory to a country that is certainly not decolonized yet, as settler colonialism is structurally underlying Canada as a country, might sound confusing to some, as critics have pointed out the "post" in postcolonial indicates a "prematurely celebratory" position (McClintock, in Eriksson Baaz 2005: 32). However, the "post" does not define an achieved state beyond colonialism, it can be seen as an "after" or a continuation of colonial structures or practices as well as psychological damages that prevail (Eriksson Baaz 2005: 32f). I thus use postcolonial theory in my study to show to what extent the colonial discourse is still active and creates an obstacle for reconciliation and certainly decolonization.

4.2.3 Othering in Democracies

To be able to analyze othering in Trudeau's speeches, a connection to modern political discourse has to be made. What is termed *democratic racism* gives exhaustive examples on how domination works in liberal democratic states today (Henry & Tator 2010, in Satzewich & Liodakis 2017: 22). Focusing on the Canadian context of this study, I address specifically related forms that have come to undermine the politics of reconciliation. I add this theory to my theoretical framework because these strategies are used in lexical terms, which mitigate and disguise a speaker's or writer's tendency to discriminate (Riggins 1997: 7) and will thus help to identify how the colonial discourse is (re)produced in the efforts of liberal reconciliation.

The two main strategies of (1) "positive self-presentation" and (2) "negative other-presentation" go hand in hand. While the own state government self-glorifies, other states, groups or nations are introduced as the negative "other" (van Dijk 1997: 36). To counteract the negative talk about the other, disclaimers are usually presented in which speakers (3) deny that they are racist or hold any bias. In the context of reconciliation, this also strategy also includes the manufacturing of an

artificial break from colonialism in the past, which in turn helps the government distance itself from it. If the speaker addresses certain actions which could negatively affect the minority, these moves are most likely defended by constructing them as being (4) "for their own good" (ibid.: 37). Similarly, unpleasant decisions are framed as (5) "firm but fair" which adds to the positive self-presentation of being humane, tolerant even when "reality" is "forcing" those decisions (ibid.). The (6) top-down transfer or "victim-victimizer reversal" (Wodak 1997: 8) is used to assign blame to the minorities in their attempt to social justice, in suggesting that they are the source of their "own" problems (Henry & Tator 2010: 13, in Satzewich & Liodakis 2017: 22). Here and in "denial of racism" the speaker sees discrimination and problems always somewhere else. Lastly van Dijk suggests that the speaker's decisions are justified by the (7) "force of facts" which are reasons from all kinds of areas like international situations, agreements, financial difficulties, popular resentments which justifies if decision with negative consequences for the minority have to be made (1997: 38). These strategies combine democratic values such as justice, equality, and fairness with attitudes that attribute negative feelings toward minority groups (Henry & Tator 2010: 9-10, in Satzewich & Liodakis 2017: 22). These strategies are used by the dominant group and specifically governments to hold power of the asymmetric relations. They are most likely used in speeches in the political sphere which sets the tone on how to deal with issues in connection to minority groups, in general, but also if they seek to speak up and demand social justice.

5 Methodology

In this chapter I present my methodological framework for the analysis. I draw upon the concept of *Critical Discourse Analysis* in general and will present Norman Fairclough's "Three-Dimensional Model," which will guide my analysis.

5.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis generally explores the underlying patterns of discourse, which as touched upon in chapter four, can be understood to be the idea that language is structured according to different patterns that people's utterances follow when they take part in different domains in social life (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002: 1). Discourse analysts are interested in, as Tonkiss emphasizes, "how people use language to construct their accounts of the social world" (1998: 247-8, in Rose 2001: 140).

A *critical* discourse analysis (henceforth CDA) goes a step further. A discourse analysis acquires a "critical" dimension when the focus lies on the intersection of language, power, and privilege within the representations of identities and reality that discourses produce (Riggins 1997: 2). The discourse analyst takes an oppositional stance to the hegemonic structures and strategies of the discourse, which (re)produce normative views of social practices and the social world (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002: 60f). The analysis focuses on how these "common-sense" understandings are produced on the linguistic level of discourse, for example by looking at words, phrases and patterns, and how they relate back to the broader picture of creating and re-creating control as it is perpetuated through the common-sense and everyday practices (Rose 2001: 149; Strauss & Feiz 2013: 312,315). By criticizing the hegemonic discourse, CDA opens up space for alternative grasps of social practices of discourses, which might lead to social emancipation of those who suffer under the structures imposed by the dominant group (van Dijk 1995: 19).

Identifying discourse as such a shaping and reflective tool sets CDA apart from other poststructuralist approaches like Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory which sees all social phenomena as discursive. Fairclough, as I will elaborate more extensively on his approach in the next section, draws on key insights of Foucault's understanding of discourse as constraining and productive, seeing it as a social practice, which *constitutes* our social world and is *constituted* by other social practices (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002: 24,61; see also chapter 4.1). CDA is based on this understanding of discourse and sees the relation it creates between words and "truth" as a highly problematic practice (Riggins 1997: 2). The advantage CDA has over purely descriptive methods is the fact that it takes into account the role of historical and socio-political aspects which shape the discourse when analyzing its dimensions (Fairclough 1995: 60ff).

5.2 Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model

One of the main contributors to CDA is Norman Fairclough. His CDA has two complementary focuses when analyzing discourse. The communicative event – an instance of language use, which can be either written, oral, or a visual image. In this study, the object of analysis are the two speeches by Justin Trudeau from February 2020. The second dimension is the order of discourse which is identified by Fairclough as the overall hierarchy of all discourse types that are used within a social institution, e.g. in the media or in the government (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002: 67). The three-dimensional analysis model divides the communicative event itself into three dimensions. The communicative event is (a) a text, (b) a discursive practice and it is (c) a sociocultural practice (ibid.: 68). These three dimensions, according to Fairclough, all require a different kind of analysis. The text analysis is a description of linguistic structures, the analysis of the discursive practice focuses on production and consumption of the chosen texts, lastly, the analysis of the sociocultural practice of the discourse explains whether the discursive practice of the text reinforces the existing order of discourse, or if it instead challenges and reforms the hegemonic order and in doing so addresses the possible effects this has for the wider social practices (Fairclough 1995: 50ff; ibid.: 69).

Generally, this model should be understood as being interdependent (see Figure 1). The findings of the descriptive analysis inevitably will be of importance in the second interpretative stage, and vice versa, interpretation of the discursive practice influences what to focus on when looking into linguistic structures. Similarly, the explanatory analysis draws from the two prior dimensions on how it overall affects the social practice (Fairclough 1995: 59).

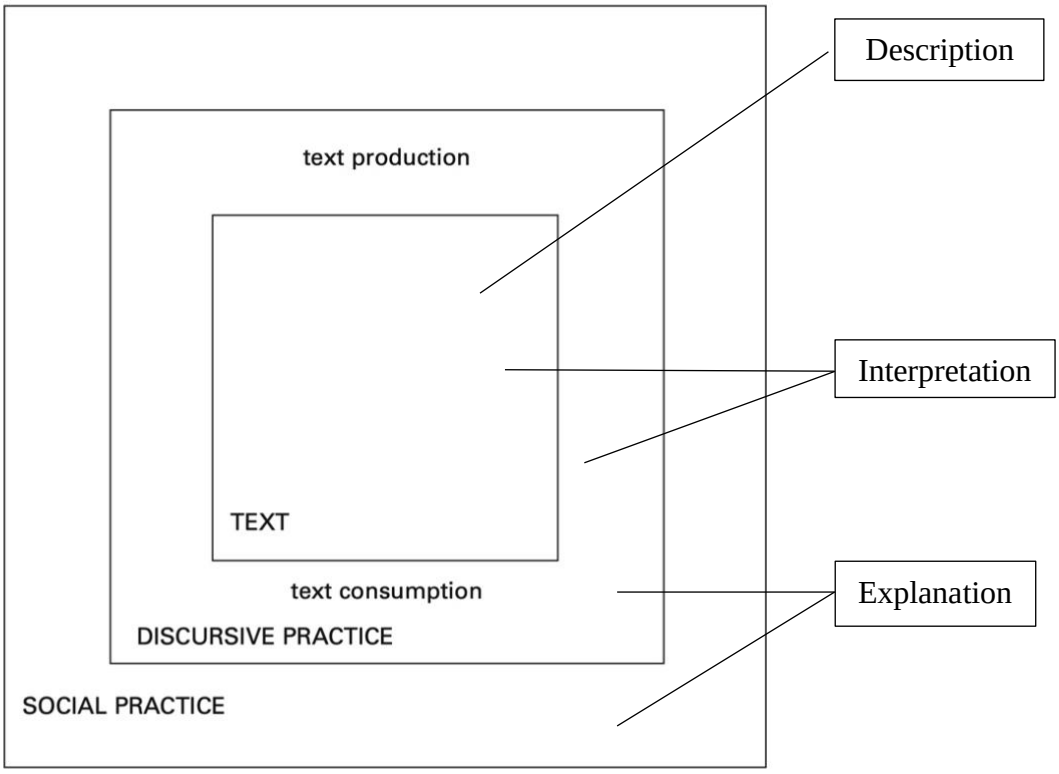

Figure 1 Framework for CDA of a communicative event based on Fairclough (1995: 59) with added analysis stages

Text analysis is concerned with the linguistic structures of the text. Here the focus lies on wording, grammar, modalities, rhetorical figures and structures. In light of the theoretical framework, textual analysis focuses on how representations, relations and identities of the government and the Indigenous people are articulated (Fairclough 1995: 58). Absences of specific things are just as important to point out as the presence of others. "What is not being said?" *Silences* might work in the interest of the speaker (ibid.; Riggins 1997: 11). Interpretive analysis of the discursive practice of the text explores how the text draws on previous text and previous discourses. Two concepts are deemed crucial for this stage of Fairclough's

CDA model: *interdiscursivity* and *intertextuality* (1995: 60ff). Interdiscursivity is a form of intertextuality referring to the mixing of different genres, discourses and styles associated with specific institutions within a single text. Intertextuality itself refers to "the way that meanings of any one discursive image or text depend not only on that one text or image, but also on the meanings carried by other images and texts" (Rose 2001: 136) in discourses. Thus, this analysis stage is concerned with how much a text refers back to other texts or events to produce its own meaning or reproduce the meaning of previous texts. While a high-level of interdiscursivity is a means of producing new meaning by drawing on different discourses, a high-level of intertextuality refers back to whether a text draws on multiple similar texts and consequently reproduces the discourse and holds up the status quo of this chain of texts. This stage identifies if the text reproduces the hegemonic understanding or not, which can lead to either stabilizing power or opening the discourse practice to the possibility of change (Fairclough 1995: 60). This intertextual analysis is much more interpretive than the linguistic analysis, as it draws on what discourses were used to produce the text and uses the linguistic features as evidence of those traces (ibid.: 61). For this part, I draw back on the discourse of reconciliation and the colonial discourse presented in previous chapters to explore if Trudeau either is creative in the use of new approaches or if he reproduces the normative understandings of these structures. Lastly, the sociocultural practice is analyzed by situating the communicative event and its discursive practice at a much more immediate situational context. Here the implications of the text are situated in the frame of society, politically, economically or culturally (ibid.: 62). Again, this section will draw on the politics of reconciliation and how its implementation affects the relationship between government and Indigenous peoples in Canada.

As stated above, the analysis stages are guided by the operationalization of theory, focusing on the representation of Indigenous peoples in contrast to the government self-presentation and the Canadian population, and how these relations are to be understood in the context of reconciliation. Additionally, new themes can emerge while reading the text, which also have to be taken into consideration to be able to situate the findings in the context (Rose 2001: 150).

5.3 Reflection on the Choice of Method

Discourse analysis is generally concerned with language and the mean-making of language use for our understanding of the social world (see chapter four). A *critical* stance added to discourse analysis in regard to the research question and research aim seems highly suitable for this research. Critical discourse analysts are concerned with the relation of power and consequently the injustices that are produced through language and discourse. Analyzing political speeches to reveal these structures with this method seems appropriate.

Qualitative research emphasizes particular understandings of the social relations analyzed. However, this can be thought of as problematic since social constructivism holds the view that there are multiple subjective understandings of our social world. A researcher thus cannot seek to reveal *the* truth in their analysis but argue for their interpretation of the discursive event (Chambliss & Schutt 2019: 264f). Through interpretative work in qualitative research the researcher also seemingly becomes the focal point as they take on an instrumental role by processing the information themselves (Creswell 2009: 177).

Social constructivism accounts for this unreliability of personal interpretation with reflexivity. Reflexivity can be achieved through reflection on how the researcher's own background shapes the interpretation as well as being transparent on the choices made in the research process (Chambliss & Schutt 2019: 275; Rose 2001). The theory part also helps with being transparent about how conclusions are drawn from the analysis. Postcolonial theory and its critique of the academic world helps especially with situating ourselves and acknowledging that to a certain extent we take part in (re)producing problematic discursive structures and common-sense meanings of terms (Locke 2004: 36). Here, I acknowledge the fact that I am a Westerner myself and inevitably take part in this discourse production (see also chapter 1.4). Therefore, the analytical framework of discourse theory and colonial relations is of use as a theoretical lens in combination with the method of CDA, helping the researcher gain an understanding of their position as part of discourse in the research. Reflexivity, accordingly, helps to give validity to research and lays out more openly how the researcher's bias affects the outcomes.

5.4 Material

The material to be analyzed in chapter six have two primary sources. At the height of the protests of the Indigenous peoples and allies in mid-February 2020, the Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau gave two speeches to address the conflict. These two speeches were chosen since it is in political speeches that the government remarks on issues concerning the country. For critical discourse analysts, speeches are communicative events where problematic discursive practices and patterns are present. They address large parts of the population and are part of a powerful institution, such as the Canadian government and hence are large discourse (re)producers (Fairclough 1995; van Dijk 1997). Additionally, in the context of the conflict laid out in this paper, these two speeches were the only public response by Prime Minister Trudeau. The speeches can be found on YouTube in video format, as well as on the prime minister's website as transcripts. I have chosen the latter as my source to mainly focus on the linguistic structures. For clarification, their titles and how I will refer to them in the analysis are as follows:

1. "Prime Minister's speech in the House of Commons about the blockades" (Trudeau 18.02.2020) (as of now referred to as **Speech 1**).

2. "Prime Minister's remarks for a media availability at the National Press Theatre on the blockades" (Trudeau 21.02.2020) (as of now referred to as **Speech 2**).

Trudeau presented Speech 1 in the House of Commons (a governing body of the Canadian parliament) and Speech 2 was given at a press conference four days after the first remarks on the blockades. For referencing to specific sections within the sources, each line in the format taken from the government's website has been given a number, e.g. **Line 1**, **2**, **3**, etc. In the references, Line will be shortened to "L.".

5.4.1 Material Limitations

While general delimitations were made in chapter 1.4, here I lay out some (de)limitations that are taken into account with the chosen material. First, one

obvious limitation lies in the fact that the two speeches are treated as text only and not as visual images of the videos I have mentioned above. This means the study abandons the analysis of the verbal communication, as well as the visual presentation of the speeches which means that some key insights of conveying messages in non-verbal communication are not analyzed. This decision was made due to word and time limits of the thesis. However, this leaves more space for the analysis of the linguistic structures with which CDA is mostly concerned with (Fairclough 1995). Second, the initial speeches as seen in the video format were partly in French and English, Canada's two official languages. The transcripts on the prime minister's website, however, are either fully in English or French. Here I made the choice to use the English-only versions, as I am not equipped with enough French knowledge of my own to translate and transcribe from the original speeches or analyze what is written in French. While they should be similar in the way they are conveying their information to the population, it may be the case that subtleties are lost within translation of words from French to English.

6 Analysis

The analysis is divided into three parts according to Fairclough's 3D model. The analysis consists of the textual dimension, the discursive practice dimension, and the sociocultural practice dimension. Throughout the analysis the method is combined with the theoretical framework of discourse theory and othering theory in connection to research question and research aim.

6.1 Textual Dimension

In the text analysis I focus on the linguistic elements which manifest discourse in the speeches in the way different identities and relations are presented. In the analysis I specifically pay attention to the construction of identities for the government, the Indigenous peoples and how they relate to one another, linking back to my operational questions. Before assessing the different groups related to the operational questions, I briefly touch on the structure of the texts, which helps identify what is of importance in the speeches.

Speech 1 is focused on the government's action in response to the Indigenous protests, addressing different topics throughout the speech. There is a back and forth between different aspects of the initial problem and the overall problem of historic legacies, which is underlying the protests. Speech 2 takes on a more challenging tone compared to Speech 1. There is a time difference of four days (Speech 2: L. 89) when Trudeau reassesses the situation. Speech 2 has a clear hierarchy, which Trudeau introduces in the beginning. In this press speech, Trudeau addresses three topics in order (L. 9-10,14-15). The blockades and their impact are last and take up most space in the speech. There is a clear break from the two previous topics of the flight 752 tragedy and the coronavirus in Line 39.

6.1.1 The Indigenous Peoples

First, the Indigenous peoples are identifiable by the term "Indigenous" and specifically by their different Nations e.g. Tyendinaga, or as hereditary chiefs, leaders and representatives. This draws a clear distinction in the speeches between who is Indigenous and who is the general Canadian population in Speech 1 and, more particularly, the "Canadians" in Speech 2. Additionally, of interest, "you" in relation to the Indigenous is only used in one section (Speech 1: L. 42-45), however it is always in relation to the actions of "we" and "us." The Indigenous "you" only once actively "remind[s]" the "us" in this section, prescribing the group agency of their own. The distinction relevant to the blockade issue, also becomes of interest in the short paragraph about the coronavirus, as the work to protect from the coronavirus is ascribed to "Canadians" but the distinct mention of the Indigenous is absent here (Speech 2: L. 36-37). This omits how Indigenous populations are impacted by the coronavirus. Considering Prime Minister Trudeau points out the poor conditions of their communities in Speech 1, an assessment on the specific impacts could have shown empathy and concern, or at least a clear plan for managing the situation.

The presentation of the Indigenous peoples, and more specifically the Wet'suwet'en and Mohawk Nations, becomes apparent in several ways in the speeches. The most prominent one is how the blockades of the Indigenous protest are affecting the Canadian population. The reason for the protest is rather vaguely described as "a disagreement over a provincial natural gas pipeline in British Columbia" (Speech 2: L. 48-49), whereas the blockades are a result of the protest turning into the broader question of Indigenous rights for the Wet'suwet'en First Nation and overall in Canada. In both speeches, the blockades are presented through a nominalization. The action of blocking, rather than the Indigenous groups, who are the ones blocking the way, receives the agency of impacting the Canadian economy and population. It transfers the power of the groups to the blockades themselves. In a way, the blockades speak for the Indigenous peoples in the speeches.

Indigenous actions generally are perceived as negative in regard to impact on the country. The blockades are creating uncertainty in the general population (Indigenous Nations included) about the future, with emphasis on personal,

communal and national levels (Speech 1: L. 8-12). The blockades are compared to past incidents of resistance, supporting the notion that there has been no change in behavior, however changing the situation in the past for the worse, as Trudeau goes on, is not attributed to any specific side (Speech 1: L. 55). While there was no escalation of the conflict at the time of Speech 1, Prime Minister Trudeau gives a detailed list of "farmers, entrepreneurs, families, and workers" (L. 59-60), which seems to indicate they are specifically targeted by the protesters. By the time of Speech 2 "all Canadians are paying the price" as some "can't get to work" and "have lost their jobs" (L. 40-41). In addition to the attack on a personal level, the blockades are impeding on the economy by "paralyzing key infrastructure" (Speech 2: L. 39). Indigenous actions are stopping the economic development of Canada, being irrational and uncivilized in their actions against the Canadians who are following their work lives, and especially "hurting Canadian families", presenting the Indigenous as violent and opposed to harmony in the country. The impacts are declared as truth, in the way they are presented as "very real" (Speech 2: L. 94). It creates a victim-victimizer reversal where the call for justice by the Indigenous is impeding on the lives of Canadians and spurning the government's offers, which becomes even more obvious in Speech 2.

Moreover, not only are the Indigenous opposing economics, they are leaving the democratic dialogue, which the government highly values, with democracy presented as a trait of rationality and morality (Speech 1: L. 103-105). While generally it is expressed that Indigenous peoples and Canadians are allowed to protest for their rights and communities (Speech 1: L. 42-43;L. 108-109), Prime Minister Trudeau claims the protest in question to generally be illegitimate by drawing a comparison to legitimate Indigenous protest, which are presented as being based on the historic injustice they have experienced, stipulating that this cannot be connected to a protest against a pipeline project (Speech 2: L. 96-108). The illegitimacy as well as the resistance to the patient government's efforts to establish dialogue are reinforced by Prime Minister Trudeau redefining previously used term "blockades" into "barricades". While this indicates that they are actively blocking the railways, it also expresses inactiveness by those who shut themselves off in connection to the Indigenous peoples being presented as unwilling to cooperate (Speech 2: L. 47,119). This goes hand in hand with the presentation of the leaders of the Indigenous nations as passive receivers of the government's

commitment to the relationship, as well as inactive responders to the offers, as the term "barricades" already indicates. Responsibility is understood to be solely on the Indigenous side, creating impatience if not acted upon as desired by the state (Speech 2: L. 46). Increased impatience is again imposed by the following lines:

> […], I sent a clear message to the Wet'suwet'en and Mohawk Nations, as well as Indigenous leaders across the country. I said that our government is listening. I reiterated our commitment to a peaceful resolution. I expressed our desire to work in partnership with all parties concerned. That was four days ago. (Speech 2: L. 83-89)

When addressing the overall historic wrongs colonialism has inflicted on the Indigenous Nations (see also 6.1.2), the Indigenous are described as victims of those "historic wrongs" and injustices done by previous governments, which are still persisting during this government's term (Speech 1: L. 80-84). While the government is on the path of reconciliation, rebuilding the damaged relationship others have caused, the Indigenous peoples are presented as harming the progress of reconciliation through their blockades and their unwillingness to work with the government, which is presented to be for their own good (Speech 2: L. 127-128). The only time the Indigenous are perceived as agreeing to resolving the issue with dialogue and mutual respect, they are the passive speaker who the government has "heard" and they are the absent speaker to who "we are listening" (Speech 1: L. 37-41). The Indigenous are here met with the apparently easy task of cooperating with the government since the government "only" asks for one favor: to work together (Speech 1: L. 43-44).

Overall it can be said that the Indigenous peoples are being constructed as opposing the values the government is emphasizing in the speeches. Specifically, their actions are perceived as harming the reconciliation process and the attempt to rebuild the relationship, which is deemed in their best interest if contrasted against the historic wrongs committed by previous governments. This representation is in concurrence with the identity of the colonial "Other" presented in the theoretical framework. The "Other" is negative in action, but passive in response to government offers in Speech 1, and government demands in Speech 2. Protest as a method to speak up is not completely illegitimate, but in contrast to the Canadian population's connection

to job occupancies and contributing to Canada's "well-being," the protests are seen as irrational and backward, and are presented as inappropriate for gaining the government's attention.

6.1.2 The Government

In both speeches the government is identifiable as a whole governing body, different government positions such as ministers and in Trudeau's remarks as the Prime Minister himself. There is a high occurrence of "we," "our," and "I" in connection with the government, the Prime Minister and their values, signifying that the "Self" from the self/other relation in these speeches is the speaker himself. In Speech 1, Trudeau is generally addressing the Speaker of the House of Commons, indicating that this speech is held in Canada's parliament. Additionally, Trudeau directly addresses the people that are affected by the blockades (L. 19) and the Indigenous parties of Wet'suwet'en and Mohawk Nations and Indigenous leaders in general (L. 40). Speech 2, on the other hand, is directed at the general audience of the media since it as a press statement at the National Press Theatre concerned with the newest challenges Canada is facing (L. 2,8).

Trudeau presents the government as actively committed to finding a peaceful solution to the issue of the blockades. The governing body is representative of good work ethic by working "hard," (Speech 1: L. 21) emphasized through added time references of "over the past 11 days" and "around the clock," having been committed "from day 1" onward (Speech 1: L. 34,53; Speech 2: L. 56). Detailed time references also highlight that the government is adjusting with time, adapting to the situation, indicating a form of progressiveness. Similarly, commitment to the work is expressed through listing several government positions such as Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Minister of Indigenous Services, and Trudeau's personal contributions as Prime Minister (Speech 1; Speech 2). The commitment concludes with Trudeau's verbal gesture of "formally extending his hand" (Speech 1: L. 32,124) to a "willing partner," addressing the Indigenous leaders, for dialogue (L. 37), which creates an open-ended action that has to be actively responded to by the receiving side. It shifts the responsibility onto the passive receiver of the action. The gesture also indicates a paternalistic relationship in which Indigenous peoples

need to be taken by the hand for guidance, indicating that the government is superior in knowing how to handle the situation.

Trudeau presents the government as inherently peaceful, as mentioned several times throughout the texts, and rational in its attempt to solve the issue by distancing itself from an unnamed "other" that suggests acting hastily and using force. It can be assumed that Trudeau is referring to the Conservative Party, which has criticized him for a weak response to the blockades (see 6.2). Only presented as "those," the opposition becomes an unidentifiable mass (Speech 1: L. 88-94; Speech 2: L. 62-70). The Conservative Party becomes the "bad guy", identifying the government as the "good guy"; consequently, the government's words and actions can never be as bad as those of the other party, which urged for other options. There is a clear distance to "bad" decisions promoting self-glorification. Throughout Speech 1 the government is presented as valuing the rule of law and "our democracy" by taking up a clear stance in order to "always" defend and protect it (L. 17,22-24). The government as a protective agency becomes visible in Speech 2, when "reality," presented as the *truth,* shows that their commitment from Speech 1 is not met with a desirable response. The follow-up calls for action to end the blockades, uphold the law, and to obey the injunctions, are demands which therefore seem justifiable, and that the blockades have to come down is presented as a "fact" (Speech 2: L. 111-121).

The government's commitment to peaceful solutions is exemplified by two challenges throughout both speeches. One is dealing with the issue of the blockades and the impact they are having. The other is showing the government being invested in dealing with the legacy of historic wrongs. The current government stands above all other previous governments by "having invested more than any other […] to right historic wrongs" (Speech 1: L. 78). Colonialism as a term to define what the historic wrongs are part of, is never mentioned. Terming the injustices as "historic" also serves to create a break between the past and the present. Here the emphasis lies on the objective that the government is embarking on a path of reconciliation, despite the fact that it seems beyond its power to solve the issues created in the past (Speech 1: L. 78-85), but is met by an unwilling partner for this desirable goal of a better relationship (see 6.1.1).

The government as an actor in this situation presents itself as being rationally and morally superior in contrast to the Indigenous side, and its peaceful demeanor is

met with resistance and unwillingness by a passive actor. The overall solution to the problem is presented as difficult to find, however the steps the Indigenous peoples need to take are presented as an easy task as stated in 6.1.1. These linguistic structures relate back to the theory of the colonial discourse in the theoretical framework and how they play out in the discourse of reconciliation as discussed in chapter three. The government presents itself as a rational peace-maker who is progressive, wishing no one harm, being concerned with the situation of the Indigenous population of the country. The government also creates an objective self-other relation to Indigenous peoples by actively dividing them from the "Canadian" population.

6.2 Discursive Practice

This second part of the analysis is concerned with the discourses the speeches rely on and are shaped by exploring how the speeches build on other texts. Analyzing interdiscursivity shows whether the speeches reinforce already existing discourses or are a of changing nature. Intertextuality, on the other hand, explores the relation to other text and examines if the speeches hold up a normative understanding by referencing multiple other text in the same discourse (Fairclough 1995: 60ff).

6.2.1 Intertextuality

Intertextuality in speeches is often rather hidden compared to for example advertisements or news articles, unless there are visible quotes and references used. However, the most visible intertextual relation is between the two speeches themselves since Speech 2 is a follow-up address to Speech 1. Trudeau references Speech 1 several times, justifying the government's decisions, based on the indifference of the Indigenous peoples to his offers in the first address (Speech 2: L. 46,83-89).

For the most part, Trudeau refers to communicative events that took place within the institution of the government. All "within government" texts are in one way or another connected to the politics of reconciliation. Trudeau is following the time line of the Canadian government, which is, though not in particular order

throughout the speeches, starting to implement Aboriginal and treaty rights into the constitution in 1982, the time his father was prime minister and originally opposed the inclusion of Indigenous recognition (Speech 1: L. 73-74). The incident of Kanesatake resistance in 1991, though not explicitly named in the speech, was a turning point and officially started the path of reconciliation in Canada after the situation escalated (Speech 1: L. 55-56). That the government at the time too hurriedly made bad decisions, is then mentioned in Speech 2 (L. 62-63). To "move forward together" also occurs repeatedly and was first used by Prime Minister Harper referring to building a stronger Canada together in his apology speech for the Residential School system (Speech 1: L. 119; Harper 2008). Similarities between the two speeches becomes apparent by the implications in which Trudeau, at the end of Speech 1, includes the "Indigenous leaders" with a general list of people with different civil occupations (L. 126-127), followed by "build[ing] a better path, for all Canadians" (L. 129), which includes the Indigenous in the term Canadians, even though as mentioned in 6.1.1, throughout the speeches a clear differentiation is made between the two groups. This assumes a continuation of assimilation of Indigenous people into the Canadian population through reconciliation politics.

Trudeau mentions several times in both speeches that he has met with the Incident Response Group and has been in contact with Premiers of the states, which indicates that what he is presenting in the speech is not solely his own opinion, but has been discussed with other government and state members (Speech 1; Speech 2). The references to the other text imply that Trudeau is following the politics of reconciliation and does so by relying on articulating it with others and based on previous viewpoints on the matter, reproducing underlying colonial governance structures. On one occasion, Trudeau refers to the press conference statement by National Chief Perry Bellegarde agreeing on mutual respect for dialogue, however, as established in 6.1.1, the speaker is passive as it is portrayed as a hearing action by the government (Speech 1: L. 37-39). This indicates that Prime Minister Trudeau is relying to a certain extent on Indigenous opinion on the matter, but it becomes the only agreeable aspect that has been actively voiced from the "other".

On the one hand, the intertextuality in the speeches is indicating the reliance on the government's past approaches to reconciliation, while on the other hand, it is

deviating in the way that Trudeau's government is doing a better job, enforcing the positive self-presentation of the institution today as presented in 6.1.2.

6.2.2 Interdiscursivity

Interdiscursivity in the two analyzed speeches is rather low and does not deviate from strategies of identity construction within the political sphere which I pointed out in chapter four. There is one instance, Speech 2 L. 101-103, where Trudeau refers to the "governance structure" of Canada in the past, which did not respect Indigenous rights. While it is still attributed to the past, it acknowledges not only the injustices themselves, but that they were based on structures underlying the governance of the country and the relation between the Indigenous peoples and the government.

Otherwise, the speeches are consistent with the construction of the identities of the Indigenous and the government pointed out in the theoretical framework, which gives insight into the production and reproduction of the dominant discourse within reconciliation. The findings in 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 are indicators of a positive/negative presentation, denial of current colonialism, as well as denial of discrimination, passiveness/activeness, and civilized/uncivilized groups.

The native population is specifically identified as Indigenous, which on its own should always be the case, as they are the population that has lived on the land before the settlers arrived, and thus hold specific group identity claims and group rights, as defined internationally and nationally. However as pointed out in chapter 1.4, the term itself already implies a definite relation to the settler population. These implications of the term itself shall not be discussed further in this paper, but it certainly has a pre-existing dependent relation, which becomes even more obvious as the Indigenous peoples are contrasted against the "people" (assuming the general Canadian population) and the "Canadians" in the two speeches, giving the two groups clearly different positive and negative attributes.

The negative implications of the blockades are attributed to these specific group actions of protest. This behavior of protest is contrasted to the Canadians who are living their civilized life of going to work and having jobs specifically as farmers, workers, and entrepreneurs contributing to the Canadian economy. Not only are the Indigenous peoples impeding the economy but also the protest is also assumed to

be outside of the democratic sphere, even though democracy generally allows justified protests (Speech 1: L. 42-43,108-109). In relation to reconciliation and the offer to building a better relationship, the Indigenous peoples are presented as harming the process, which the government claims is for their own good, referring to past injustices the groups had to endure. This argument is supported by the mention of past instances of protest, a prime example of which is the Oka Crisis from 1991 (see 6.2.1). While in Speech 1 the situation has generally been described as escalated, in Speech 2 previous governments are argued having made matters worse. The comparison with similar prior situation involving Indigenous resistance to the government also portraits the Indigenous as static, they are using the same approach to address the injustices, and assuming that the Indigenous could again turn the protest into violence. This reflects the identity construction of the "Other" as irrational and violent, justifying the colonial relationship.

The government's self-presentation here follows the strategies pointed out in the theoretical framework. The government presents itself in a positive light all around. Positivity is attributed through the distancing from the irrational conservative party, through distancing from previous governments which produced the historic wrongs or were not as committed to the reconciliation process, and thus this difficult challenge has been imposed onto the current government. This also reinforces the peace-maker presentation as part of the politics of reconciliation.

The relationship that should be mutually built through reconciliation is here presented as only being moved forward by the current government, while the Indigenous peoples are presented as counterproductive with their actions, compelling the government to be impatient and justifying the calls to action. However, whereas the protest is deemed counterproductive by the government, the protest initiated by Indigenous peoples has led to the start of the discussion of the issue in the first place.

6.3 Implications on Sociocultural Practice

The speeches as discursive practices are connected to sociocultural practices. They are produced within the Canadian government, a powerful political institution. While the advent of populist leaders in recent global history accelerates the overall

erosion of credibility of communication by democratically elected officials, political speeches still carry significant weight, presenting what state leaders see as objective truth to the wider population and institutions such as the media, for instance in Speech 2. As sociocultural practice the speeches are part of constructing identities, which in turn affect social interaction and practices on a political level. The two previous analysis steps have illustrated how different identities were constructed on the linguistic and discursive level.

The implications of the reconciliation discourse in a settler-colonial framework have presented themselves in Trudeau's speeches through specific words used in the context. Different political strategies (see 4.2.3) have been used to portray and justify Indigenous peoples as a negative and inactive group unwilling to work with the government in rebuilding the relationship, which is presented as for their own good. The government reasserts its powerful position through positive self-glorification compared with all other parties.

Through the liberal politics of reconciliation, the government is reproducing the colonial power relations they claim to abandon. While the protest did have some real-life impacts, the Indigenous are portrayed as directly targeting the Canadian citizens with their blockades. The contrast between the groups' behavior underlines the negative portrayal of the Indigenous people (see 6.1.1). Reconciliation seems to only be functioning in the framework the government has given it. The reconciliation framework in Canada is oriented toward a Western, liberal understanding of the concept, and thus the protest fuel the impatience Trudeau speaks of, since resistance mobilization is perceived as not valuing reconciliation (Speech 2: L. 46). While reconciliation is presented through the government's terms of the process, the discussions on the issue of the pipeline and the Indigenous rights for recognition were only considered after the protests had already reached the federal government's level. In theory reconciliation is supposed to rebuild the relationship with mutual respect, and both sides express the need for it, but the implementation by the government fails to recognize different emotional expressions and resistance as a means toward reconciliation and not against.

The reconciliation discourse reinforces, as scholars have claimed (see chapter three), colonial self-other relationships through the strategies van Dijk has pointed out, addressed in 4.2.3. The power relations are being concealed by these strategies for the listener who is not analyzing the speeches on a discursive level as this study

has done. This makes it easier to manifest the status quo. The discursive practice of the speeches hence suggests a strengthening of sociocultural practices that have been previously in place. But in turn, the pre-existing sociocultural practices have also influenced the way the communicative event has come about. While Trudeau claims to leave the injustices in the past, the government's practice of reconciliation reinforces those past asymmetric relationships.

7 Conclusion

In this thesis I analyzed how the current discourse of reconciliation in Canada is reproducing colonial power relations between the Indigenous peoples, the Canadians, and the government by constructing positive/negative, active/passive, and civil/uncivil identities, which are produced through various political discursive strategies. This has been achieved by looking at two speeches through a combination of an theoretical framework, which addresses discourse theory and the theory of postcolonialism in the context of settler colonialism (chapter four) and the critical discourse analysis 3D Model by Fairclough (chapter five), relating it back to what scholars have criticized about the liberal reconciliation approach in Canada (chapter three). The findings have been analyzed through a critical standpoint, which tries to open up space for alternative understandings of the topic and point out injustices. I have tried to account for my own bias in this study by applying the theoretical framework and methodological considerations to the data, nonetheless, the interpretations I have made come from my understanding of these concepts which in turn influences the results. I refer back to my own biases because I am discussing material that concerns an Indigenous minority group and their relation to the government, based on my own Western-influenced perspective and thus one should be concerned with the way interpretations have been made about a minority group in connection to power relations.

The overall theme of rebuilding the relationship together is evident in the speeches but it is overshadowed by the othering and positive/negative grouping of sides, showing that the liberal framework is counterproductive to its goal. This way it bypasses more radical forms of structural transformation, which could destabilize the asymmetric power relations as they have existed until today. The discussion on the Aboriginal title and recognition for the Wet'suwet'en were conducted only because of the nation-wide outcry. This reaffirms Alfred's (1999) suggestion that resistance and protest are a vital part of reconciliation. This event suggests that protests are the beginning point of starting a discussion on the prevalent issues.

These speeches, like previous ones, are rather performing the facade of reconciliation without actually dismantling settler privileges and rather focuses on the government's self-promotion through the reconciliation discourse, which in turn portrays the Indigenous as negatively impacting the proposition of a mutually respected relationship. This consequently promotes the reproduction of the colonial relations of the past, which has been pointed out by applying the postcolonial theories of othering in a settler-colonial setting to the speeches of Prime Minister Trudeau. By realizing the inherent paradox, scholars such as Coulthard (2014) and Alfred (1999) offer Indigenous alternatives, which focus more on land, sovereignty and Indigenous culture. This is not to say that all efforts of reconciliation are problematic. The issue of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls was recognized as a genocide by the National Inquiry (2019) and Trudeau accepted the term, which allows for concrete actions to follow in Canada. Similarly, the signature of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2010, though delayed by all of the settler states, is a step into the right direction. But the findings of this thesis suggest that the work toward reconciliation is undermined by the underlying structures which the government's approach strategically does not include into their framework of reconciliation with Indigenous populations in Canada as this would challenge Canada's unsettled claims of sovereignty through *terra nullius* land accumulation since the first settlers have arrived on the land.

7.1 Suggestions for further research

As mentioned in 1.3, the field of settler colonialism has been widely researched. Previous research as well as this thesis also show that the implications of liberal reconciliation in a non-transitional setting with settler-colonial structures have been researched and critically engaged with. But especially in the field of Peace and Conflict studies the concept of reconciliation as a stepping-stone to sustainable peacebuilding, away from structural and cultural violence should be further researched in the context of non-transitional societies. Future research, for example, could further investigate the different approach scholars such as Coulthard (2014) and Alfred (1999) have suggested, building on the Indigenous understanding of resistance, resurgence, and reconciliation in connection with the land and their own

communities. These could be alternatives to the liberal approach, or create a hybrid peacebuilding approach, which would foster a more mutual and respected relationship with the focus on land rights and recognition as land accumulation has always been and still is the underlying driving factor of settler colonialism.

It would also be of interest to further analyze Prime Minister Trudeau's verbal and non-verbal communication strategies in the speeches, which this study due to time constraints as well as method choices has omitted (see 5.4). Clues based on non-verbal communication could support the discursive analysis by exploring what sentences or words are particularly emphasized by Trudeau.

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