



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Tabea Magdalena Grünewald

Title: The Securitization of Immigration (An Assessment of the Extent of Securitization of Immigration in the German Political Discourse in the Aftermath of the 2015 European Refugee Crisis)

Programme/year: ISSA (2018)

Author of Evaluation (Supervisor): Dr. Ondrej Ditrych

Criteria	Definition	Max.	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	10
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	30
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	37
<i>Total</i>		80	77
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	10
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	20
TOTAL		100	97



Evaluation

Major criteria:

The thesis investigates the effect of European ‘refugee crisis’ on the political discourse of immigration and asylum in Germany. Deploying the securitisation theory toolbox, it focuses in particular on the parliamentary debate, analytically describing and assessing dominance of two basic contending securitising discourses: in one, the refugee was constructed as a threatening other, whereas in the other (‘humanitarian’) s/he featured instead as a referent object in need of protection.

The thesis is logically structured – proceeding from literature review to theoretical discussion and the research design formulation to the discourse analysis and the presentation of results –, and the argument is coherent and well presented. The literature review is performed competently both when treating the broader concept of security, securitisation theory, and the more immediately relevant concepts anchoring of the research through articulation of fundamental assumptions about the basic discourses and their character. The author demonstrates a solid grasp of the fundamentals of securitisation theory from Buzan, Waever and de Wilde onward – I would only take issue with the claim that security after the cold war is *predominantly* defined in constructivist terms (p. 24) –, drawing inspiration in particular from Vuori and Stritzel. It is duly translated into the research design through emphasis in operationalisation of both sociolinguistic and sociopolitical context. (That said, CDA apparatus is introduced but not developed any further either in the operationalisation or later.) Moreover, the author is to be commended for being reflexive concerning the potential limitations of her research. (However she in part identifies those limitations in relation to causal research while her own project is decisively *interpretive*.) The corpus and timeframe for the discourse analysis is clearly defined and based on transparent and premeditated choices.



While the actual analysis relies on the operationalisation only to a point – with the contextual exploration somewhat limited – and as a consequence its interpretive potential is not fully exploited, it may be considered an exemplary descriptive analytic of the migration discourse that is disciplined, clearly presented and substantiated by data the processing of which is detailed in the thesis' appendix as well as episodic evidence.

Minor criteria:

The thesis is competently written in terms of both form and style. It uses a solid corpus of relevant secondary literature in the conceptual groundwork.

Overall evaluation:

The thesis presents a very well executed discourse analysis anchored in the securitisation theory which succeeds in articulating a clear research design and performing a discipline descriptive analytic of the discourse that manages to capture different discursive positions and patterns despite the constraining rules of discourse at the chosen institutional site (*Bundestag*).

Suggested grade: A

Signature: