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**NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND
NEOLIBERALISM:
A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**

MA thesis

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ABSTRACT

Non-governmental organizations are seen to have an important position in the transnational public sphere as representatives of local communities on questions concerning international development aid. This thesis proposes to study an international public-private initiative launched by the G8 in 2012 (the G8 Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition) and analyze NGO responses to what can be perceived as the neoliberal strategies of this Alliance.

The research focuses on whether elements of neoliberal discourse are present in the corpus and how these neoliberal elements are represented and contested within the texts. The corpus consists of seven press releases from seven NGOs who have directly addressed the above-mentioned initiative.

This thesis is divided into three main chapters. The introduction and the first chapter present the theoretical and philosophical background of the subject area, including the theories of neoliberalism from Foucault, Harvey and Stiglitz; Jürgen Habermas on the public sphere and Norman Fairclough on critical discourse analysis. The second chapter presents the method used in the research, which is adapted from Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis. The third chapter analyses NGO discourse on three levels: description, interpretation and explanation.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BRE - Bread for the World

FOE - Friends of the Earth

NGO - non-governmental organization

OXM - Oxfam International

VIS - World Vision

WDM - World Development Movement

WWP - War on Want

INTRODUCTION

‘Neoliberalism’ is the general term used to denote what is now commonly held to be the dominant economic system in most developed nations; it is also promoted by international institutions and the processes underlying globalization. Neoliberalism gained currency in the 1980s when its underlying ideas, as articulated by economists such as Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman, were applied by Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. It represented a move away from Keynesianism in favor of more free trade, deregulation and privatization, and was generally characterized by a mistrust of state action with the exception of action to promote competition and free trade.

The discussion of neoliberalism on the international arena brings us to the importance of civil society and non-governmental organizations (hereinafter NGOs). When the governments are cutting back on activities that are not strictly connected with maintaining the free market and ensuring the personal liberty of each individual, or are unable to ensure certain functions, as it is often the case in developing countries, civil society has to step in to represent community issues. In a way, civil society could be seen as filling the void created by neoliberalism in general that promotes a relatively ‘thin’ state. Neoliberalism is often linked with globalization, opening up an international space where interaction and criticism take new forms.

NGOs are not democratically elected bodies, but are still seen to have legitimacy in advocating for people’s rights, as the neoliberal state partly distances itself from the provision of social services (Harvey 2005: 78, 177). NGOs are seen to operate on a type of intermediary ground between the state and what Jürgen Habermas (1991) calls the public sphere. The term NGO itself covers a variety of associations, organizations and lobby groups with very different activities. For the sake of clarity, they all will be referred to as NGOs in the present thesis (see subsection 3.1 for discussion).

In order to study these large-scale interactions this MA thesis studies NGO press releases that focus on a public-private initiative started by the Group of Eight (G8) called the “G8 New Alliance for Food Security” (hereinafter G8 Alliance), launched in 2012. This initiative aims at more foreign private investment and participation in developing countries in order to alleviate poverty and malnutrition. The G8 Alliance merits attention because of its controversial nature: the strategies and methods proposed have met with serious NGO criticism claiming that it focuses on corporate participation without consulting with civil society. Therefore, NGO texts that address this topic discuss a variety of issues concerning the interaction between states and civil society that gives an interesting insight into NGO discourse on international aid. What is especially important, however, is the status and occurrence of neoliberalism in NGO texts as economic issues are presented from various points of view. The texts see NGOs engaging in dialogue with both the private sector and government bodies. Yet, the discourses of corporate and government bodies themselves do not fall within the scope of the textual analysis carried out here, and will be referred to mainly in establishing the context and framework of the corpus. A more detailed overview of the G8 Alliance and the NGOs will be given in the empirical section of this thesis.

Concentrating on this particular initiative limits the time span of the research: the corpus consists of NGO press releases from the time period directly preceding the launch of the G8 Alliance on May 18th, coinciding with the Camp David, USA G8 Summit (May 18-19, 2012), up to the time period around the progress report of the first year coinciding with the G8 meeting in Gleneagles, Northern Ireland on June 17-18, 2013. This rather recent and closed time span enables a closer look at contemporary discourse and the international scope of the activities and texts studied leads towards a more comprehensive and global understanding of the issue.

The theoretical basis for this thesis, which aims at combining the study of civil society (NGOs), public space and neoliberalism, is built on mainly theories from David Harvey, Michel Foucault, Joseph Stiglitz and Jürgen Habermas. The preliminary subject of study is the activities of NGOs in the contemporary Habermasian public sphere and their position in relation to neoliberal discourse. The analysis in this thesis starts from the premise that language use is a part of social practice (Fairclough 1991: 17), and that the use of discourse is one important means for NGOs to achieve their goals. Discourse is language used in a way that aims to change the practices of others. The question of whether this discourse is chosen consciously to appeal to a public with some specific expectations of these specific types of texts, or whether this is the only discourse that can function in a neoliberal system is one that would require a different research method and approach. The focus here is on the language as practice and the choice of a specific discourse or discourses by those using it to achieve political objectives.

The main aim of the present research is to study how NGOs position themselves regarding neoliberalism and will attempt to answer the following questions: Firstly, are elements of neoliberal discourses present in NGO discourse? Secondly, how are these neoliberal elements represented and contested within the texts?

The empirical material is gathered from Internet websites; yet, it is not the effect of the Internet on the public or the participants in discourse that will be the main topic of this study. Instead, more attention will be given to examining the ways in which neoliberal or other types of public spaces are actually used rather than to describing how they came about.

This thesis is divided into three main chapters. In the first chapter, an overview will be given of the theoretical and philosophical background of the subject area, including the theories of neoliberalism from Michel Foucault, David Harvey and Joseph Stiglitz; Jürgen

Habermas on the public sphere and Norman Fairclough on discourse to lead the way to method and empirical analysis. The second chapter presents the method used in the research, which is based on Fairclough's critical discourse analysis and adapted to the corpus material. The third chapter starts with a presentation of the corpus and continues with a detailed analysis of the texts, ending with a synthesis of the results of the analysis with the theoretical material presented in the first chapter. The analysis consists of three levels: description, interpretation and explanation.

1 NEOLIBERAL DISCOURSE IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

The present chapter focuses on the theoretical debate surrounding neoliberalism and NGOs in the public sphere, including neoliberal discourse and the contribution of critical discourse analysis and critical theory to this topic. The presentation is divided into five subchapters, starting with main theories of neoliberalism, continuing with Jürgen Habermas' public sphere theory and the position of NGOs in it. The chapter is rounded up with an overview of critical discourse analysis and Norman Fairclough's critical discourse theory, serving as an introduction to the research method discussed in detail in chapter 2.

1.1 Theories of neoliberalism

'Neoliberalism' is a term, which is neither universally accepted nor easily defined, because it is not only the meaning of the term but also its use that is contested. For example, Joseph Stiglitz criticizes the forceful liberalization of trade and capital markets without referring directly to 'neoliberalism', using instead the term 'Washington Consensus' (Stiglitz 2002: 15–17). Other authors have noted that neoliberalism seems to be the term employed by those critical of it.

The basic analysis of the functioning of neoliberalism is presented in Michel Foucault's *Birth of Biopolitics* (2008) based on the Collège de France course from 1978–79. He sums up the theoretical and political principles of neoliberalism with the following:

The problem of neo-liberalism is rather how the overall exercise of political power can be modeled on the principles of a market economy. So it is not a question of freeing an empty space, but of taking the formal principles of a market economy and referring and relating them to, of projecting them on to a general art of government. (Foucault 2008: 131)

Above Foucault provides an insight into the nature of government action. He states that if in orthodox liberalism the government was not supposed to intervene, in neoliberalism it is supposed to do so, but in a specific way. The government's (Foucault uses 'government' instead of 'state') regulatory activities should not fix prices, create jobs

or do public investments. The regulatory (French *ordonnatrice*) activities should manage the environment of economic activities, i.e. the population, technology, education, legal framework, land tenure, climate and so on. In the two types of action, the economic intervention should be discreet, whereas the social intervention should be extensive (Foucault 2008: 138–141).

With 30 years separating the two, Harvey in *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (1996: 2) defines neoliberalism as “a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade”. He emphasizes the importance of ideology in shaping the economic system but he does not offer a definition of ideology itself. Although he denounces the “ideological assault” of neoliberal politicians and ideology that creates popular consent, he also attempts to look beyond the ideological and cultural mechanisms and show through an analysis of our everyday experience how neoliberalism has “penetrated ‘common-sense’ understandings” (Harvey 1996: 23, 40).

Joseph Stiglitz, is one of the economists critical of neoliberalism, yet he proposes to reform the economic system from the inside. He admits the detrimental effect of imposing reforms and liberalization on countries which may not be socially or economically ready to adopt the international economic system under the terms imposed (Stiglitz 2002: 9–14).

It remains open to debate whether a viable alternative to the present system exists. According to critical theorists such as David Harvey and Slavoj Žižek (among others) another system is possible. However, like other critics of neoliberalism, they mostly fail to provide substantive proposals about what form an alternative system should take.

1.2 Jürgen Habermas and the public sphere

Jürgen Habermas' ideas on public sphere, communicative action and mass communication are of importance to critical discourse analysis (CDA) for he puts great emphasis on communication and discourse (Fairclough 1999: 27, 34, 43, 64, 75, 83–87). According to Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999: 5) the great insight of “Habermas's analysis of the bourgeois public sphere was that a public sphere is constituted as a particular way of using language in public, and the proliferation of public spheres /.../ is a proliferation of ways of using language in public”. Another aspect relevant to the present thesis is his commitment to universality and his vision of the future global system (mainly in Habermas 2001).

Jürgen Habermas originally defined the public sphere as “the sphere of private people come together as a public /.../ [that] soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labour” (Habermas 1991: 27). Three criteria should be followed for the existence of a public sphere: disregard of status among participants (thus separating it from the state and the market), existence of a common concern among them and finally, the inclusive nature of the public sphere, never assuming that it is or could be cut off from an even larger ‘public’ (Habermas 1991: 36-37). As a development of the theory of an all-encompassing public sphere, later analyses by scholars, including Habermas himself, acknowledge the existence of several public spheres (Habermas 1992).

According to Habermas (1991: 160) the bourgeois public sphere emerged at the turn of the 18th century in England, where public opinion began to be formed by journalism – the fourth estate – and parliament had to answer to public opinion. Habermas observes that as a continuation of this historical development since the first decades of the

20th century the bourgeois public sphere has been disintegrating into a commodified mass culture that is not capable of critical-rational thinking. He believes that as all the other social classes joined in, the public sphere became more open to the influence of media and “a public sphere in appearance only” (Habermas 1991: 171).

Civil society is in this Habermasian context defined as the “realm of commodity exchange and social labor governed by its own laws” (Habermas 1991: 3) that developed as a “corollary of the depersonalized state authority” (Fairclough 1991: 19) and that moved economic activities into the private sphere, out of the control of the state, but also out of the individual household (the *oikos*) into the public sphere to be subject to a public debate (Habermas 1991: 19), hence transforming the meaning of the terms ‘private’ and ‘public’. Civil society organizations, including NGOs, are part of the public sphere that Habermas describes as the mediator between private interests and the state (Habermas 1991: 223). Habermas claims that a “global public sphere” does not yet exist, although non-governmental organizations are important contributors in creating “transnational public spheres” (Habermas 1997: 125). At this stage, it is necessary to clarify that Habermas makes a specific distinction between international (agreements between individual states, treaties and cooperation agreements), transnational (agreements between states in specific regions, the EU for example, creating its own law) and supranational (global) level (the UN, global society), which represents a movement from individual states into a cosmopolitan or postnational constellation led by a “cosmopolitan solidarity” (Habermas 2001: 53, 55-57). (Throughout this thesis Habermas’ definition of these terms will be followed.) NGOs are the ones that bring the voices of the people to the transnational public spheres and in order to achieve this transformation from an international towards a supranational public sphere or ‘world society’, the UN should develop from a “congress of

states” into a “World Parliament” (Habermas 1997: 133). Concerning development towards more democracy Habermas (2001: 111) states:

Institutionalized participation of non-governmental organizations in the deliberations of international negotiating systems would strengthen the legitimacy of the procedure insofar as mid-level transnational decision-making processes could then be rendered transparent for national public spheres, and thus be reconnected with decision-making procedures at the grassroots level (Habermas 2001: 111).

Habermasian public sphere theory has a number of contemporary uses and critics, such as Crossley and Roberts (2004: 10-12) who confirm that Habermas’ work from the 1960s is relevant today. However, Habermas is criticized for his focus on rigid typologies and dichotomies that are now being confronted with a Bakhtinian plurality of discourses and Bourdieu’s criticism of abstract models. In addition, Habermas seems to have failed to address the question of the male-centered nature of the bourgeois public sphere.

Habermasian theories are of interest to the discourse analyst for the public sphere, in a sense, is constructed by discourse itself. As the focus in this thesis is the international and transnational, mainly interaction between a specific number of states and actors, we arrive at a study of what Habermas has called the ‘transnational public sphere’. This rather wide term will serve as the background for an analysis of neoliberal discourse applied by NGOs as the actors in this international public sphere. Another aspect of Habermas’ work important for this thesis is his emphasis on the position of communication and discourse in the aforementioned processes. The role of the NGOs and the mass media in this sphere will be discussed in the following subsection.

1.3 NGOs in the public sphere of mass media

NGOs used to focus mostly on humanitarian aid, but this is no longer their primary goal. Starting from the 1970s they are taking a stronger stand in creating sustainable and long-term development in the regions, which includes campaigning for fairer policies (Collingwood 2006: 440). “A large transnational NGO such as Oxfam International, for

instance, now devotes a considerable amount of its energy and resources to campaigning on matters of global economic justice, in addition to its traditional operational role” (Collingwood 2006: 442).

Habermas seems to think politically active NGOs have an important role to play in the public sphere. At the same time, David Harvey is critical of the term ‘public sphere’ and seems not to be convinced about the emancipatory power of NGOs (Harvey 1996: 77). Harvey criticizes what he sees as the “profoundly anti-democratic nature of neoliberalism”, pointing out that both international institutions (IMF, World Bank, etc.) as well as the NGOs largely operate outside of democratic oversight (Harvey 1996: 205).

The question of democracy and democratic legitimacy is a serious criticism often used by various parties to undermine the claims of other actors. On the one hand, NGOs have not been elected as representatives of the people. On the other hand, democratically elected governments that have a popular mandate may be unable or unwilling to pursue certain policies, or, use their power by moving outside of their specific mandate to pursue actions in other countries, as is the case with the G8 in this topic. Examples and discussion of this issue will be presented in the analysis.

An important aspect in a transnational public sphere is the media, especially mass media. In the public sphere or the public spheres in plural where NGOs are active, their discourse is closely tied to the media. Habermas’ criticism of media influence is echoed by Bourdieu and Wacquant who claim that “/.../ perpetual media repetition has gradually transformed into a universal common sense” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2001: 2). This common sense is then presented as economic fatalism and natural necessity. Yet, when it comes to NGOs and other participants in the public sphere, use of advertising and mainstream political discourse may be a precondition for having an impact (Fairclough 1999: 13).

Although the specific influence of Internet is not the main topic of this analysis, it surely has an effect on the definition of ‘public sphere’. The seemingly egalitarian space where everyone can express their opinion creates a multiplicity of voices that, in order to be heard and noticed, must follow a number of rules. Firstly, it is a question of access to the technology. Secondly, one must comply with the consumerism that rules the media. Thus the NGOs must provide something that is easily comprehensible and that will sell as an article, regardless of their potential opposition to the system. Thus, the NGOs, when stepping out in the public sphere to negotiate a position of ‘hegemony’ or ideological power and achieve their goals may be required to follow the rules set by society which they may at the same time be trying to criticize.

NGOs help in establishing the transnational public sphere, representing voices that would otherwise be muted. It is of interest here what types of discourses they employ as participants in the public sphere *vis-à-vis* what is perceived as the hegemonic neoliberal discourse and the tool used for answering this question is critical discourse analysis.

1.4 Critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) seeks to combine linguistics, mainly the systemic functional linguistics of Halliday, with critical social theory, including the work of Habermas and other members of the Frankfurt school (Fairclough 1999: 4). Fairclough states that “[l]inguistic phenomena are social phenomena of a special sort, and social phenomena are (in part) linguistic phenomena” (Fairclough 2001: 23). This subchapter provides an overview of the basic tenets, terms and proponents of CDA.

The main critical theory and CDA terms used in this thesis are discourse, ideology and hegemony. Foucault defines the concept of ‘discourse’ as “practices which systematically form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault 1972: 49). Fairclough

(2003: 3) sees discourse in discourse analysis “as the particular view of language in use /.../ – as an element of social life which is closely connected with other elements”. For him “ideologies are representations of aspects of the world which can be shown to contribute to establishing, maintaining and changing social relations of power, domination and exploitation” (Fairclough 2003: 9). Ideology is closely tied to hegemony, which is defined as “relations of domination based upon consent rather than coercion, involving the naturalization of practices and their social relations as well as relations between practices, as matters of common sense” (Fairclough 1999: 24).

Within CDA, several approaches can be distinguished that situate themselves directly within critical discourse analysis including, among others, the work of Ruth Wodak in what is called a Discourse Historical Approach (Reisigl and Wodak 2001), as well as Teun A. Van Dijk with a socio-cognitive approach (2008, 2009) and Paul Chilton (2004) who concentrates more on political discourse analysis. In addition, the Essex School of Discourse Analysis, best known in the work of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (2001), attempt to expose hegemony in society through the deconstruction of what we see as objective and natural (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 3). A detailed overview of the theorist Norman Fairclough, whose work will be used in the present thesis, will be provided in the following subchapter.

1.5 Norman Fairclough

Norman Fairclough’s work is the basis of the method used in the present thesis. In one of his earlier books *Language and Power* (2001, first published in 1989) Fairclough states that language and society cannot be separated and proposes a threefold system of analysis: text (written or oral), interaction (interpretation) and context (social situation), where the first focuses on contents, knowledge and beliefs, the second on social

relationships and the third on subjects and social identities (Fairclough 2001: 19, 21, 62). In other works on CDA, Fairclough offers various elaborations of the threefold division mentioned above, including a combination with David Harvey (Fairclough 2000: 61), arriving at four moments of social practice and analysis, and in Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) a combination with philosopher Roy Bhaskar's 'explanatory critique' (Fairclough 2000: 66).

Fairclough aims to provide an approach, not a rigid method and the specific method for a specific research topic should be created through a two-way process between the empirical material and the guidelines provided, as it is more and more the tendency in social studies and sociolinguistics. It could be said that what we see throughout Fairclough's work is a re-conceptualization of the guidelines for analysis and the levels of analysis as well as emphasis on the fuzziness of the borders between them, so as not to constrain the researcher in a ready-made set of tools that would in itself undermine CDA's claim that all theories are also discourse, thus open to debate.

In his later works Fairclough (2001; 2003; 2006; 2009) starts to focus more on the international and global aspects of critical discourse analysis, analyzing globalization and international processes, including multinational corporations and the neoliberal economic system, which is especially relevant for the present research topic. In an article on globalization Fairclough (2009) makes preliminary observations about discourse on the global scale. He observes “/.../ particular forms [...] of communication that are specialized for trans-national and interregional interaction, such as the genres of global news networks; and that the ‘flows’ include flows of representations, narratives, and discourses, such as neoliberal economic discourse” (Fairclough 2009: 318). Fairclough focuses on ‘new capitalism’, a term he uses to designate ‘globalization’, ‘information society’, ‘consumer

culture' and so on. These terms are linked to the neoliberalism under study here and in his later works (2001; 2013) Fairclough also takes up neo-liberalism as an object of study.

In *Language and Globalization* (2006) Fairclough also studies non-governmental organizations, claiming that the specific NGO studied does not provide an alternative to international trade regulation criticized in the text, but rather demands changes to be made within the trade system. He then goes on to present a Green party publication, which asks for more independence and self-sufficiency for the locals, as well as government aid to local communities, not international free trade (Fairclough 2006: 47-51). Both of these analyses will prove important for my analysis below. Fairclough (2009: 332) also emphasizes the importance of mass media “in the constitution of the public knowledge and information, beliefs, values, and attitudes that are necessary for establishing and sustaining economic, social, and political systems and orders”.

Taking into account all of the above, the present research shall adapt the approach originally proposed in the 1989 book to the specific texts under study and complement it with the later works (Fairclough 2001; 2003; 2006; 2013). The three-level division can still be seen as a basis of a critical discourse analysis following Fairclough. Changes made to the original framework are explained in chapter 2 on method.

2 METHOD

It can be challenging to choose or develop a method in CDA, where, as Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) have said, creating a set method is not desirable (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999: 17). That is why terminology from Fairclough's latest works on critical discourse analysis shall be incorporated into his earlier views as much as possible to follow the current trends in CDA. The initial framework is based on *Language and Power* (2001: 19, 21, 25, 62), where he proposes a three-level analysis of discourse that provides a stepping-stone towards a possible re-elaboration and adaptation of these premises. The method is divided into description, interpretation and explanation.

2.1 Description

The first stage of CDA is description, which involves textual analysis of the subject material. Fairclough proposes ten key questions for text analysis which are divided under three headings: vocabulary, grammar and textual structures (Fairclough 2001: 110-111). Although this is seen as the first level of analysis, it can be difficult to separate it from the interpretation level because the meanings given to words often depend on the position of the interpreter or participant, as well as the explanation level and the analysis of ideology. Nevertheless, a general analysis of the structures and vocabulary of a text will provide input for the following two levels of analysis. The following is the list of selection of Fairclough's question list that will be used in the analysis in chapter 3.

A Vocabulary:

- Words that are ideologically contested; ideologically relevant meaning relations (synonymy, antonymy) and rewording/overwording;
- Relational values of words: euphemistic expression; markedly formal or informal words;
- Expressive value of words;
- Metaphors.

B Grammar:

- Unclear agency; active/passive;
- Modes (declarative, grammatical question, imperative); modality; pronouns ‘we’ and ‘they’.

C Textual structures:

- Larger-scale structures of the text;
(based on Fairclough 2001: 110-111).

Fairclough’s in-depth analysis of all the ten questions (Fairclough 2001: 112-139) will be referred to in detail in the analysis part of the thesis for the sake of clarity.

2.2 Interpretation

Textual features become socially operative only as part of social interaction and based on “common-sense assumptions” (Fairclough 2001: 140). Fairclough focuses this level of analysis on what he calls ‘member’s resources’ (MR). In this section the emphasis will be on the following:

- Intertextual context, quotes, sources and assumptions;
- Discourse type(s) and frames

(based on Fairclough 2001: 146, 162).

According to Fairclough ‘frames’ represent the entities that populate the (natural and social) world i.e. ‘woman’ and ‘democracy’ and help readers frame the information or activity under discussion by tying it to objects or entities that are familiar to them. Frames also add connotations and additional information to the message (Fairclough 2001: 158, 159). In this analysis frames will be used to study NGO representation and legitimation strategies.

2.3 Explanation

The third level, explanation, seeks to interpret discourse in terms of struggle and power relations in society, focusing on ideology and socio-historical conditions (Fairclough 2001: 141). Both social effects of discourse and social determinants of discourse should be investigated at three levels of social organization: the societal level, the institutional level, and the situational level and these involve 'processes of struggle' or 'relations of power' (Fairclough 2001: 163). This structure is used in the analysis with the following modifications:

- Social determinants: levels of distance, power relations and power struggles in an international scene;
- Ideologies: the expression of ideology within the texts;
(based on Fairclough 2001: 166).

NGO discourse rather overtly addresses questions of power and is directed towards change in the relations of power. Study of power relations and ideologies is combined to tie the analysis to larger structures.

3 ANALYSIS OF NGO DISCOURSE

The analysis of NGO discourse is an application of the research method presented in the previous chapter to the corpus of NGO press releases. The chapter begins with an introduction of the texts and the NGOs studied and then continues with three subchapters on description, interpretation and explanation of the empirical material. The aim of this section of the thesis is to start from the most basic text level and work towards a more general analysis that allows for a synthesis with the theoretical basis.

3.1 Corpus

The texts studied are examples of NGO discourse that concentrate on the activities and initiatives of the G8 in developing countries. Classifying the NGOs concerned in this study is slightly problematic because of the extent of their activities and the general variety of civil society organizations. NGOs themselves mostly define themselves as organizations, movements or campaign groups, not explicitly as non-governmental organizations, as can be seen below in the introduction to the NGOs. A more general and appropriate term would be civil society organizations but that leads to the difficulty of defining what civil society is and how it is separated from other domains such as government, and the 'public'. Non-governmental, on the other hand, implies that the organizations have no direct connection with the governments, which is a common perception of NGOs (see subsection 3.3.2), yet they may cooperate and receive funding from them, as well as cooperating with the private sector (philanthropists, sponsors etc.). Nonetheless, considering the complexity of the civil society scene the term 'NGO' will thus permit generalization and focusing on their similar goals.

The corpus was compiled with the aim of choosing a coherent set of texts, namely, press releases that could be seen as a representation of the NGOs' policies and viewpoints.

The press release is meant to address the public sphere and is therefore especially relevant for the research topic at hand. Firstly, a general list of texts on the topic of the G8 Alliance was compiled from the websites of NGOs whose main activities include poverty reduction and food security and that corresponded to the following criteria: organization mainly or partly based in the USA or the UK (the text being issued on their international website or by an agency or partner site in the UK or the USA); with an aim to fight against poverty in developing countries, especially Africa, thus have an international scope and partnership; are non-governmental and hold a claim to independence. Secondly, the resulting list of texts by relevant NGOs was narrowed down to press releases that would form a relatively coherent set concentrating mainly on the G8 Alliance. The resulting corpus consists of eight texts by eight organizations: Oxfam International (OXM), War on Want (WWP), ONE, World Development Movement (WDM), Friends of the Earth (FOE), Bread for the World (BRE), World Vision (VIS). The following NGO descriptions are compiled from the information provided in the press releases about the organizations themselves as well as in the sections "about us" on the websites where the press releases were published. Although the NGOs are international in scope, the texts can largely be divided into those originating from the US base office or agency (US-based) and those published by UK agencies or offices (UK-based).

International agency Oxfam (Washington DC, USA office) is “an international confederation of 17 organizations working together in more than 90 countries” (OXM; Oxfam 2014); “ONE is a campaigning and advocacy organization of more than 3.5 million people taking action to end extreme poverty and preventable disease, particularly in Africa” (ONE, ONE n.d). The two overtly Christian and US-based groups include the US lobby group Bread for the World, "a collective Christian voice urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad” that writes letters to members of Congress.

(BRE; Bread for the World n.d.). World Vision is “a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice” (VIS) and they work in nearly 100 countries (World Vision 2014).

The UK-based groups include War on Want that calls itself a movement that fights poverty in developing countries (War on Want n.d.) and World Development Movement, a “democratically-governed movement made up of local campaign groups based in towns and cities around the UK”, seeking “economic justice for the world’s poor majority” (World Development Movement n.d.). Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland presents itself as a part of Friends of the Earth International which has groups in more than 75 countries. It is both a campaign group and a charity that campaigns “for solutions to environmental problems”. (Friends of the Earth n.d.)

The size of the corpus is 4746 words, which should provide a thorough overview of the type of discourse studied. On the other hand, the scope and applicability of the results or conclusions to NGO discourse in general is naturally limited due to the small number of texts studied, but it will hopefully provide a starting point for future research in the same area. The examples in the following discussion come from the corpus and are noted with the source text, unless mentioned otherwise. A table of the corpus texts with additional information is listed in appendix 1.

3.2 Description

The description subchapter presents an analysis of the corpus texts based on the research questions proposed by Fairclough discussed in subchapter 2.1. It is divided into three sections (vocabulary, grammar and structures), which are in turn presented as subsections based on the most important features.

3.2.1 Vocabulary

The first subsection of the vocabulary level includes features that express an experiential value, such as ideologically contested word and ideologically relevant meaning relations (synonymy, antonymy) that are used in rewording and overwording. The second subsection looks at words that create relational value, such as euphemistic expressions and formal or informal words. The third subsection explores the expressive values of words and the last subsection is dedicated to metaphors. (Fairclough 2001: 110–111)

3.2.1.1 Ideological words, synonymy, antonymy (experiential value)

This subsection aims to discuss vocabulary choices in the texts and bring out classification schemes that are partly expressed through synonymy and antonymy. Choices made when rewording and over-wording are not only a stylistic tool to avoid repetition but also an expression of an attitude or a judgment, carrying a certain ideology. The connection with ideological features and context will be studied in more depth on the explanation level (subchapter 3.4).

A concept that is an important part of ideologies but is not easily defined is ‘freedom’ (also ‘free’ and ‘freely’) that can largely be divided into economic and political freedom. The specific contexts where it is used give an insight into its meaning for the authors of the texts, as in the following examples:

“Smallholder farmers need the freedom to pursue their own growing strategies /.../” (OXM quote)

“/.../ corporate and genetically modified (GM) seeds, agro-chemicals, resource grabs and laws that prevent farmers from freely using, sharing or selling their seed.” (WWP)

As can be said from the above examples, NGO discourse focuses on economic freedom and participation in the (global) market, which is in many ways in accordance with neoliberal discourse. NGOs are claiming that the G8 activities are a constraint to the local farmers' participation in the market. In this interpretation, integration into the global market is a guarantee of freedom, disregarding the serious obstacles that small farmers will face. There is a juxtaposition between freedom offered by the G8 and the free market and the freedom offered under government rule. 'Freely' is used to refer to how the free activity of local communities is inhibited (WWP). Yet, the economic freedom is presented as important for individual farmers, who wish to "freely use, share and sell", referring to a local level free market, although only for seeds. Thus, reference still seems to be made to an individualistic view of freedom, which is represented as benefitting the community as a whole.

Political freedom is not a term used explicitly in the texts but it regroups concepts tied to having the right to speak up and to participate and to be consulted in the decision-making processes. Political freedom and participation are closely tied to the consultation process, democracy and civil society. The following examples show how NGOs position civil society and tie it to democracy:

"A number of African civil society leaders and groups publicly raised concerns about the path the G8 is taking on food security in an open letter to the G8 and a declaration signed at a Committee on World Food Security Consultation for African civil society groups in April of 2012" (OXM).

"Having been developed without African civil society, it's unclear what role they will play in its execution" (OXM).

".../ a coalition of pan-African networks, with members in 50 African countries and representing smallholder farmers, indigenous peoples and civil society" (WWP).

In the above examples, the definition of civil society remains unclear. WWP lists civil society with the two other groups that they are supposed to be representing. Civil society is used as an umbrella term for all organizations and groups that represent local interests but it seems that NGOs are only carriers of their voices.

‘Civil society’ is credited with the right to represent African farmers but seems to be left without a defined power to do so. The term ‘civil society groups’ is present in most of the texts and is directly tied to the main topic of the text, i.e. the situation of smallholder farmers and local communities. In the vision of the NGOs, civil society forms an important part of a democratic process. NGOs emphasize that by not consulting with civil society “[t]he New Alliance has bypassed [the] democratic process in Africa” (WDM Gaia quote). Yet, Harvey (subchapter 1.1) has noted that civil society itself is not democratically elected. Moreover, emphasis on civil society could be a sign of a thin state, which refers to a neoliberalization process.

As economy is one of the main topics of the texts, how the NGOs use economic vocabulary could help study how NGOs view and position themselves regarding the (international) neoliberal market system. An important feature of the market system is goal-setting and numerical target-setting as the main measure of success. Specific goals and targets for poverty reduction are also mentioned in several texts (OXF, etc., discussed in subsection 3.3.1). VIS also makes several references to targets (numbers for poverty and stunted children) but also adds that the measure of success cannot be economic figures for agricultural production but the survival of children. They also criticize the missing Accountability report promised by the G8 giving the G8 a grade "incomplete", although the grading scale remains unclear (VIS). Thus, although the target-setting by the market system is being criticized, it is also an important feature in NGO discourse.

The word 'invest' is also used as a positive term covering any type of aid, although it has a strong connection with profits and economic gain. BRE praises Obama's leadership for \$22 bn of investments in the poor countries and bemoans a "lack of investments" in African agriculture. It seems that the word 'invest' does not necessarily mean gaining revenues from these investments but that the word originally used in the economic sphere has colonized other fields: one could also invest in the future, in the health of children and so on, where revenues are not directly measurable in digits. One could say that the economic investment frame in general is applied to a much wider field of activities. This claim is supported by the use of other terms and expressions that are commonly related to economics, such as "have lived up to their end of the bargain" (OXF), "president Obama deserves credit for /.../" or even reference to children who "cannot afford delays" (VIS).

In addition to economy, NGOs refer to the environment and 'sustainable' is one of the 'buzz-words' directly related to the environment that can cover a wide range of activities. OXM urges to find "sustainable solutions to hunger and poverty" whereas WDM talks of "sustainable agricultural techniques" that would allow "household food security" (WDM). A positive connotation is given to nature, agriculture and Africa, whereas a negative connotation is given to profits and privatization. This amounts to a construction of a natural and ecological Africa.

Some widely acknowledged biological, ecological and environmental methods that are generally thought to be good for the environment and the local economy are criticized. For example, FOE claims biofuels that are "guzzling the planet's precious food resources" which has the effect of inflating food prices. WWP refers to the "huge areas of African land" going to "biofuel and export agribusiness" (WWP). 'Guzzle' gives a clear sense of wasting and uneconomical results – thus the activities are not only unsustainable but also

uneconomical. In these references, biofuels are resignified from being a means to reduce global pollution to a practice that reduces food available for human consumption. The negative opinion is emphasized in the disturbing image of burning and guzzling food, with its implications of wastefulness.

Another contentious topic is bio-fortification and genetically modified plants, which are among the solutions that Western countries provide to end malnutrition. The two practices are supposed to increase yields and resistance to drought and insects. Lobby groups like ONE and BRE were working towards including nutrition in the agenda of the G8, but this seems to include by default the participation of seed and GMO corporations criticized by other NGOs. Although bio-fortification can be done with conventional breeding methods, without genetic modifications (internet source), WWP still claims that “[b]io-fortification [of crops] is a dangerous distraction from real solutions for nutrition such as increasing crop diversity” (WWP).

NGOs are relying on and reproducing the image of a natural and ecological Africa that goes with the assumption that smallholder farming is environment-friendly and ecological. Locals have a “model of afro-ecological family farming” that should be saved. In a similar vein, the question of strategies for poverty alleviation is tied to general global issues such as climate change and natural resource constraints (OXF).

What is commonly known as the developing world, more precisely African countries in this case, are referred to as “poor countries” or “developing countries” (OXF), the “world’s poorest”, “passengers” (ONE) that have no say in their future and must follow the path imposed on them. The local actors are mostly called “local farmers” (FOE; WWP), “smallholder farming” (FOE; WWP), “small farmers” (WWP), “small-scale producers” (OXF) and “smallholder farmers” (FOE; WWP; OXF).

The main issue under discussion is termed as “global hunger”, “food insecurity” (OXF), “complex challenges” (OXF); “hunger” (personification). The word ‘hunger’ is omnipresent in the texts. It conveys the urgency of the problem, yet obscuring the reasons or actors behind this complex problem. In a kind of personification of hunger as a menace, it becomes a common and global focus and aim that does not belong to a specific ideological rights discourse but refers to the basic physiological needs of human beings and is thus not debatable. It is an expressive and emotional term that is much more effective than the less emotionally charged and more formal ‘food insecurity’.

The G8 is often referred to as “rich countries”, “the world’s richest countries” (OXF) or “world's wealthiest nations” (FOE). “G8 powers” (WDM) makes a direct reference to power. In general, there is constant reference to wealth and prosperity in the G8, creating a division between the rich and the poor. The companies, especially Western companies are seen as “multinational corporations” (WDM), “donors” (VIS). There seems to be a tendency to substitute multinational corporations for the private sector covering business activities and entrepreneurship that does not fall under the public sector (state activities) and is not situated within the intimate private sphere but within the public sphere. Examples in the texts:

“[T]he ‘New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition’ focuses too heavily on the role of the private sector to tackle the complex challenges of food insecurity in the developing world” (OXM).

“This G8 marked a new and more unifying direction as both the public and private sector came alongside civil society groups to fight chronic hunger and malnutrition, but we had hoped for more” (VIS).

Although OXM also criticizes the G8 Alliance’s heavy focus on the private sector they admit that it has “a positive role especially local small and medium enterprises”

(OXM). The OXM text is not so much an attack against foreign corporations but rather the lack of G8 commitment to the promises they have made in the past. Both G8 and corporate “over-prescriptive” guidelines are rejected but the main emphasis seems to be on chastising the G8 leaders into committing more sums to the efforts, not discouraging the private sector from joining in (OXM). Following the examples, NGOs do not seem to refer to the wide definition of the private sector that encompasses both large corporations and small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) but may use it as a synonym for large Western corporations only, leaving aside SMEs and local African enterprises that may participate in or benefit from the G8 Alliance. Thus, the WWP text denounces the G8 Alliance as a purely corporate alliance benefiting “multinational seed, fertilizer and agro-chemical companies, private breeders” (WWP), leaving aside the fact that local SMEs could also participate in the initiative. It is a generalization that simplifies the situation into a binary opposition where readers will find it easier to take sides, creating a more emotional result.

The G8 Alliance is referred to as “plan”, “bold beginning”, “new alliance”, “the New Alliance for Food and Security”, “the new G8 food security plan” (ONE), “scheme” (WDM), “G8’s hunger initiative” and “ill-conceived initiative” (FOE). At the same time, the local or non-G8 solutions to hunger are represented as “food security plans”, “sustainable solutions”, “good plans to tackle hunger”, “agro-ecological family farming”, “safety net” (WWP), “alternative strategies” (WDM), referring to the unsustainable and less secure and beneficial nature of the solutions proposed by the G8.

Use of antonymy gives an insight into how NGOs choose to represent certain topics or actors by placing them into opposition. The study of explicit or implicit antonyms is an important part of how NGOs choose to represent the situation. Bringing out and emphasizing clear oppositions is a relatively effective strategy for structuring and

clarifying the situation and thereby influencing the understanding that the public have. A list of terms are used in opposition regarding local and corporate activities respectively, for example, “diversity”–“one size fits all” (OXM), “poor–rich” (simplified opposition), “local food needs”–“corporate profits” (WDM).

This is quite clearly an integral part of the classification schemes used for vocabulary. An overview of the ideological nature of terms is given in the table in the section on ideology (3.4.2).

3.2.1.2 Euphemisms (relational value)

Euphemisms and formality fall under what Fairclough calls the relational values of words, creating “social relationships between participants” (Fairclough 2001: 116). The NGO texts rarely address the reader directly; nonetheless, they create a relationship with the readers through euphemisms, markedly formal or informal words, to create common values with the readers.

The aim of euphemisms is to mitigate negative assessments and judgments of participants or their actions. Examples of euphemisms include “food security”, “complex challenges of food insecurity” (OXM) as a euphemism for hunger.

Sean Phelan (2007), who writes about euphemistic neoliberal discourse claims that “[t]he market is equivalenced as the sphere of economic freedom, while the state is signified as the embodiment of illusory, and ultimately coercive, political freedom” (Phelan 2007: 34) and the opposition between the euphemism "progressive and modern" against the transparent "evangelical and archaic" is also important for our discussion (Phelan 2007: 34). It seems that NGO discourse is inclining towards reversing these descriptions and applying them to the market (see subsection 3.4.2).

In my view, the analysis of euphemisms in the framework of relational analysis should take into account the importance of buzz-words studied by Andrea Cornwall and

Karen Brock (2005: 5), such as ‘participation’, ‘empowerment’ and ‘poverty reduction’, which in their analysis are used to justify certain interventions and create a common consensus on the topic. These types of words create a sense of common understanding with the reader who is assumed to be used to the set of words that are used on other texts related to the topic and aid at creating a common understanding of the problems and activities tied to humanitarian aid (subsection 3.4.2).

3.2.1.3 Expressive value of words

Expressive value is tied to the relationship to truth and it concerns “mobilization of expressive values for particular persuasive ends” (Fairclough 2001: 99). It conveys a judgment or an evaluation and this section concentrates on the representation of corporate (private sector) initiatives and the negative evaluations tied to the expressions.

As corporations invest in African countries they take over agricultural land. According to WDM, the G8 has no legitimacy on the question of land tenure (WDM). NGOs are challenging the legality of corporate action in Africa, highlighted in the use of negatively loaded terms like ‘land grabs’. The telling word choice implies greed and illegality, emphasized by the negative connotation of the frequently recurring term.

“Africa’s diversity and knowledge systems are being threatened by corporate and genetically modified (GM) seeds, agro-chemicals, resource grabs and laws that prevent farmers from freely using, sharing or selling their seed” (WWP).

“ ‘[B]latant land grabs’ backed by G8 powers such as the ProSavanna project in Mozambique are forcing farmers off their lands and destroying their livelihoods” (WDM).

In the above sentences, the NGOs construct a negative meaning. The word ‘grab’ already has a negative connotation, although the investments themselves that force “farmers off their land” (WDM) are not necessarily against the law. The main issue is

threat of land going from local farmers, including women, to big companies. The freedom of the farmer is positioned as being more important than the freedom of corporations.

Another negative evaluation is a “new wave of colonialism”, a quote that WDM takes from an African Civil Society Statement, supported in turn by a UK statement and published on the websites of other NGOs. It presents a severe judgment on the inappropriateness of the G8 Alliance and NGOs explicitly quote it in order to show its source from the African target group itself, not from the Western associations. Although in my corpus it occurs only in the WDM text, the term ‘colonialism’ has echoed in the media in articles related to the Alliance (e.g. Provost *et al* 2014).

Agriculture is represented as two different activities: firstly, as an economic investment when pursued by multinational corporations, as WWP denounces the type of "biofuel and export agribusiness" pursued by corporations that includes "cash crops" and the "global cotton market" for corporations; secondly, as a human survival issue, the "model of agro-ecological family farming" that concentrates on "key staple crops" (WWP). The positioning in this opposition is very clear as corporate agriculture is identified with negatively loaded words like cash crops and stressing that the crops are being raised for export, rather than for local consumption.

The expressive values used in the texts carry a judgment or an approval. Negative evaluations seem to be given to the market and corporate actions whereas a positive connotation is for African initiatives. Expressive values are toned down into euphemism (relational value) for relational purposes, studied in the previous subsection (Fairclough 2001: 97).

3.2.1.4 Metaphors

Fairclough emphasizes the importance of metaphors, as the choice of metaphors can represent an ideology and he defines them as “a means of representing one aspect of

experience in terms of another” (Fairclough 1995: 119). The NGO texts contain a variety of metaphors, accentuated by the informal style of the texts and these are mostly related to space, movement and war.

How ‘space’ is perceived and represented by NGOs is important for creating a sense of unity between some actors and a more separated relationship between others. Geographically, Africa is a "possible new frontier" for economic action (WDM), perpetuating the center-periphery division common in colonialism. Space metaphors are mostly based on a specific perception of progress or a path, referring to "beginning", "end" (ONE) and "start" (OXF). NGOs thus reproduce a vision of progress for Africa. Thereby NGOs refer to the fact that the activities proposed are important but far from sufficient. Progress is also shown through movements in the space (on a path), mainly through steps, resembling the movement of the human body as in "step", "misstep" (OXM); "step forward" (ONE); "strong steps" (VIS); (Obama and other G8 leaders) took real strides (VIS), or even "step up to the plate" (ONE), while actors are invited to move "alongside" others in cooperation (VIS). But the path is not always guaranteed to be straight, especially for African countries: it can also become a "[world economy] roller coaster" (ONE) or a fruitless circular movement, a "cycle" (ONE). Thus, movements also go up and down, as in "falling down on the job" (OXF) and "stepped up to the plate" (ONE). In general, more reference is made to movement than stability. Another space metaphor present in the text is hunger and poverty depicted as a prison or a confinement: “escape hunger and poverty through agriculture” (OXM), "lifting out of poverty" (ONE).

There are specific patterns that refer to different frames of action, such as ‘sports’ or ‘war’, for example, that bring a certain connotation of competition or violence. The WWP text, as seems to be appropriate for the belligerent name of the organization, features a number of war-related metaphors, such as "assault", which evokes the need to urgently

"safeguard" the "diversity and knowledge systems" from the threat. There are copious references to the word "threat" and the use of coercive force ("strong-armed" into doing something), which parallels one of the 'buzz-words' "food security" (WWP). These terms are emphatic and refer to a world system of opposition and power relations, not positive cooperation. There is reference to a situation of war even in the name of the G8 Alliance itself: "alliance" suggests a union between parties to counter some type of danger or threat, or even another alliance. WWP talks about three Alliances, two of which are seen as negative, including the G8 Alliance and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) (promoting multinational companies) and the third one as positive: Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA), which represents local people (WWP).

It seems that poverty and hunger are accorded a status as a personified entity that must be fought ("fight against hunger", ONE). In a way, the problems are thereby distanced from the various sources of inequality of the global financial system, the failure of governments and other actors by labeling it with a general term 'poverty' or 'hunger' (see discussion on hunger above). This enables the NGOs to create a war-like situation and legitimizes the offence of the West without offending any other parties for no other specific state or actor is identified or is willing to identify with the abstract adversary 'poverty'. Thus, the fight is fought without a clearly identified enemy. Moreover, although war metaphors convey a sense of urgency and commitment, they also inevitably contain the failure of the initiative for it is essentially a war that cannot be won. Constant advances and forceful measures are needed in order to detract and confront critics who are always saying that not enough is being done or that the results are not sufficient.

This fight is also often expressed through sports metaphors as in "tackling hunger" (WDM twice; FOE). Both war and sports share the metaphors "target" and "goal" that can be connected either to achievement or annihilation. Set goals and numerical target-setting

is the main measure of success (in a market economy). Specific goals and targets for poverty reduction are mentioned in several texts (OXF, etc., discussed in subsection 3.3.1). VIS also makes several references to targets (numbers for poverty and stunted children) but also adds that the measure of success cannot be economic figures for agricultural production but the survival of children (VIS). This criticism is similar to that of Stiglitz, referred to in subchapter 1.1, regarding economic and numerical targets yet NGOs mostly welcome clear targets set by G8 countries.

As an alternative to war, WWP refers to “Pan-African networks” and local seed breeding as a “safety net [for food security]”. Network is a rather peaceful and contemporary term that Boltanski and Chiapello (2007: 141) see as one of the basic features of “the New Spirit of Capitalism”, whereas “alliance” would rather refer to old military measures and all-out battle in a rather neorealist sounding system. It is as if by referring to war metaphors NGOs were trying to show the seriousness of the economic dependency, thus revealing the malevolent nature already there in the name of the initiative.

In order to solve issues of discord, NGOs recommend bringing participants to the negotiating table as equal participants to play a role (OXM) as “agents of change” and to “build” (the New Alliance) across the countries (ONE). This may be an attempt to show the ones receiving the aid not as passive receivers (in a colonial framework) but as active agents, although the latter may be only an illusion. Reference is made to the obligations of Western countries as a “job” without “passing the buck” (OXF), making reference to an economic frame of work and profit, as they are the ones “guzzling” the planet's resources (FOE). Guzzling refers to waste and an unecological and unsustainable activity, which is again indirectly opposed to the ecological and sustainable Africa.

3.2.2 Grammar

The grammar section concentrates on the active and passive as well as we/you distinction that express the experiential, relational and expressive values of grammatical features (Fairclough 2001: 101-107).

3.2.2.1 Agency and active/passive (experiential value)

This section looks at experiential values of grammatical features (actions, events or attributions), namely agency and active/passive.

The agency in the text in general is not problematic. The texts feature inanimate subjects: “biofuels drive people off their lands”, “the plan mentions” (OXF), followed by the idea that the plan “must do more” (OXM). As inanimate objects are referred to as agents, such as plan, strategy, and so on, the actual agents are partly masked and the inanimate objects become the center of interest. The authors, on the other hand, are united under the name of a specific institution whose ethos serves to validate or maybe to discredit the text and its proposals. The actor may then be either the text or the dehumanized institution. Yet, this reference to texts or discourse also serves to show the discrepancies between declared intentions and actual actions, or rather the declarations missing some key conditions that should be fulfilled if the final goal is to be achieved. For example, the plans should include more requirements and regulations for the private sector participants, i.e. compulsory local level action and aid.

The use of active and passive is related to the question of unclear agency. Yet, in the texts studied, passive is used mostly when the agent is clear from the previous sentence. Ambiguous agents seem not to be beneficial for the purpose of this text. WWP features more passive voice, including the title “Africa’s Food Sovereignty Under Attack by Corporate Interests”, where the underlined part is the actor. The structure of the title puts emphasis on the negative action, which is then connected to the actor, the cause of the

problem. This leaves a different emphasis than the corresponding active sentence would. Firstly, the title becomes more compact; secondly, the actor seems to be sidelined by the *by*-phrase but is in reality brought forth and emphasized by being at the end of the title. In this case, I do not think that passive contributes to hiding or sidelining the actor. It is debatable whether the alternative “corporate attack on Africa’s Food Sovereignty” leaves a different impression.

Passive constructions can also be used to create a sense of common responsibility without explicitly naming the agent responsible for it: “more still must be done” (VIS; subsection 3.2.2.2).

3.2.2.2 Modes, modality, pronouns us/them (relational value)

Relational values of grammatical features studied under this section include modes (declarative); relational and expressive modality and pronouns ‘we’ and ‘they’.

The predominant mode in the texts is declarative. There are no directly imperative constructions; obligation is expressed through modal verbs. No questions are being asked about the subject, the authors and the quotes are giving clear opinions.

Relational modality expresses power relations, whereas expressive modality expresses the relationship the claim has to the truth (Fairclough 2001: 129). In this section, relational and expressive modality are studied together under the same title in order to avoid repetition. Modals ‘can’, ‘could’, ‘should’, ‘must’ and ‘will’ are used to convey a degree of obligation or possibility.

Referring to the probability of (future) events and expressive modality NGOs use ‘should’: “G8 leaders should join President Obama to commit resources /.../” (OXM). Will is used to present future events that are in reality probable as certain: “[private sector] will not be able to make up for the G8’s broken promises” (OXM). Assertions made about the future: “/.../ backing a scheme that will ruin the lives of hundreds of thousands of small

farmers” (WDM). The difference of this emphatic and expressive use of ‘will’ becomes evident in comparison with reference to planned and less controversial events: “[G-8 Summit] also will focus on global food and nutrition security issues” (BRE).

Obligation as well as expressive modality appears, for example, as ‘should’ in the negative “The UK public should not be bewitched” (WDM). It seems important to note that the UN guidelines are tied to the less radical ‘should’, whereas the G8 and the Alliance are tied to clear obligations with ‘must’: “[the plan] must not be the end” (ONE); “G8 leaders must also move quickly to deliver [on their promises]” (VIS). ‘Can’ occurs used in the negative ‘cannot’ and also has a categorical meaning: “The measure of success in 10 years cannot just be growth of agricultural production or even economies” (VIS)

The use of pronouns ‘we’ and ‘you’ is mostly tied to creating an inclusive ‘we’, often including the audience or other actors in addition to the author. They thus create relationships between the participants, author and the reader. The corpus features some examples of ‘we’ but ‘you’ is not used by the NGOs. Thus, this discussion includes an analysis of ‘they’ as it also creates an in-group and out-group connection.

The ‘we’ in WWP texts features in quotes from other organizations: "We are outraged" from a quote from La Via Campesina Africa representative; "We cannot look to dependence on so-called ‘fortified’ crops /.../" from COMPAS Africa representative and "We must support them instead of undermining their knowledge and practice" from the Coordinator of AFSA. ONE features quotes from one representative, who uses ‘we’ very often to refer to his organization. "We thank President Obama", "We are disappointed" from ONE and BRE has similar examples. Thus the text as a direct quote from a ONE representative uses first person plural and represents the point of view of the whole organization. The examples here could also refer to a more inclusive *we* in the following example that could encompass both government, private sector and NGOs:

“We must support them instead of undermining their knowledge” (WWP).

"The Alliance needs to be built out across the 30 developing countries with plans for agriculture if we are to meet the goals /.../" (ONE), referring to a joint effort.

This example also shows the use of passive in creating a sense of common obligation or need (“needs to be built”) as the actor is not explicitly mentioned (subsection 3.2.2.1). In these cases, ‘we’ seems to refer to a global international community, but could also refer to the G8 country governments and NGOs who work in cooperation. In general, the texts have occurrences of an exclusive ‘we’ for it seems to refer to the organization and its representatives, as well as an inclusive *we* that calls to action.

‘They’ is primarily used to avoid repetition, when the subject referred to is obvious in the text, including the G8, governments, local civil society, farmers, etc. Based on the corpus, the division between ‘us’ and ‘them’ seems to be complicated, because, although the NGOs are siding with the local communities in Africa, they are still more part of the Western ‘us’ than the African ‘us’. Thus, they could be trying to create a unity between the publics in G8 countries and the African farmers to fight the G8 and government action and mostly corporate activity. This is more apparent in other parts of the analysis, mainly synonyms (3.2.1.1). Yet, the public must feel more attached to the Western governments, even though they may feel a moral obligation to support the NGOs action. Us/them is used to some extent to build a community or a grouping, most probably the ‘rich’ that should help the ‘poor’.

3.2.3 Textual structures

This section concentrates on the large-scale structure of the texts – the press release. The NGO press release generates a link between the NGO and the media to reach the target audience. In order to achieve this final goal, the press release must first capture

the attention of the journalists (media) and must therefore follow certain rules: a specific pattern, contain a certain amount of basic information about the topic and should also be easily converted into an actual article. It is important to realize to what extent the NGOs must follow the rules of the media, to put out information that will become news.

Fairclough (2013: 231) also studies press release structure that consists of a headline, lead and text body. It is a promotional discourse type with a media “spin” which “needs to be subsequently sustained and developed” (Fairclough 2013: 243). Ample resources on how to write a press release can be found and the common outline is the following:

- Title (short and in the present tense)
- Contents (two sentences per paragraph):
- First paragraph (Who? When? Where?)
- Succeeding paragraphs give information on the topic with receding level of importance (Foster 2008: 102–103).

According to Foster (2008: 102–103), the presentation of the topic at hand should thus be followed by paragraphs with decreasing importance. The NGO texts mainly follow this structure with titles that are relatively short and in the present tense. Some press releases also have the lead mentioned by Fairclough. The lead is usually distinguished from the main body of the text by a different size or font. The VIS lead sums up the main point of the text.

The first paragraph responds to the main questions such as who, when and where. Interestingly, the structure does not include a conclusion and the press releases end with either a quote or a simple paragraph that in OXM and ONE is also a militant sentence that would fit into any campaign document conclusion.

In addition to the paragraph structure it is important to study the argument structure of the press releases and to see in what pattern criticism and praise of the G8 Alliance is

presented. When criticizing G8 activities OXM paragraphs usually start with a praising sentence and then give recommendations with hedging (OXM). ONE and VIS first thank and praise the leaders of the efforts and then criticize the feeble promises of the G8. BRE follows the same pattern but gives recommendations with more hedging. WDM, on the other hand, simply starts with a presentation of the background, followed by criticism. The same FOE press release is rather shorts and critical throughout and WWP follows the same lead.

If we follow the premise that the press release structure presents information in a decreasing order of importance, it would seem that some NGOs find praise of the G8 Alliance to be more relevant than the various criticisms that they present mainly at the end of the press release or the relevant paragraph (see OXM and ONE, for example).

3.3 Interpretation

This level of analysis mainly concentrates on the different interpretations that participants in a discourse can have of a specific text. It studies the various possibilities of interpretation within the text but also in connection with other discourses. Fairclough focuses this level of analysis on what he calls “member’s resources” (MR). Textual features become socially operative only as part of social interaction and based on “common-sense assumptions” (Fairclough 2001: 140). Based on Fairclough (2001: 146), this section is adapted to the corpus and includes sections on intertextual context, presupposition and frames.

The participants under study in this subchapter are the NGOs as the compilers and producers of the text (and through them the sources they use) and the two groups that can be seen as the targets of the texts: the governments of G8 countries and the general public. Although in theory these two are placed in the same space within the G8 countries, the

NGOs quite often clearly draw a distinction between them as separate target groups. These audiences can be divided into primary and secondary. Depending on their position, NGOs are aiming to create a sense of unity and understanding between themselves and the public, the primary audience, but the G8 and the governments are a secondary audience to be addressed through public debate and a public opinion. On other occasions, the texts seem to be addressed more to the government actors, advising or asking them to change their policies and the public is left in a secondary position.

3.3.1 Intertextual context, quotes, sources and assumptions

Intertextual context is an analysis of the other texts surrounding this text and the analysis looks at how these are referred to. The focus is on how texts as well as entities and events that are mentioned show the relationship to the surrounding information. Presentation of the most clearly visible instances of intertextuality, namely quotes, direct speech and sources (texts, actors and events), is followed by an analysis of assumptions (presuppositions).

Fairclough (1995: 70) explains that quotations (direct discourse) can refer to a specific relation to the truth or the source used and can be used as a legitimation of the text or as a way to distance oneself from the propositions. In the corpus texts the reasons for quoting are mainly the importance of the text, as well as its expressiveness and the authors wish to associate themselves with the ideas put forth. The sources are presented as authoritative civil society sources.

The ONE, FOE and BRE texts are almost wholly a quote. ONE quotes the President and CEO of ONE, FOE is represented by FOE campaigner and BRE by its president. These texts and also VIS and OXM only quote sources internal to the organization, whereas WDM and WWP quote external sources that still remain within the

civil society sector. WDM press release is issued jointly with 25 other UK campaign groups and criticism of the New Alliance is repeated through the words of several sources, such as an African civil society statement and a UK statement by over 25 campaign groups. WWP quotes African “local” sources such as La via Campesina, Association Nourrir Sans Détruire, COMPAS Africa. There are no quotes from the G8 or the partnering corporations.

Numerous references are made to the two G8 summits in Camp David (BRE) and Gleneagles within the time span of the corpus, including two main figures of the G8 Summits: Barack Obama (BRE; OXM) and David Cameron (ONE; WDM). ONE also speaks of the G20 in Los Cabos. African sources and events include African union meeting in Malawi July 2012 (ONE), Committee on World Food Security Consultation for African civil society groups in April of 2012 (OXM), whereas BRE refers to the 3rd Annual Symposium on Global Agriculture and Food Security held by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs (BRE).

Reference to other projects and programs for development include L’Aquila commitment (2009; VIS, OXM), the SUN movement (VIS), Muskoka Initiative child and maternal health (VIS) and the Accountability report of the G8 (VIS), Prosavanna project in Mozambique (VIS) and UN Committee on World Food Security (WDM). VIS is the only text to clearly name multinational corporations Yara, Monsanto, Sygenta, Cargill (in a negative light).

There is a slight difference in emphasis for the pattern ‘quote, source’ vs. ‘source, quote’. The latter prepares the reader beforehand, giving the text a specific level of legitimacy, depending on the reader’s background knowledge and position on the subject. The former, on the other hand, leaves a more fluid impression while in some cases (WWP)

the transition to direct speech is barely noticeable, as it is not introduced by an introductory phrase.

All in all, the quotes remain within the civil society sector and in addition to the G8 summits the texts mention other events, initiatives and programs that concern African civil society or African development programs.

Another aspect of intertextuality is the fact that online sources often provide quick links that provide easy access to additional information, which allows the authors to avoid overloading with information and keeping to the main gist of their argument. For example, highlighted and linked words include “raised concerns” and "declaration" (OXF).

The visual aspects of the texts also belong under intertextuality, as photos can also be treated as texts that provide a certain angle of interpretation. WDM features a photo that depicts what could be called an African smallholder farmer among his crops. The smile on his face and his white clothes along with the ripe crops create a sense of wellbeing that, according to the text, should be protected and developed. BRE on the other hand features a photo of Obama launching the G8 Alliance. As the text itself is praise for Obama's efforts, the photo emphasizes the focus on Obama.

The texts present a number of assumptions about the topic and the entities mentioned. What is assumed and how different frames of knowledge are brought up through specific expressions, implicitly refer to a certain part in the reader's knowledge. Fairclough divides assumptions into existential, propositional and value assumptions. (Fairclough 2003: 55)

Existential assumptions are “assumptions about what exists” (Fairclough 2003: 55). The main assumptions that readers probably have of the NGOs is that they are independent, against the system, not cooperating with the government or the business sector. Yet, the extent to their dependency on public and private funding cooperation with

both in order to achieve tangible results is what this view does not account for. In the texts, readers are assumed to think that the civil society actors and texts, including the NGOs themselves, have legitimacy – their decisions and statements are taken as important. It is the G8 whose legitimacy is under question (to a certain extent) and their right to indirectly (through economic measures, i.e. money) impose certain conditions on the local governments and the local smallholder farmers. On the other hand, it is assumed that readers are familiar with the “United Nations Voluntary Guidelines on Land Tenure”.

Propositional assumptions are “assumptions about what is or can be or will be the case” (Fairclough 2003: 55). On the one hand, NGOs assume that companies (private sector) will take no responsibility for the effects of their actions on the local communities. It is assumed that the G8 will exert very little control on the private sector partners. It is also assumed that more funding from the G8 could lead to important results and that the inverse would lead to catastrophic consequences.

Value assumptions are “assumptions about what is good or desirable” (Fairclough 2003: 55). In this area NGOs are trying to convince readers about the negative effects of a reform in land and seed laws, the benefits of biofuels, privatization and private sector investment, up to a different understanding of private sector (see above).

The NGO texts in the corpus do not aim at objectivity; these are not typical media texts that report events – their main aim is to present the subjective point of view of a group or groups of participants in the global development business. Thus, they are rather clearly representing a certain common sense and assumptions.

3.3.2 Discourse types and frames

This section focuses on what discourse type(s) are being drawn upon and which frames are used by the NGOs. The discussion of discourse types shall make reference to

the description level of the analysis (subchapter 3.2) regarding grammar and vocabulary (based on Fairclough 2001: 162). Frames are part of what can be called NGO legitimation and argument strategies.

Discourse types are habitually used in certain situations and by certain actors as a “resource for subjects” that can be combined to fit actual social situations (Fairclough 1989: 39). The genres of discourse that can be present in the press releases are the following: media discourse (mass communication) and campaign discourse (persuasive campaign document).

The main genre that the texts draw upon is media discourse, as they are presented as press releases for the media, thus aiming at being diffused on a mass communication scale. As discussed in the subchapter on the public sphere (1.2), media discourse is an important factor of the development of the public sphere and seems to be indispensable on the international level. Habermas has seen the fall of the 19th century ideal public sphere with the appearance of mass communication (section 1.2). Although this phenomenon may have negative effects, it is now indispensable for NGOs to reach the largest number of people and thus they are required to use the techniques of mass communication, thereby creating what could be seen as an international public sphere.

Concerning campaign discourse, Fairclough brings out that NGOs not only explain and inform but also incite to action in his analysis of a campaign document from an NGO (Fairclough 2006: 48). The texts partly and sometimes quite explicitly ask the readers to take action. The style is rather colloquial and even conversational at times, aiming at an emotional effect on the readers, using quite expressive metaphors including "poisoned chalice" (FOE quoted in WDM) and reference to the British prime minister crowning himself as savior (Gaia Foundation quoted in WDM).

In order to structure their discourse and appeal to the readers (G8 and the general public) NGOs use certain legitimation strategies that I choose to call 'frames'. Frames represent the entities that populate the (natural and social) world (Fairclough 2001: 158, 159). The main frames in the text are the NGO frame and the Africa frame.

NGO frame refers to experience from fieldwork and close contact with local communities. They also have a claim to specific types of knowledge about the situation. According to WWP the G8 initiatives are a "distraction from real solutions to nutrition" (WWP). Reference to reality makes an implicit assumption that there exists an unrealistic vision of the situation. It seems the texts are indirectly accusing the G8 and the companies of not having enough information on the state of affairs, if not of hiding or distorting information. Knowledge of the local situation in Africa seems to give WWP a claim to 'reality' as opposed to the G8. This frame could be expanded to a general 'civil society' frame, presented as more democratic than G8 activities. As there is no set international democratic process in place the NGOs refer to a chance at political freedom with the help of civil society.

Within the 'Africa' frame, developing countries in Africa are represented as natural and sustainable, benefiting from ecological small-scale production (see subsection 3.2.1.1). Africa is represented as poor and the poor are in this case not to blame for their own poverty but are presented as victims of first colonialism and then globalization. Division into poor and rich countries refers to a moral obligation of the rich to aid the poor. It aims at bringing home to the readers the huge income difference and to make them more willing to make sacrifices by donating money to NGO projects. If they do not perceive themselves as wealthy, reference to the whole country as wealthy makes them more apt to support aid programs for the benefit of the poor countries.

Relying on my own MR I would suggest that these frames help readers to place the NGO texts within their previous knowledge and could lead to a reclassification of some elements concerning ecology and reforms.

3.4 Explanation

The third level, explanation, seeks to interpret discourse in terms of struggle and power relations in society, focusing on ideology and socio-historical conditions (Fairclough 2001: 141). Based on Fairclough (2001: 163), this subchapter is divided into two parts: social determinants and discourses. Social determinants of discourse shall be investigated on a series of levels to draw up a scheme for relations of power.

3.4.1 Social determinants and power relations

This section seeks to discover what power relations at the international and local level help shape the discourse of the NGO texts. This section is divided into subsections that discuss the different levels created by the international nature of the discourse studied and the power relations that they include.

The power relations between the various institutional levels can be explained through the notion of distance. As the decisions regarding the G8 Alliance are believed to be have been taken in developed countries, it is the NGOs and their local branches that must do the lobbying in the developed countries, geographically distant from the objects of these discussions. The decision-making is distanced from the local groups (except for states which are thought of as the structure-makers). The following distinctions in terms of analysis and interaction levels can be made, mainly based on distance and scope of the level: supranational, international, state, community and individual level.

Supranational (UN): It is important to differentiate between the supranational United Nations (UN) level that includes all nations (in theory) and the international level that includes agreements between a number of nations, like the G8. The supranational level includes aspects that are presented as undebatable and common for all, starting with hunger and global poverty, which are represented as affecting all nations (directly or indirectly). Generalizations are used as a tool to show the importance of the issue. This level also includes references to the UN and international law but only on a 'soft law' level, such as "United Nations Voluntary Guidelines on Land Tenure" (OXM) (official name: United Nations Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure, from 2012). These references to higher international guidelines are an important and effective legitimation frame for the NGO claims but give little sign of their actual implementation and restrictive power. The NGOs seem to be creating what Habermas has called "world society" where problems are shared under a universally recognized UN.

The international level refers to activities that concern a limited number of states: international agreements for cooperation, the G8, the G8 Alliance and also NGOs. This level consists of mainly a perceived attack by the G8 and the corporations on the developing countries (3.2.2.5). This seems to belong to a neorealist world vision of power relations and the evocation of "colonialism" is to bring up in readers a wide range of knowledge and to use it as the background for the statements in the text. BRE even refers to U.S. national security interests. The two G8 summits referred to were held in the USA and the UK. Curiously, the 2012 texts mostly from US-based NGOs criticize the small amount of funds and a lack of ambition in the alliance, whereas the 2013 texts urge Cameron to withhold payments altogether in order to avoid weakening the African agriculture. It could be that the understanding of the alliance and its effects had changed, or

one could think that the US campaign groups like ONE and OXF had less information at that moment.

The state level includes local governments, local civil society, NGOs, also some of the local enterprises, although most of them are said to have some international activities or connections. In general, the local governments are seen as positive entities, although they are the ones taking the decision to join the G8 Alliance and making the reforms and commitments necessary for that. In OXM poor countries are seen as the ones who have done what was asked from them, thus showing their motivation.

The main focus in terms of legislation is the local land and seed laws that, when reformed, would provide better conditions for foreign companies, according to NGOs. Land law reform towards privatization and more transparency would seem like a positive development; yet, these reforms here are denounced as benefiting international corporations (WDM). As African states are reserving thousands of hectares of land for investments backed by the G8, it is most likely taken from smallholder farmers, the NGOs claim (WDM gives an example from Mozambique). At the same time, NGOs seem to be skeptical about how profits and revenues to the state or companies would benefit the whole population.

The local community level includes the local communities, which consist of smallholder farmers. The civil society and NGOs are divided between this and the international level, for they are said to directly represent local communities. Community evokes a small-scale group of people that is more or less independent from the international and can be put against state, corporate or individual interests.

Individuals, women, farmers is the lowest level referred to and presented as those who are supposed to benefit from the initiatives and alliances proposed.

These levels are combined to create power structures and mechanisms with a common goal of alleviating global poverty. Yet, the path to achieving this goal and the main actors who have the best strategies and information to make changes are different according to actors.

The following table represents the two power relations that NGOs put forth.

Table 1: Power hierarchies

G8	NGO
G8, African Union	UN
Private sector	States, international NGOs
States and governments	Local governments, NGOs
Local farmers	Local communities, smallholder farmers

The G8 column in table 1 explains how NGOs present the G8's vision of power relations, which are led by the G8 and the African group of states, the African Union. The intermediary role would be given to the private sector whose demands would be followed by states and governments to eventually benefit local farmers. The NGOs propose what they see a more just hierarchy (second column) which is topped by the UN following states and NGOs working as well as local governments and NGOs to benefit local communities, whereas the private sector would have a complementary role but would not directly participate in the power structure.

3.4.2 Ideologies

This section concentrates on the overlying theme of the present research, which is ideology. The main ideology identified in the texts is neoliberal but its representation is not straightforward and coherent. When we look at the table of state and market terms put forth by Bourdieu and Wacquant (2001; table 1), the NGO discourse represents these two 'actors', i.e. state and market, in rather similar terms, applying the words tied to the state in typical neoliberal discourse to the market itself, namely to the private sector activities in

the market. At the same time, the terms tied to the market are used to describe the local community level actors in an attempt to show that the freedom and the flexibility of the market is based in the local communities and it is the marketization imposed from outside that stifles local growth and limits individual freedoms. Their attempt to bring to light the negative effect of private sector activities shows the problems tied to the definition of private sector. On the one hand, it comprises both local small and medium size enterprises, as well as smallholder farmers who market their products. On the other hand, multinational corporations and enterprises from G8 countries are also representatives of the private sector. That is why in NGO discourse the private sector is divided into two terms: corporations on the one side and local smallholder farmers on the other side to make a clear distinction between the opposing interests of these two.

The following table shows how NGOs represent what is seen as neoliberal vocabulary. The first part of the table referring to globalization is from Bourdieu and Wacquant (2001: 5) and the second part is based on the NGO text corpus.

Table 2: Neoliberal vision of the market and the state (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2001: 5).

STATE	MARKET
constraint	freedom
closed	open
rigid	flexible
immobile, fossilized	dynamic, moving, self-transforming
past, outdated	future, novelty
stasis	growth
group, lobby, holism, collectivism	individual, individualism
uniformity, artificiality	diversity, authenticity
autocratic ('totalitarian')	democratic

Table 3: NGO vision of the market and state

MARKET	STATE LEVEL
constraint	freedom
diversity	one size fits all, exclusive focus
land grabs	free access to land
prescriptive	free

It can be seen in comparison between the two tables, that NGOs are representing the market and the private sector (neoliberalism) with terms that are similar to those used to criticize the market in the first table. Thus the criticism neoliberal actors use against the state is shown to apply to the neoliberal market itself.

Nonetheless, there seems to be no clear opposition to the term 'market' itself and the NGOs are not relying on a Marxist (or critical theory) discourse that opposes capitalism. The opposition is between local and international levels. War on Want explicitly criticizes multinational corporations (WWP), leaving aside the fact that local enterprises are also included in the initiative. At the same time, NGOs seem not to be opposed to government activities in general. What they are saying is that by opening up the markets the neoliberal governments are not promoting an objective free market where everyone would have more chances to participate but they are making a conscious choice to support big money and big corporations for these have an advantage on this market with more resources, information and political leverage. So the term 'lobby' that is tied to the state also applies to the market. A criticism that is largely missing from the corpus is of the volatility and danger in especially foreign private sector investments, which would also be relevant (except for the mention to the economic roller coaster in ONE).

There is a preliminary conclusion to be made from this. Probably the NGOs are not taking a directly anti-neoliberal position and they are not referring to critical theory. Rather they would agree with Joseph Stiglitz (subchapter 1.1): opening up markets and chasing specific economic indicators such as inflation and foreign debt numbers for the sake of the indicators themselves is not rational if the local situation and the socio-economic conditions are not taken into account. All investment should be conditioned to include specific activities to help local communities and attention should be given to consumption

on the local level, not just production and profits that are made. NGOs clearly state that it is not more profits that are needed but more equal opportunities (source).

I also wish to revisit the concept 'freedom'. The basis for this discussion is the vocabulary level study (subchapter 3.2.1.1) of how this complex philosophical concept that is also one of the key concepts and goals of liberalism is employed in the texts. Milton Friedman repeats the idea that "one man's freedom must be limited to preserve another's" (Friedman 2002: 26). Yet, it seems that neoliberal freedom is offered selectively and on unequal grounds. In the context of neoliberal discourse private freedoms extend to everyone; in the present corpus NGOs are trying to point out that the private sector initiatives tend to concentrate on the benefits of Western companies. In doing so, NGOs call attention to the absence of local farmers in the G8 discussions and in their own texts privilege the freedom of individual African farmers to the freedom of multinational corporations. The general concept of investing in Africa promoted by the G8 Alliance can thus be opposed by showing the contradiction within the generally accepted neoliberal discourse concepts and expressions.

CONCLUSION

This thesis presents an analysis of NGO discourse in an international public sphere. Since the NGOs have little actual power in legal or democratic terms, their battle is mostly confined to the discourse level. In addition to their lobbying for a change in G8 activities, they are working to capture the public's attention in order to push for change of G8 country policies concerning development aid. Yet, since the policies do not concern the public in the G8 countries directly, NGOs must mobilize an awareness of what is happening outside of their home country. This can be challenging for several reasons, mainly economy and geographical distance. Thus, the NGO strategies refer to global poverty as a common concern, criticism of neoliberal activities and the market and appealing to emotions such as solidarity with the sufferers and a sense of duty.

The source materials do not permit to make conclusive claims about the positive or negative nature of neoliberalism but allow to give an overview of how the NGOs represent the (neoliberal) international system, as the emphasis in the discourse analysis is on economic terms and concepts tied to neoliberalism. Although it remains unclear what alternative the NGOs are proposing, they reveal the inability of neoliberalism to guarantee equal freedom to all in terms of access to resources and capacity for action. Following the examples, the NGO discourse seems to be turning neoliberal discourse upside down, criticizing neoliberalism with the same concepts that are used in neoliberal discourse to describe states and governments, although this may also depend on the international aspect of the topic under study. For example, NGOs denounce the way neoliberalism is structuring the use of freedom, claiming reform and transparency, whereas in reality inhibiting the local farmers from using their knowledge and local resources. The fact that governments (especially G8 governments) setting the framework for economic action and the imposition of (neo)liberal market freedom is seen as a restriction to the liberty of local

smallholder farmers whom the G8 Alliance is meant to address. Based on Foucault (chapter 1.1), neoliberalism is not completely against government action that is supposed to create the conditions for a free market. NGOs, on the other hand, focus on the importance of government action and the UN level, presenting a differing power structure.

The NGOs present and criticize what they see as the G8 and private sector based power structure, which they oppose to a UN, civil society (NGO) and local government power structure that is seen to be more beneficial and effective in reaching local farmers. Although civil society is not a democratically elected representative, it is represented as a crucial part of a democratic process and provides solutions to problems related to hunger, having seemingly more legitimacy than the local governments, not to mention the G8. Yet, in the international power relations, which are divided into the supranational, international, state, community and individual level, the supranational (UN) level is seen as more legitimate, yet represented as rather powerless (international soft law). The main power relations are enacted on the international and state levels, whereas the individual and community levels are presented as those most in need of help and the least able to speak up for their rights.

With the strategies and frames described above, civil society (NGOs) position themselves as important actors and creators of what Habermas has termed the “supranational public sphere” (chapter 1.2). NGOs with their emphasis on supranational (UN) present a public sphere in constant development towards its three main aspects: shared concerns, a perception of equality between participants and a constant expansion.

The main issue in this process is how to raise interest in the general public, and studying how NGOs attempt to achieve this goal is one of the important research subjects of this thesis. The immediate capacity for action is limited for the general public so a sense of powerlessness or apathy is surely present. In the lack of close physical or economic

connections between their publics and the African farmers, NGOs must insist on other arguments. There is probably an attempt to create a sense of global citizenship, so that the importance that we give to everyone's wellbeing in our own country should be extended to the global poor. Yet, here the research must limit itself to the texts studied and the full scope of possible activities cannot be presented.

In order to reach their readers, NGOs draw on media discourse and campaign discourse, both of which aim at reaching a large public, while the latter adds more emphatic and expressive styles. These discourse styles incorporate frames that aid in classifying the actors and actions referred to, for example, the NGO frame referring to competent and knowledgeable NGOs and an image of an ecological, sustainable and natural Africa. A sense of common obligation is created through agentless passive and inclusive 'we', although NGOs mostly resort to the exclusive 'we', which refers to the organizations themselves.

The structure of quotes and sources in the texts reveals that NGOs mostly quote and present their own sources and views, or that of African civil society representatives, excluding the G8 and corporate sources, except for background information and negative references. Ample comparison is made to other initiatives and programs tied to Africa. The information is presented based on the assumption of legitimacy of the NGOs and civil society in general, while assuming that the corporate actors are irresponsible and uncontrollable and overturning the assumptions that biofuels and land reform is necessarily positive and ecological. The G8 Alliance is also criticized through emphatic negative predictions about the future using modals such as 'will' and 'must'. Relational value is created through euphemistic terms such as "complex challenges" and "food insecurity" and a negative connotation is given through "land grabs" and "cash crops". A prominent method for criticizing is through war metaphors, as the Alliance is depicted as an attack on

African sovereignty, while also emphasizing the necessity to move forward with a series of path metaphors.

This thesis begins with the premise that the world economic system is neoliberal, although the use of the term itself is contested. In spite of the criticisms private sector and government action of largely neoliberal nature, a coherent alternative ideology cannot be distinguished. The vocabulary used still seems to belong to a neoliberal framework of euphemisms and buzz-words.

Due to the size of the corpus and the qualitative nature of the analysis, the amount of generalizations that can be drawn on NGO discourse in general is limited. The term NGO itself is a generalization, for NGOs have a variety of activities and strategies of action. Nonetheless, it is possible to draw out some limited generalizations of NGO discourse represented by the corpus. Firstly, NGOs emphasize the importance of government aid (investment) that is monetary aid from both the G8 countries as well as activities led by local governments. Secondly, although to a radically varying extent, the NGOs express a level of suspicion towards the beneficial effects of including private sector more in the initiatives. Although some NGOs do say that the enterprises, especially local SMEs, could be beneficial for the development process, most sources still see this as placing international corporations as the main profit-takers. Lastly, all NGOs represent civil society and themselves as its representatives as a reliable and legitimate representation of the local communities. They fulfill their role as participants in the public sphere through the use of neoliberal discourse, being part of the prevailing neoliberal ideology and contesting it, highlighting its inner contradictions and, where appropriate, giving alternatives.

The discourse and style of the NGOs studied is probably tied to their size and partners in the public and private sphere. Yet, this information remains outside of the scope

of the present thesis but could be part of future research that should focus on contrasting discourses of NGOs with those of the G8 and the private sector on the subject in order to compare ideologies and representations of several participants and partners.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: List of corpus texts

	NGO	Title	Date
OXM	Oxfam International	G8 food security alliance answers questions hungry people have not asked	18.05.12
WWP	War on Want	African Food Sovereignty under attack by corporate interests	15.08.13
ONE	ONE	ONE Reaction to G8 Summit: A Beginning on Food Security, But Not an End	n.d. (2012?)
WDM	World Development Movement	African groups reject G8 corporate food plan as 'colonialism'	03.06.2013
FOE	Friends of the Earth	G8 Summit must tackle hunger	08.06.2013
BRE	Bread for the World	Bread Commends Obama's Historic Speech to End Hunger and Malnutrition	18.05.2012
VIS	World Vision	G8 Summit took strong steps toward improving food security and nutrition but 'more still must be done'	19.05.2012

RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL
INGLISE FILOLOOGIA OSAKOND

Ulvika Hurt

Non-governmental organizations and neoliberalism: a critical discourse analysis

Mittetulundusühingud ja neoliberalism: kriitiline diskursusanalüüs

magistritöö

2014

Lehekülgede arv: 66

Annotatsioon:

Käesoleva magistritöö eesmärk on uurida rahvusvahelises avalikus sfääris tegutsevate mittetulundusühingute (MTÜ) diskursust ja nende suhtumist neoliberalismi, võttes aluseks MTÜde pressiteated, mis kirjeldavad G8 arengumaade abistamise initsiatiivi (*G8 New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition*) ja kommenteerivad avaliku ja erasektori tegevust selles valdkonnas. Töö koosneb sissejuhatausest, kolmest peatükist ja kokkuvõttest. Analüüsitava korpus koosneb seitsme Ühendkuningriigis või Ameerika Ühendriikides baseeruva mittetulundusühingu pressiteatest, mille analüüsi aluseks on Norman Fairclough kriitilise diskursusanalüüsi meetod.

Sissejuhatus ja teooria peatükk keskenduvad neoliberalismile ja avalikule sfäärile, kasutades neoliberalismi teoreetikuid Michel Foucault, David Harvey ja Joseph Stiglitz ning Jürgen Habermasi avaliku sfääri teooriat. Lisatud on analüüs kriitilise diskursusanalüüsi meetoditest ja Norman Fairclough meetodi eripäradest, mille käesoleva töö jaoks kohandatud versioon on esitatud teises peatükis. Kolmas peatükk analüüsib korpusi kirjelduse, tõlgenduse ja selgituse tasandil.

MTÜd on suuremal või vähemal määral G8 initsiatiivi suhtes kriitilised ning vastandavad end G8 ning erasektori tegevusele. Siiski kasutavad nad üldiselt sõnavara, mis kuulub neoliberalistlikku diskursusesse, samas andes sellele teisi tähendusi. Võib täheldada, et sõnavara, mida neoliberalismis üldiselt riikide tegevuse kritiseerimiseks kasutatakse, on siin suunatud hoopis G8 ja erasektori vastu, kujutades viimast kui kohalike inimeste majandusliku ja poliitilise vabaduse piirajat ning kohaliku arengu takistajat. Seega positsioneerivad MTÜd end selgelt Habermasi rahvusvahelisse avalikku sfääri, olles samas ka selle loojad ja kujundajad: nad püüdleval võrdse esindatuse poole, üritavad luua arusaama ühistest globaalsetest probleemides ning töötavad avaliku sfääri pideva laiendamise suunas, eelistades riikidevahelistele lepetele ÜRO rahvasteülel tasandit.

Lihtlitsents lõputöö reprodutseerimiseks ja lõputöö üldsusele kättesaadavaks tegemiseks

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