How to Create a Leader

A critical discourse analysis on how international actors describes Robert Mugabe
Abstract

To learn how international actors use their discourse as a power tool in an international debate can it help us to understand how they use it to gain leverage and influence the international debate. The international debate this thesis will focus on is the debate around Zimbabwe’s president Robert Mugabe, a heavily debated leader. The three chosen actors who view Robert Mugabe very differently and have interest in Zimbabwe are; China, United Kingdom and South Africa. The analytical framework that is used to understand how the actors influence the debate is based on Steven Lukes theory on the Three-dimensional view of Power, to see how issues are included or excluded from the public debate. Steven Lukes concept of Power as Domination will also be used to analyze the discourse the actors are conducting. The thesis methodological framework will be a Critical Discourse Analysis, where the focus is on the relation between the social contexts and the linguistic. When talking about Robert Mugabe the actors have used different discourses describing him very differently. The discourse that the chosen actors have been using have had its foundation in a specific moments or incidents to which he is described very differently. This thesis will also show how the chosen actors try to dominate the international debate regarding Robert Mugabe by describing him each in their specific way.

Keywords

Robert Mugabe, Discourse, Power, China, United Kingdom, South Africa

Thanks

I would like to thank the Peace and Development program and all the professors for preparing me for this thesis.
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC – AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
CDA – CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS
FTLR – FAST TRACK LAND REFORM
IMF – INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FOUND
MDC – MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE
UN – UNITED NATIONS
U.K. – UNITED KINGDOM
ZANU-PF – ZIMBABWE AFRICAN NATIONAL UNION - PATRIOTIC FRONT
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Problem
In the world of international politics there is bound to be conflicts between different international actors who have different views on the world and how it should be governed. Conflicts in international politics do not need to be violent, a conflict arise during a discussion were multiple actors cannot get along. It is not uncommon that the conflicts that arise in international politics derive out of different ideological settings. These international actors concerned in the world of international politics is to better allocate resources to gain a leverage in the conflict (Garfinkel, 1994, p1295), in this case the debate. This thesis will be a study on how three different international actors are using their discourse in international politics to gain leverage in a specific conflict. The conflict that this thesis will focus on is; how different international actors view the president of Zimbabwe, Robert Gabriel Mugabe. Different international actors view Mugabe very differently and they have very different views on him. Some actors argue that he is to blame for the decay in Zimbabwe, a country with hyperinflation and a ruined food production. Other actors argue that he is a protagonist who fought against the white colonialists and fought for the oppressed people in Africa and hence should be seen as a face for Africa’s liberation struggles. Then there is the third type of actors who will not take an active opinion about Robert Mugabe, although they are constantly effected by his policies (Coetzee, 2004, p81; Longtime Zimbabwean dictator Robert Mugabe wins Chinese Peace Prize, 2015; Swarn, 2002). The three countries that the thesis will focus on is China, United Kingdom and South Africa. This thesis will show how these three actors use their discourse as a power tool in the international debate to shape the picture of a debated world leader, Robert Mugabe.
1.2 Objective and Research Questions
The objective of this thesis is by the use of the Critical Discourse Analysis try to understand how three different international actors use their discourse as a power tool in an international debate. The international debate that this thesis will focus on is the case about Robert Mugabe and how different international actors view him differently due to the policies that he has been conducting in Zimbabwe. The actors this thesis will examine have an interest in Zimbabwe, they are; China, United Kingdom and South Africa.

- What is the discourse of these international actors when talking about Robert Mugabe?
- How do these actors use their discourse as a power tool when talking about Robert Mugabe?
- How have these actors used their discourse as a power tool trying to influence the international debate regarding Robert Mugabe?

1.3 Relevance
The reason for this thesis to be focusing on the international debate surrounding Robert Mugabe is due to the fact that he has been absolute leader of Zimbabwe for a long time, 37 years and during this time has his policies and political decisions been heavily debated. During his time in office Mugabe has grown old and he has now reached the high age of 93 and his time as president of Zimbabwe is soon coming to an end (Zimbabwe After Mugabe, 2016). The support that Mugabe has had among the civil population of Zimbabwe has started to decline and there has been an outcry among the civil population that time for a change has arrived. Some voices even claim that Mugabe is no longer in power, he is only the face outwards, and it is now his wife Grace Mugabe who controls Zimbabwe (Ibid; Thornycroft, Laing, 2016; Burke, 2016). So by the looks of it Robert Mugabe’s time in office is approaching an unconditional end, either by him stepping down or by him not being able to rule the country anymore. Since Zimbabwe is entering such a crucial time in its history is it interesting to use their current leader, Robert Mugabe, as a case when analysing how he has been described by international actors.
When looking into existing research written about the international relations of Zimbabwe and Robert Mugabe one can notice that there is very little research done comparing the different discourses on Mugabe. Research has been done looking in to Mugabe and Zimbabwe’s relation to one specific actor. There have however not been any studies done focusing on comparing the discourse coming out of these actors. So there is a research gap where very little research has been conducted comparing the discourses.

1.4 History of Zimbabwe
Zimbabwe, a relatively small country landlocked in the southern parts of Africa has a history of political instability and economical mismanagement. The country used to be a British colony, called Southern Rhodesia, but in 1965 the country did break away from Great Britain. The Prime Minister of Rhodesia, Ian Smith, refused to listen to the British recommendations about including the black population of Rhodesia in policy making. Smith proceeded to keep Rhodesia a white ruled country until 1980 when a civil war abruptly changed the political scene of the country. After the civil war Rhodesia did get a new name and a new president and the xenophobic regime was overthrown. Rhodesia changed name to Zimbabwe and Robert Mugabe became the new president. When Mugabe took over as president of Zimbabwe the country was seen to be a prosperous country with a great future. The country had good economic future and good possibilities for agricultural farming. Mugabe recognized that he had inherited a “jewel of Africa” and he promised that he was going to work to keep it that way (Power, 2003, p83). When Robert Mugabe took over power in Zimbabwe there was a lot of hope that he was going to be a decent leader of the “new” country. He was praised for being a diplomatic leader who focused on reconciliation between the black and white populations of Zimbabwe. That was also the case in the beginning of Mugabe’s rule, but as time passed by has he became more and more authoritarian and some of the voices that used to praise him disappeared (Raftopoulos, 2004, pX-XII).

For a long time was Zimbabwe seen as a country with good governance that worked to develop the country and it was regarded to be a model for other African countries (Zinyama, 2012, p139). During the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 1991 was Zimbabwe and Mugabe held as thriving African country that strived for economic, social and cultural rights. The argument was that Zimbabwe’s work to
improve basic education, primary healthcare, safe drinking water and rural development in general had been so successful so that other African countries should look to Zimbabwe for guidelines for development (Ibid).

However, Mugabe has ruled Zimbabwe very authoritarian to keep control of the country during his time as president. One of the more brutal methods Mugabe has used to keep hold of the power was to use the “Gukurahundi”, or as it also is called the 5th Brigade. This was a North-Korean trained army force who acted directly under Mugabe’s order. Between 1982-1985 they were responsible for massacres on civilians in both in North- and South Matabeleland. Gukurangundi justified their actions with the argument that the civilians belonged to the Ndebele people who were considered to support the opposition and this was their punishment (Eppel, 2004, p 44-45).

During Mugabe’s time as Zimbabwe’s leader there has also been a few land reforms and people have accused him of being responsible for the destruction of food production in Zimbabwe. During his early years in power the policy in Zimbabwe was that no land should be seized from landowner if they did not want to sell. This policy did rapidly change in the beginning of 2000 when Mugabe introduced the “Fast-track land reform” (FTLR). The meaning of FTLR was to redistribute land from the rich farmers to the war veterans and to the poorer population. The farmers tried to resist, but it got clear that it was impossible after a few farmers were murdered. The majority of the Zimbabweans agreed that a land redistribution was necessary, due to the fact that the big farms occupied 70% of the arable land. But the way the redistribution of land was implemented had a devastating effect on the agricultural production of Zimbabwe (Power, 2003, p88-89).

Zimbabwe and Robert Mugabe has also been heavily criticized for rigging the national elections and making it impossible for the population of Zimbabwe to vote for anyone else then him and his party. The most infamous events took place in the elections of 2008 when opposition leaders disappear, opposition meetings where stopped by force and voters were brutalized and tortured (Rylander, 2016, p183). Since then has Mugabe kept a tight hold of the power in Zimbabwe. However, by the looks of it, will he not be able to keep hold of the power for much longer. Talks have started about what will happen with Zimbabwe when he is gone (Zimbabwe After Mugabe, 2016).
1.5 Literature Review

As mentioned above there already has been quite a few academic paper written on Zimbabwe and Robert Mugabe’s relation towards international actors. It is not only academic papers that write about Mugabe’s relation towards the rest of the world, there are also a lot of media covering him as well, such as newspaper, television and radio. As will be further explained below do the other existing paper have a different take on the international relations of Mugabe. The papers focuses on the relationship between Robert Mugabe’s Zimbabwe and one other country, not comparing the views of different actors.

For example, there is a lot of research done on China’s relation towards Zimbabwe. An interesting aspect from the current academic debate regarding the China-Zimbabwe relations is that depending on where the paper is published they will have different perception on whether Mugabe acted in the best interest of his people when improving the relations between the two countries. Researchers from the West tend to be very critical towards Mugabe’s relation towards China compared to Chinese and Zimbabwean sources that tend to be much more positive towards the relation (Chun, 2014; Kriger, 2003; Moore, 2014; Mudavanhu, 2014; Power, 2003).

There has also been research done focusing on Robert Mugabe’s speeches and what discourse he has had towards international actors. Clemenciana Mukanenge and John Mutambwe wrote about Mugabe’s discourse towards EU and the United States of America following the sanctions these two actors put on Zimbabwe. In their research they are concluding that Mugabe is using a “attack the accuser” rhetoric, attacking theses actors for being hypocritical and blaming them for the stagnation of Zimbabwe’s development. With his speech Mugabe paints the picture of him being the victim of a new type of imperialism (2013, p317).

As can be seen there has been a lot of research done already about Zimbabwe, Mugabe and his relations towards different international actors. However, is there a research gap where there is no substantial research done considering and comparing the different discourses that is surrounding Robert Mugabe hence will this research try to fill a part of that research gap. A more developed literature review will be presented in the chapter 2.
2 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

With the background of that so many different actors are trying to paint their picture of Robert Mugabe the analytical framework for this thesis will focus on power relations in international politics. The analytical framework that will be used to analyze the topic in this thesis will be based in Steven Lukes theory about power. In his book *Power a Radical View* from 2005 is he presenting three different dimensions of power (one-, two- and three dimension) and discussing their strengths and weaknesses. The three different dimensions have their base in different definitions of what power is and how it works. However, Lukes argues for that the first two dimensions lack depth and complexity to be able to provide a satisfactory analysis of power. He instead argues that the third dimension of power provides a more accurate way of analyzing power relations in the society (Lukes, 2005, p15-16). Therefore, will the analytical framework of this thesis use Steven Lukes third dimension of power, the three-dimensional view, when analyzing the findings. Further in order to really understand the type of power that is in play will the concept of *Power as Domination* also be applied to the analysis.

2.1 Three-Dimensional view

Lukes describes the Three-dimensional View of Power as; “…power involves the thoroughgoing critic of the behavior focus of the two first views as to individualistic and allows for consideration of the many ways in which potential issues are kept out of politics, whether through the operation of social forces and institutional practices or through individuals’ decisions” (2005, p28). According to Lukes this can happen where there are no observable conflicts, since it has been adverted before any outbreak, however do the potential of a conflict remain. The potential of a conflict might never be seized and it stays as a potential conflict, this is what Lukes calls a *Latent Conflict*. A latent conflict consists of the interest of those who exercise power and the interest of those that they exclude (Lukes, 2005, p28).

In this thesis will the Three-dimensional view of power be used to try to understand how the international actors use their discourse as a power tool when talking about Robert Mugabe. There is a conflict of interest among the international actors who all wants to influence Zimbabwe going into one specific path of development. The question is how the conflict plays out in the debate and who actually has the power to affect
Zimbabwe. These actors do all have some interest in the country and are trying to exercise their power to influence the course of development in Zimbabwe. The actors do have a different approaches regarding who should be included in the developmental progress of Zimbabwe and who should be excluded.

2.2 Power as Domination
To really understand how international actors use their power through their discourse in international politics when talking about Robert Mugabe the analytical framework will also focus on Power as the form of Domination. Power as domination works in the way that it restrains the choices of other, forcing them or obtaining their compliance, by impeding them from living as their own nature and judgment dictate (Lukes, 2005, p85).

To be able to understand how the powerful use their power to dominate in international politics there are two aspects that one has to take into consideration when analyzing. The first aspect that one has to understand is when power as domination is present and in work? To be able to understand that Lukes does clarify that one has to see beyond the visible and look into the hidden, less visible forms of power. One needs to look into the discussion of the powerful, and pick up the threads of the discussion. The power of the powerful range across issues and contexts and their discussion will lead to consequences, perhaps even unintended, without that the powerful use any means of physical intervention. This is due to the fact that power resides in the ability to bring about a desired outcome. Hence will power as domination be present where it furthers or does not impact the interest of the powerful and where it will have a negative impact on those who are subjected by it (Lukes, 2005, p86).

The second aspect that one has to take into account is how such power can secure compliance. One can divide this aspect in to two different categories, physical and mental compliance. The physical aspect focuses on the bodily features such as; movement, speaking and seeing. This is present when the powerful use their physical advantage to keep the weak in bonds of obedience. The mental aspect focuses more on the mindset of people and the focus is instead on; fear, anger and trust. Human power cannot be judged by the strength of the bodily aspect therefore must the mental aspect be the one to provide human power. Hence does that mean that those whose reasoning
is most powerful and are guided by it, are also the ones who have most control of their own rights (Lukes 2005, p 86-87).

In the world of international politics there is a constant conflict of interest between the powerful. The theory of choice will then be applied to understand how these different actors are trying to dominate in international politics and shape a biased picture of Robert Mugabe. When analyzing the findings, the focus will mainly be on the first aspect of Power as Dominance, the focus will be to look into the discussion that is present and the discussion that has been present over the course of history. In this case is the desired outcome that the powerful are striving to uphold their picture of Robert Mugabe which clashes with other actors’ view of him. As mentioned in previous chapters this thesis will focus on the discourse surrounding Robert Mugabe, hence will the second aspect of power as dominance not be relevant for this thesis. The discussion is not affected by the physical setups of the actors. However, could the mental aspect of the international actors be interesting to investigate in. Unfortunately, since this is a case study will that not be possible. Hence will the focus only be on the first aspect of Power as Domination.

2.3 Literature Review
As mentioned in Chapter 1 there has been a lot of papers written about Robert Mugabe and Zimbabwe’s international relation towards other international actors in a lot of different channels, both academic and non academic. The academic papers that the author has found is usually more focused on the relation between Zimbabwe and one other specific country and the theoretical approach is usually not based around the concept of power.

In a master thesis at Stellenbosch University Cari Coetzee wrote about South Africa’s policies towards Robert Mugabe and Zimbabwe. She is examining how the former president Thabo Mbeki’s quiet policies towards Zimbabwe has affected South Africa’s place in the international sphere as a “leader” for Africa. The theoretical framework that she is using is constructivism to examine the norms and identity in the quiet diplomacy towards Mugabe. She concludes that as a consequence of Mbeki’s quiet diplomacy South Africa has received a lot of criticism both domestically and internationally due to its lack of condemnation Mugabe and the human right abuses that is taking place in
Zimbabwe (Coetzee, 2004, p7, 81). Chris Landsberg an other South African scholar also wrote a paper about South Africa’s Quiet policies and Mbeki’s difficult job. He however is quite positive towards the job Mbeki did. He argues for that the quiet policies of South Africa during the Mbeki administration gave South Africa a strong position in the international debate when it came to find a good solution for a working transition for Zimbabwe. He is concluding in his paper that Mbeki gave the new president of South Africa, Jacob Zuma, a good platform to build from and that Zuma has done that. Landsberg argues that Zuma has built on that platform after changing his discourse after he was elected (2016, p144).

Chinas increased investments in Africa has been written about in many papers and a lot of scholars have written about the effect that the “unconditional” aid China has provided to Africa. Zimbabwe has obtained a lot of aid from China and therefore have a lot of scholars written about the relationship between these two countries. That has lead to an academic debate about what effect the aid has had on Zimbabwe. There are scholars who have argued for that the aid has damage the development of Zimbabwe but there are also many scholars who believe that the aid has helped Zimbabwe to develop, as will be presented next. Obert Hodzi, Leon Hartwell and Nicola de Jager wrote a paper about what effect the “unconditional” aid has had on Zimbabwe’s development. Their conclusions in the paper is that it has had a negative effect on the development of Zimbabwe due to that it has increased the bad governance of Zimbabwe, boosted the corruption and undermined the civil societies role. According to them China has provided Mugabe a way to avoid political reforms that the Western world are trying to push on Zimbabwe. Instead of supporting a sustainable African development China are supporting the Mugabe regime and their own interests in Africa (Hodzi, Hartwell, de Jager. 2012, p96). Other scholars have done research that argues against this view and have instead argued that the aid that Zimbabwe is receiving from China will actually provide the country with better tools to increase their chance of development. They are in their papers writing that Robert Mugabe’s action to increase trade with China was the right thing to do. However, do scholars argue that there must be a change in the relation between the two countries and they are arguing for that Zimbabwe needs to understand that China is acting in their own foreign interest and that Zimbabwe could gain more profit if they were to put some conditions on China (Mudavanhu, 2014; Chung, 2014).
Academic literature that is examining how the United Kingdom views Robert Mugabe and how the relationship between those two actors have been harder to find. Ian Taylor and Paul Williams wrote a paper together talking about the weaknesses of British foreign policies and how little U.K. succeeded to influence Zimbabwe. They conclude that the British foreign policies have not been successful in Zimbabwe since they are focusing on the wrong thing. British foreign polices towards Africa has focused on the elites of the continent instead of the people. Taylor and Williams argue that British focus has to change if the U.K. expect to have any real power in Africa (Taylor, Williams, 2002, p562-564).

Nevertheless, there is a profound amount of literature discussing Robert Mugabe’s stand towards the Western world. What these research has shown is that Robert Mugabe is working with his discourse when describing the Western world. He constantly attacks the Western world and accuses them for being hypocrites when talking about democracy. He accuses organization such as Untied Nation (UN) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) of being undemocratic. Further is he claiming that these organizations did not support the liberation smugle in Zimbabwe hence did they support the former undemocratic government. He is using an attack the accuser rhetoric to question the reliability in the accusation that the Western world is making. In these speeches is he often using words such as “us, we” and “ours” to indicate that all people of Zimbabwe is going through the struggle and that it is a shared responsibility. Words as “they” and “them” are often used when discussing the people who he accuses for being responsible for the disaster in Zimbabwe. Through the use of this language Mugabe is trying to create the picture of him and the people of Zimbabwe as the victims (ALO, 2012; Chimbarange, Takavarasha, Kombe, 2013; Mukenge, Mutambwa, 2013).
3 METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Methodology
To be able to understand how different actors talks about Mugabe this will be a abductive case study using a qualitative method. When doing an abductive study the start of the study will be on describing a general pattern. What differs from deductive and inductive is that it will neither give a logically generalization nor an empirical generalization (Danermark, Ekström, Jakobsen, Karlsson. 2005, p90). However, what abductive reasoning will bring to the research is to provide it with a deeper understanding. This is due to the fact that the research has to be described and understood by participants’ perspective. (Bryman, 2012, p 401). When using abductive reasoning in social science research and unravel a case with help of the framework of interpretation it will provide one of several possible interpretations. Abductive reasoning will provide the research with is new insight as an outcome of the researchers’ interpretation and/or explanation. The conclusion will be one of many possible conclusions depending on how the researcher is interpreting the facts. Abductive reasoning will show how something might be (Danermark, Ekström, Jakobsen, Karlsson. 2005, p90-91). This study will be a desk study examining already existing data hence does the author believe that a abductive study will be the best possible way to achieve the most satisfying results. The abductive research will then provide help to get a deeper understanding in how international actors use their discourse when talking about Robert Mugabe. The framework that will be applied to analyze the thesis will be presented bellow, which is Critical Discourse Analysis. The author is aware of that the conclusion will be the result of his interpretation of the findings and it will show the relation between the factors as he understands them. However, can an abductive research deliver a better and deeper result for this thesis.

3.2 Critical Discourse Analysis
The methodology in this thesis will furthermore examine the power relation between different international actors using the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The basis for a CDA is that it tries to explain the relationship between the discourse and the reality (Bryman, 2016, p540). Gilbert Weiss and Ruth Wodak argues that when doing a CDA the focus is on the relationship between language and power. According to them a CDA does examine the relation between how an actor through the use of language can
exercise power over another actor (Weiss, Wodak, 2007, p12). Further, they do explain how CDA sees language as a social practice and if one is using CDA is the context of language crucial. When the discourse is described as a social practice there are some events, situations, institutions and social structures that frames it, the discursive frame is constructed by it but they are also constructed by the discourse (Weiss, Wodak, 2007, p13).

Additionally, do they explain that when one is using a CDA one does see languages as a social practice and the context of the language as crucial. Since language is seen as a social practice it will indicate the importance of understanding power. The use of discourses may have a huge impact on the ideological discussions, it can produce or reproduce unequal power relations between different groups in the society (Ibid). Further they do explain that CDA sees ideology as an important way of creating and preserving unequal power relations and CDA focus on how language mediates the ideological debate (Weiss, Wodak, 2007, p14). When doing a CDA it is not the language in itself that is powerful, the language gets power depending on how powerful persons use it. This is why CDA focus on those who are responsible for that inequalities exist and who has the means to change the situations (Ibid). To clarify power does not appear out of language, but language can be used to challenge power, to change the distribution of power in both long and short term (Weiss, Wodak, 2007, p15). To conclude CDA does aim to research social inequalities as it is expressed, legitimized and so on, by the use of language (Ibid).

3.3 Epistemology
What scientific knowledge is, has been heavily debated as well as whether a common truth actually exists. The broadly accepted picture among researchers is that knowledge is a passive reflection of a phenomena ‘out there’ but also a creation of a power working ‘within’ the researcher. Knowledge is seen as created by shared conventions for knowledge production and the ‘truth’ is understood as being the tool to produce a culturally recognizable representation of the reality instead of creating a truth that corresponds with the reality (Jørgensen, 2007, p63). The big question one meets when doing a CDA is how should an author act towards the data he obtains when having in mind that his own knowledge is a production of what is culturally acceptable for him. CDA is characterized by an interdisciplinary integration between different perspectives
where the illustration of the world is seen as a relation between it and the social contexts. Knowledge is therefore understood as the knowledge production that operates under socially situated discursive practices that acts under its own regulative mechanisms with social consequences (Ibid). The author of this thesis is from a Western country and has grown up in a society heavily influenced by Western cultural views. Hence can the author not be totally objective in the research, the preexisting knowledge that he has obtained might influences the outcome of the research. The knowledge might also influence how the author views the meaning of different words, in the cultural where he comes from might one word be connected to something horrifying while in another culture the word might be connected to something not so horrifying. The question thus remains wheatear CDA will bring anything positive to the debate, or if the result will become too subjective to even be taken serious. To make the research trustworthy is it important to find a balance between text and institution, between communication and structure and between discourse and society (Weiss, G. Wodak, R, 2007, p9). The author will to the best of his ability try to find a good balance between these opposites with obtaining statements that produces a clearer picture of their opinion on Robert Mugabe, where the actors express a clear opinion about Robert Mugabe.

3.4 Objectivity
The aim of doing a CDA is to critically study the linguistic used by actors who has used it to communicate a socio-political message (Van Dijk, 1995, p17). These actors tend to argue for them being objective in their discourse. However, do they serve under the norms and values, referred to political ethics, which controls what one believes to be right or wrong (Van Djik, 1995, 19). The question is then how the author of this thesis can be objective, if the actors that the thesis will examine can not be objective. The thesis will not take any opinion about whether or not Robert Mugabe is a fitting leader to rule Zimbabwe and whether the actions he has taken has been to the best of Zimbabwe’s interest. The thesis will instead focus on how three different actors, who has taken an opinion about Robert Mugabe, have talked about him and how they have described him. The focus will be to look into specifically chosen statements and text that they have produced regarding Robert Mugabe and how they do view him.

However, do the author of this thesis heritage from the “Western world” and has grown up in a society were the political ethics is not the same as someone who heritage from
an other part of the world. As to this, will the author have some preexisting values and beliefs that the author can not control or look away from. Unfortunately, will this to some extent effect the outcome of the research. The author has tried to counter the preexisting values and beliefs by comparing the three different actors without putting any value into their opinion, just look into how they use their discourse as a power tool when they talk about Robert Mugabe.

3.5 Sources
As mentioned above this thesis is an effort to examine the discourse by international actors when debating Zimbabwe’s president Robert Mugabe. To clearly understand how the international actors, use their discourse when they discuss Robert Mugabe is it important to have good reliable sources. There are a lot of research done regarding Robert Mugabe, both on how he got to where he is, how he changed, his policies and also the legacy that he is going to leave behind him after he is gone. This thesis will however examine the discourse expressed from three different actors regarding Robert Mugabe and how they view him and the policies that he has been conducting over the course of history. Since this thesis will examine the language used by these actors it is important that the sources used are reliable and follows the path of that actor. The focus will be to obtain as many primary sources as possible discussing where there is a direct link between the actor making the statement and the person who writes it. It will be in either the form of official statements, a debates or interviews. The author has avoided secondary sources since the data presented there have already gone through the process and lens of another author (Bryman, 2013, p13). However, the author will use a number of interviews done by journalists and presented in newspapers. The author argues for that these interviews should be seen as primary sources due to the fact that it is words expressed by an official person following the official line of the country. One other reason for why the author have chosen to use data presented in newspapers is that they reach out to a huge amount of people and are much more likely to be read by people in the civil society. On a monthly basis some 80% of the adult population of the world are reached by a newspaper and with the increased access to internet based newspaper will reach even a higher number of people (Hart, 2010, p17).

There have been a constriction regarding the amount of sources that this thesis will obtain and present. Accessible are there a lot data discussing the relation between South Africa and Zimbabwe and United Kingdom and Zimbabwe. However, have there been a though constriction regarding the
amount of data that has been presented. This is due to find a balance between the data presented regarding the three actors. If one or two countries had more data it would jeopardize to make the analysis unbalanced. Hence, will this thesis only present a qualified amount of data in the findings. However, there might be more data not found in this research that would point to other directions regarding Robert Mugabe. The author will try to focus on obtaining as much data from official statements done by an official person working for one of the chosen actors. However, as mentioned above the author will also use data accessed from media, in the form of newspapers. The author will to the best of his ability make sure that the interviews are done correctly and that the sources are reliable. The data that the author gathers will then be separated and sorted depending on how it describes Robert Mugabe and what type of language is used when discussing him.

3.6 Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations: There are a few limitations to the chosen topic that the author has to take into account when writing this paper. One limitation is that China is a quite closed who does not openly take the debate. This can result in that the information accessible is limited. However, the author has found quite a lot of information on Chinas opinion of Robert Mugabe, not least because of the Peace prize he was awarded in 2015. One more possible limitation is the changes in South Africa’s policies towards Robert Mugabe, as will be shown further down has Jacob Zuma both been attacking Mugabe and also praising Mugabe. So it can be hard to see where he actually stands in the debate.

Delimitation: A chosen delimitation for this thesis is the countries that the author has chosen to emphasis on. To make this thesis doable and of interest the author has chosen to only put focus on a few specific countries who are of specific importance for Zimbabwe and are affected by Mugabe’s policies. Countries such as Sweden who used to support the liberation struggle and Mugabe but on later days have criticized him will not be of any concern to this thesis. Instead will the thesis focus on; Great Britain since Zimbabwe used to be a British colony, China since they are investing a lot of money and time in Zimbabwe and that they in 2014 awarded Mugabe with a peace prize and South Africa who have been receiving a lot of refugees from Zimbabwe and been deeply engaged in trying to find solutions to internal conflicts in the country.
4 FINDINGS

In the Findings chapter will the author present what discourses he has found coming out of these international actors. It is clear that these actors have different views of Robert Mugabe and that when they describe him they view him in totally different light. This chapter will be divided so that the discourse from the actors will be presented and gone through one by one, starting with China then United Kingdom and last South Africa.

4.1 China

The Chinese government has consistently acted as a “friend” towards Zimbabwe and Robert Mugabe and aided him through both rough times and the easier times. The support dates back all the way to the liberation struggles. The support and aid has however increased a lot in recent years in line with that the conflict between Mugabe and the West has increased (Eisenman, 2005, p9).

On the 21 of February 2010 the Chinese embassy in Harare arranged a birthday party for Robert Mugabe, who turned 86. This was the first time since Mugabe took power in 1980 that he had visited a foreign embassy in Zimbabwe. The Chinese ambassador, Xin Shunkang, was very proud that Mugabe had attended the birthday party at the embassy and in an interview with Gary J. Bass he talked about the Chinese relation with Zimbabwe and about the Chinese support for Mugabe. When describing Robert Mugabe, he said “He led the Zimbabwean people to win their independence… Just like Chairman Mao” (Bass, 2010, p86). When asked about why China supported Zimbabwe even though they lack valuable natural resources Shunkang answered “it’s just one drop in the sea… China did not stop our normal economic relation, as the West” (Ibid). Bass asked Shunkang about the bloodshed that Mugabe is accused of being responsible for. The answer he got was “If they say the president beat some people, did you see that with your own eyes? People could believe it or not” (Bass, 2010, p88). An unnamed Chinese foreign ministry officer told Bass when discussing latest election “For a hero of the liberation struggle to make such a big compromise is not an easy thing” (Ibid).
In 2010 Mugabe went to China to meet the former president of China, Hu Jintao to discuss the development of the two countries. Jintao was very pleased that Mugabe would visit China and when Mugabe arrived to China did he hail the traditional friendship between the two countries that had lasted for more than 30 years. During the meeting they talked a lot about the future development for the two countries and that there needed to be a relationship between the two countries were there is a mutual support and development between the two parties. Further did Jintao state that he and China supported Mugabe and the Zimbabwean government in future development of the country and he stated that he was going to work to enhance the trade between the two countries. He stated that; “China supports the Zimbabwean government's efforts to promote economic recovery and development…” (Hu Jintao Meets with Zimbabwean President, 2010).

The current (2017) president of China Xi Jinping has also endorsed Robert Mugabe and his ZANU-PF. After a conference between the two leaders in 2014 Jinping made a statement through the state owned news paper about the relationship between the two leaders and countries. The through going theme of the statement was that there was a mutual friendship between the two leaders who respected each other. Jinping describes it as; “…continue to be good friends, good partners and good brothers with equal treatment, mutual support, mutual benefit and win-win results and common development…” (State News Service, 2014). Further in the statement Jinping singled out Mugabe to be the renowned leader of Africa’s liberation and a very important actor in the integration of Africa. He stressed the issue that China will not halt their support for neither Zimbabwe nor Robert Mugabe (Ibid). The theme of the statement was that China saw Zimbabwe as a close friend and brother who they were going to keep supporting through both though and easy times.

In 2015 Robert Mugabe was awarded the Chinese peace prize, Confucius peace prize. The organization is not directly connected to the government but was created as a response to that the Nobel peace prize was awarded to Liu Xiaobo in 2010, even if he was serving a prison sentence in China. The motivation for Mugabe to be awarded the prize was “Mugabe is the founding leader of Zimbabwe and has been trying to stabilize the country's political and economic order ever since the country was first founded. He brought benefit to the people of Zimbabwe.” (Wong, Piao, 2015). Further in their
motivation do they argue that “As the president of Zimbabwe or the chairman of the African Union, he has always been pushing forward the cause of peace in Africa” and “…He has been trying to support the independence of Africa. He has his 'African Dream” (Ibid).

4.2 United Kingdom
Ever since Ian Smith declared Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) a sovereign state the relationship between the United Kingdom and Zimbabwe has been tense. The leaders of U.K. did not support Mugabe during the liberation struggle but neither did they condemn the actions taken by him. When the liberation fighting was over and Mugabe became the new president of Zimbabwe the U.K. had a quite difficult time to decide how to treat him and how they should react to the new leaders of Zimbabwe. In the House of Commons in the British parliament there have been some discussion about Robert Mugabe and his government and how they should act towards him. In 2001 when Robert Mugabe started with the FTLR there was a discussion in the House of Commons where representatives from both the Labour and Conservative party discussed how the United Kingdom should treat Robert Mugabe and his Government (Bellingham, 2001; Bradshaw, 2001). The two representatives were Sir Henry Bellingham a conservative who for 10 years served in the U.K. parliament, 2002-2012, (Bellingham, 2017) and Ben Bradshaw who served in the parliament for 8 years obtaining the position as Shadow Deputy Prime Minister (Bradshaw, 2017).

When discussing the start of Mugabe’s era as president of Zimbabwe Bellingham stated; “To be fair to President Mugabe, he helped to foster the mood of national reconciliation and good will, and his early years were characterised by pragmatism and magnanimity. In many ways, Zimbabwe was rightly held up as an example to the rest of Africa.” (Bellingham, 2001). U.K. used to be quite positive towards Mugabe during his first years as president of Zimbabwe but as mentioned before that changed and Bellingham in discussing the more present issues adds; “Three quarters of Zimbabwe’s population live in abject poverty. It is not Mugabe and his cronies who are suffering—they will always be okay—but the people of the country, who face not only poverty and starvation, but… state-sponsored anarchy, human rights abuses and a regular breakdown in the rule of law.” (Ibid).
In Zimbabwe there is a lack of democratic possibilities for the civil society and opposition parties are often victims of political violence from the national police (Zinyama, 2012, p 141). The British government has for a long time condemned this behavior and the use of violence against democratic forces. In the same discussion as above did Bellingham state the following; “President Mugabe will not forgive farmers and their workers for supporting the MDC. His bent and twisted logic demands scapegoats and revenge. Everything is happening because he is desperate to win next year's presidential elections at any cost”. (Bellingham, 2001).

Bellingham ends his statement with a clear message about the British opinion about Robert Mugabe. How they see him as an unfit leader to rule Zimbabwe and that he needs to be held accountable for the disastrous development that Zimbabwe has gone through and all the human rights abuses that has taken place. He states; “We know that Mugabe is a bully and a tyrant. He does not understand the language of compromise… The time has come to send a special envoy to Zimbabwe to talk to President Mugabe and explain to him clearly that he has a last chance to play fair and to deliver free and fair elections.” (Bellingham, 2001) and “Mugabe must be told that, unless he delivers free and fair elections, win or lose, he will be treated as the mass murderer and brutal tyrant that he is and arraigned before a war crimes tribunal at The Hague.” (Ibid).

Ben Bradshaw adds on to the discussion and he also argues against Robert Mugabe and the Zimbabwean government and he states the following; “…undermining of Zimbabwe's democratic system; widespread abuse of human rights; the rapid decline of the economy; and severe damage to commercial agriculture, the country's main foreign currency earner.” (Bradshaw, 2001). By the end of the discussion Bradshaw does however end his statement with claiming that the policies towards Robert Mugabe and Zimbabwe is not necessarily against Mugabe as a person but against what he claims the real enemy of Zimbabwe, he states the following; “Our policy is not about Britain versus President Mugabe but about helping Zimbabwe against its real enemies: poverty, disease, hunger, oppression and social injustice.” (Ibid).
In 2010 there was another discussion in the House of Commons on how the British government should act towards Robert Mugabe and his government. The discussion that was taking place was about whether the United Kingdom should provide economic support towards Zimbabwe and if they should keep the embargo against Zimbabwe. The question was if the embargos actually put some pressure on Mugabe and his government or if it only impacted the civilians living in Zimbabwe (Bruce, 2010).

Gregory Campbell a member of the British Parliament since 2001 talked a lot about the decline of development that had struck Zimbabwe since Mugabe came to office. Campbell argued for that Mugabe was to blame for the decline of Zimbabwe’s development and that he should be held accountable. In his statement he claims that the problems that Mugabe has created has continued and that it by no means looks like he will step down anytime soon. The quality of the Zimbabwe’s healthcare has declined a lot since 1980 and every week are around 1000 new cases of HIV/AIDS recorded in Zimbabwe and equally as many die from the disease. He ends his statement with claiming that it does not matter whether the United Kingdom accuses Mugabe for being a bad leader who does not care about his people, Mugabe just does not care about the British opinion (Campbell, 2010).

Daniel Poulter also talked a lot about the destruction of the infrastructure of Zimbabwe. Arguing for that Zimbabwe used to have one of the best infrastructure in Africa with great economy and some of the best hospitals and universities in Africa. That was until Mugabe took office and according to him “has been (Read universities and hospitals) destroyed and degraded by Mugabe over a number of years.” (Poulter, 2010).

The last person, that will be presented, that spoke at this event was Neil Parish a British politician who was sent to Zimbabwe as an observer in 2000 but due to his criticism of Mugabe was banned from the country. In his speech he declared that Mugabe is a dictator who instead of dealing with his own faults attacks other, the white Zimbabweans and the colonial past, blaming them for the destruction of the country. Further when he addressed the parliament he did state that Mugabe and his government were the utmost responsible for the destruction of the farms in Zimbabwe and since a lot of the farms in Zimbabwe also contained schools and medical centers for the destruction of the infrastructure. According to Parish is it important to keep on supporting the
civilians of Zimbabwe, without the British support will they be the ones who will hurt the most, but it is important not to support the Mugabe regime. Mugabe does not believe in human rights and freedom of speech and Parish ends his statement with “We must not forget that ZANU-PF and Mugabe do not believe in democracy and do not understand it as we understand it…” (Parish, 2010).

The former prime minister of the United Kingdom, Tony Blair, did during his time in office attack Robert Mugabe and his government on a couple of occasions. During the Commonwealth summit of 2002 there was a big debate about if Robert Mugabe should be allowed to attend the summit and if the restrictions towards Zimbabwe should be lifted. According to the host of the summit, Nigeria’s former president Olusegun Obasanjo, U.K. refused to attend the summit if Mugabe would attend. Blair opened the summit tough and claimed Robert Mugabe to be of the same caliber as Saddam Hussein and stated that he wanted all the leaders who oppress their people to change (La Guardia, 2003). Blair strongly vowed against the idea of ending the restrictions towards Mugabe and the Zimbabwean government. He argued that it was of the utmost importance to keep the restriction since as he said; “…because that sends a signal of strong disapproval for what is happening in Zimbabwe at the present time” (Ibid).

4.3 South Africa
The discourse expressed by South Africa and taken into account in this thesis will start with the former president Thabo Mbeki and then follow through to his successor Jacob Zuma. The thesis will focus on those two due to that they have had a lot of interaction with Mugabe and have talked about Mugabe in public. Mbeki received criticism from both domestic and international actors for being too soft towards Robert Mugabe. Mbeki was known to practice a quiet diplomacy towards Mugabe and not openly intervene in the politics that was taking place in Zimbabwe. Mbeki justified his quiet diplomacy with the slogan “African solutions for African problems” there should not be any external interventions to put an African country into the “right” direction. It was important for an African country to develop at its own speed and by its own means (Landberg, 2016).
Before Jacob Zuma became the president of South Africa he did frequently criticize both Mbeki for his quiet diplomacy and Mugabe. He argued that external actors needed to put pressure on Mugabe in hope that he might change his policies. After Zuma took over office his discourse towards Mugabe changed and he became more friendly towards him. There was an increased amount of people blaming Zuma for actually strengthen the ties between South Africa and Zimbabwe. In 2015 did Mugabe go to South Africa for an official state visit, after receiving an invitation from Zuma. This was the first time Mugabe went to South Africa for an official state visit since 1994, also highlighting the strengthening of the relations between the two nations (Landsberg, 2016, p126-127).

Thabo Mbeki always underlined the importance of letting Zimbabwe develop on their own speed without any external interference, a foreign country could aid or help Zimbabwe if asked but they should not force changes. ANC today Vol. 1 No. 9 starts of with the letter from the president regarding the quiet diplomacy and Robert Mugabe. Internal actors had started to put pressure on Mbeki to change his diplomacy towards Mugabe, they argued that the quiet diplomacy was not working and they were afraid that Zimbabwe’s problem would spill over into South Africa. The letter then went on to defend the quiet diplomacy towards Zimbabwe. The internal actors argued that South Africa’s government should use their power to overthrow Robert Mugabe and his government. Mbeki defended his diplomacy by stating that inflecting the government of Zimbabwe would be undemocratic and not defendable. Mugabe was the democratically elected president and to overrule the peoples voice would be unethical. All through the statement did Mbeki state that Mugabe was the democratic elected leader of Zimbabwe and hence should he be the leader of Zimbabwe (Mbeki, 2001).

Thabo Mbeki wrote another letter from the president two years later, 2003, about Zimbabwe and the countries problems. This time he did however not use Robert Mugabe’s name, he talked about the leadership of Zimbabwe or the government of Zimbabwe. But he followed the same line that South Africa should not intervene in Zimbabwe, it is important that the people of Zimbabwe are allowed to chose their own leader. According to Mbeki is it important that the leaders from the different parties talk with each other and compromise, Mbeki claims that the leaders of Zimbabwe are willing to do that. He then states that the picture that, what he refers to, “some people”
have of Zimbabwe’s problem are false. The economic crises in Zimbabwe did not arose from bad leadership or corruption. According to him it did arise from meeting the needs of the poor black population without taking into account the harsh economic reality. He concludes the letter with stating that the leaders of Zimbabwe are humans and they are doing their best in trying to break the deadlock Zimbabwe is in (Mbeki, 2003).

As mentioned above Jacob Zuma’s stance towards Mugabe has shifted over the years, he has been quite inconsistence in his discourse towards Mugabe both condemning him and praising him. At the international human rights day in 2007 Jacob Zuma delivered a speech at the Witwatersrand University. The through going theme of the speech was the importance of democracy and that South Africa should be a leading example for Africa. Hence should Mbeki change his quiet diplomacy towards Zimbabwe and demand free and fair elections in the country. He accused world leaders who did not act upon injustices in other countries of being equally responsible for the devastation in that country as the ruling leaders. When addressing Mugabe directly he stated that there cannot be any substitute to democracy even if the outcome is not in your personal interest (Zimbabwe Briefing, 2007).

Shortly after the speech at Witwatersrand Jacob Zuma was elected leader of ANC, but not yet president of South Africa. One of the biggest newspaper in South Africa, Mail & Guardian, conducted an interview by the end of 2007 regarding his new position. During the interview the subject of Mugabe and Mbeki’s “quiet diplomacy” was raised. In the interview Zuma had to some extend changed his discourse towards Mugabe. Zuma claimed that the rest of the worlds hostility towards Zimbabwe and Mugabe would only further the problems that the country had. He attacked the sanctions that some countries had put on Zimbabwe and claimed that: “Nobody else [in the world] has produced anything. We are going to continue with quiet diplomacy” (Wolmarans, 2007). He claimed that the diplomacy that “the world” was conducting towards Mugabe would not bring with it any positive change. He claimed that the world did not want to address the real problems of Zimbabwe. Zuma accused the world for “shouting from the rooftops” attacking problems that were not relevant (ibid).
In 2008 had Zuma once again changed his discourse towards Mugabe and the ZANU-PF. During a press conference did Zuma talk about ANC’s relation with Mugabe and ZANU-PF. He stated that South Africa could no longer agree with ZANU-PF, their values did not meet the values of South Africa. Zuma claimed that South Africa believed in democracy and that everyone had their right to get their voice heard. This was according to Zuma something that Mugabe did not believe in (Zindoga, 2012, p30).

In May of 2017 did Mugabe claim that Zimbabwe was the second most developed country in Africa hosting a lot of Universities (14) and a high literacy rate (90%). He attacked the Western World for trying to force Zimbabwe into a collapse (Robert Mugabe: Zimbabwe seconded-most developed country in Africa, 2017). A lot of actors questioned Mugabe’s statements with pointing at Human Development Index for Africa for 2016, where Zimbabwe parks at a shy 24 place, and the World Banks literacy rate for Africa, where Zimbabwe parks on spot 11 with 86.9% literacy (Ibid). Just a few days later did Zuma met Mugabe and discussed issues regarding the development of the two countries. Zuma was questioned about Mugabe’s statement after the meeting and once again had Mugabe changed his discourse. He agreed with that Zimbabwe was wrongly pictured in the Western media and that the country should not be seen as a fragile state. Zuma ends with claiming that the discussion between Mugabe and him was “…Very good, friendly and brotherly…” (Zuma: I agree with Mugabe, Zim is ‘mischaracterised, 2017; President Meets Zuma, 2017).

In February of 2016 Thabo Mbeki made a statement defending the quiet policy that his government had held towards Zimbabwe. The statement was made through his foundation, Thabo Mbeki Foundation, but is in this thesis accessed through a web based newspaper. In the beginning of the statement Mbeki writes about the help that the African National Congress (ANC) received from Mugabe during their fight against apartheid. He thanks Mugabe for allowing ANC to base underground operations in Zimbabwe (Mbeki, 2016). Mbeki further states that it was during this time that ANC and ZANU-PF came to an understanding that they had the same goals; defending their liberation, improving the lives for the civilians and advancing Pan African goals. But it was according to him important that Zimbabwe remained a democratic country with economic development. Mbeki argued that when he and the ANC saw that so was not the case, he did what according to him no one else did, he prepared and shared
documents with Zimbabwe with critic and help on how Zimbabwe should get on the right foot again (Ibid). Mbeki accuses other countries, mainly the United Kingdom, of having a totally different approach that is not in the interest of an African country. He claims that they were planning to overthrow Mugabe with the use of military intervention, by sending British troops to Zimbabwe. Mbeki saw this as the worst possible scenario as it would bring instability to the southern region of Africa. During Mbeki’s time as president of South Africa his “quite” diplomacy did focus on discussion with Mugabe, after the violent election of 2008 the two presidents did sit down to have a talk, Mbeki recommended that due to all the violence should there be new elections in Zimbabwe but Mugabe refused. Mbeki ends the statement with stating that his democratic South Africa should under no condition become a new home-grown imperialist. He states; “Consciously we took the position that democratic South Africa should at all costs avoid acting as a new home-grown African imperial power which would have given itself the right unilaterally to determine the destiny of the peoples of Africa!” (Ibid).
5 ANALYSIS

The discourse that has been expressed by these three actors differs a lot and have not been following the same pattern. They have tried to influenced the debate and expressed themselves in a specific way to influence the debate and spread their views of Robert Mugabe as widely as possible. They all tried to dominate the debate regarding Robert Mugabe and the author will now go through the discourse coming out of these actors and how they have used it as a power tool in an international debate. The thesis will first shortly go through the discourse that the actors have been using when talking about Robert Mugabe, identifying keywords that are used indicating who they believe Robert Mugabe to be which words they have used to describe him. The keywords will then be compared before being analyzed how they have been used to dominate the international debate.

5.1 China

When looking into to the Chinese debate regarding Robert Mugabe is it easy to see that the discourse that they are expressing follows a clear red line. The guidelines for what they express are words that are uplifting towards him as a person and that are prizing his actions as a national and continental savior. When talking about Mugabe they are expressing words which helps to paint the picture of a person who saved Africa from the foreign rulers who enslaved and mistreated the native Africans and stole the wealth from the continent. Officials working for the Chinese government talk about him as a hero and paint him up to be the hero of the liberation struggle and compare him to Mao Zedong. Both the former president, Hu Jintao, and the current president of China, Xi Jinping, uses a very friendly discourse when describing Mugabe. All through their statements they are referring Mugabe to be a good friend, partner and Jinping is going so far as to refer to Mugabe as a brother. Jinping was clear to express that he had no problems with the politics that Mugabe was conducting in Zimbabwe and that he and China was going to keep supporting Mugabe. The result of Jinping’s positive attitude towards Mugabe can be a reason for why Mugabe a few years later won the Confucius Peace Prize. They also praised Mugabe in their motivation talking about how much he had meant for the liberation of Africa and that he through his political career had worked to stabilize both Africa and Zimbabwe.

Keywords used by Chinese actors: Hero, Brother, Friend, Partner, Founding Leader.
5.2 United Kingdom
When officials from the U.K. talk about Robert Mugabe they tend to use other type of words and the discourse expressed by people working for the U.K. government tend not to be equally glorifying as the Chinese discourse. The discourse expressed by these actors do also follow a common redline but instead of exalting Mugabe as the Chinese discourse did are the words much tougher and disapproves of Mugabe’s presidential behavior and the policies that he has been conducting during his time as leader of Zimbabwe. There have been a few debates in the House of Commons regarding the issue of Zimbabwe and the development of the country, a lot of focus has been on Mugabe and the politicians have not been kind when choosing the words describing him. One common subject of the discussion is how Robert Mugabe is an undemocratic leader who have time and time again violated the human rights of the civilians of Zimbabwe and undermined the democratic system of the country. Officials do blame Mugabe for being the major reason for the deterioration in Zimbabwe. Claiming that Zimbabwe used to be a prosperous country before Mugabe came to power and more than 30 years later is the infrastructure, economy and agricultural possibilities totally destroyed by his policies. The former president of U.K., Tony Blair, also attacked Mugabe on numerous occasions accusing him of being a dictator being as evil as they can be. Hence is the discourse expressed from the British actors more hostile towards Mugabe and they do not praise him at all.
Keywords used by British actors; Dictator, Mass Murderer, Tyrant and Human rights.

5.3 South Africa
The discourse expressed by South Africa is more neutral compared to the discourse expressed by both China and Great Britain and can sometimes be hard to follow. Their view on Mugabe has gone in waves. The former president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, was known to conduct a very careful discourse towards Mugabe and did rarely act upon what happened in Zimbabwe. He kept on referring Mugabe to be a leader democratically chosen by the people of Zimbabwe and should therefore also be the leader of the country. When it came to the slow development, or as said by some, backwards development, of Zimbabwe did he state that African problems should be dealt with by African leaders and there was no need for any external help on the issue. He also accused the people who claimed that Zimbabwe’s problem was a consequence
of Mugabe’s policies were misinformed. One could argue that Mbeki’s successor, Jacob Zuma, has had difficulty to make up his mind on whether or not he should endorse or condemn Robert Mugabe. During the same time as he was elected leader of the ANC he both criticized and approved of Robert Mugabe and his party. He accuses Mugabe for being undemocratic and he attacked Mugabe for not hosting any free and fair elections in Zimbabwe. However, did he also state that Mbeki’s quiet policy in Zimbabwe was working and that South Africa should keep working to assist ZANU-PF. After Zuma became president of South Africa he never criticized Mugabe in public again. The words he used now were more friendly and he claimed that Mbeki’s quiet diplomacy was the best solution for Zimbabwe. Zuma has continued his support for Mugabe and in 2017 he, after a meeting between the two actors, stated that Zimbabwe was mischaracterized. He also did state that he had a very good relation with Mugabe using the same words as the president of China did, brotherly and friendly. After Mbeki had stepped down as South Africa’s president, he made a statement regarding his quiet diplomacy towards Mugabe. Emphasizing the importance of democracy in Zimbabwe, but he also argued that South Africa was the only country that was doing anything to actually help Mugabe and Zimbabwe, by aiding with administrating help. Mbeki also attacked the British government for planning to remove Mugabe through a military intervention.

Keywords used by South African actors: **Democratic, Mischaracterized, Misinformed, African solution, Quiet diplomacy.**

5.4 Keywords

The words that the author has identified as key words in the statements made by the actors has had a huge impact on the meaning of those statements. If one only focuses on the words without the context of the statement do the words have a meaning by themselves. However, as stated in the method chapter regarding epistemology the interpretation and meaning of a word can differ a lot depending on the what truth corresponds to the actors reality. For an actor who has been raised in a society idolizing democracy and human rights having it as a reality might understand the concept differently compared to an actor who raised in a society where these concepts are not a reality. Hence, the interpretations of the chosen keywords might differ. To show how the different actors can interpret a word one can look at the word democracy. South Africa in their discourse calls Robert Mugabe for a democratically elected president
while the United Kingdom keeps on referring to him as an undemocratic dictator. The two actors thus understand the same concept in two totally different ways. This shows how hard it is to get a consensus on a concept where different actors from different cultural backgrounds meets.

5.5 Dominating the International Debate
The discourse that the three actors have had regarding Mugabe and his achievements has differed considerably and they have not viewed him through the same lens. Without any doubt the different actors have tried to push for different political intervention towards Mugabe. The question is however how have they tried to dominate the international debate through their discourse when talking about Mugabe. When looking into the discussion conducted by the actors is it clear that they use different types of words when they are talking about Robert Mugabe. It is now about time to look into their discourse and try to understand how the actors are trying to use their discourse to dominate the international debate.

As mentioned above China has had a very positive discourse towards Robert Mugabe, they have painted the picture of him as a Hero, Founding father of Zimbabwe and a Friend. The very friendly approach they have had towards him has to be seen as an approval of him and the policies that he has been conducting. The fact that China never condemns any of Mugabe’s actions must be seen as an approval of his politics. Human right have never been on the Chinese agenda and the Chinese ambassador that Gary Bass interviewed even questioned if there was any political violence going on in Zimbabwe. He claimed that there was no proof of that Mugabe was responsible for any violence and one should not believe only what one hears. All through their discourse they are trying to argue for that Mugabe is not such a terrible leader and that he has been working to improve the lives for the people of Africa. China has through their discourse only pointed at the positive outcomes that Mugabe has brought to Zimbabwe. Chinese actors never talks about the more negative consequences of Mugabe’s politics.
The United Kingdom on the other hand has used the discourse in a totally different way. They have tried to dominate the international debate regarding Robert Mugabe by using a more negative discourse. One could even argue that they have been trying to destroy Robert Mugabe’s credibility and the possibility for him to remain president of Zimbabwe. In their discussion concerning Robert Mugabe do they only use a negative discourse and words that indicating that Mugabe are not a good leader. The fact that they repeatedly called Mugabe a *Mass Murderer, Dictator* and *Tyrant*, indicates that they are trying to use their discourse as a tool to destroy the credibility of Robert Mugabe. Every time Robert Mugabe or Zimbabwe is discussed the British actors take the opportunity to talk about him with a negative discourse. It can be seen in the many parliamentary debates on how they think United Kingdom should act towards Zimbabwe and how the focus tends to always go to Robert Mugabe. In the findings chapter data were collected from two parliamentary debates, the focus of the debates was never actually Robert Mugabe as a person, the focus was always on Zimbabwe and how U.K. could help to aid the civilians in Zimbabwe. However, the focus always did shift towards Robert Mugabe and how terrible he was as a leader and how he should be held accountable for the destruction of Zimbabwe. However, their disapproval for Robert Mugabe did reach new levels when Tony Blair threatened to skip the Common Wealth Summit if Mugabe was to allowed to attend the summit. One could argue that the U.K. government is trying to dominate the debate regarding Robert Mugabe through the use of threats of different types of actions. Through this type of threats and talks have the British government tried to uphold and spread their view of Robert Mugabe as the ruthless dictator who should no longer be the leader of Zimbabwe.

The threats from the U.K. was something that the former president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, also confirmed by stating that U.K. had threaten to move into Zimbabwe with their military to remove Robert Mugabe by force.

Further to understand how South Africa have tried to push their picture of Robert Mugabe does one need to see how their attitude towards him have somewhat gone in waves depending on who has been the president. Compared to both China and the United Kingdom, South Africa’s posture towards Mugabe has been more neutral and that is that picture that they have tried to advocate for. During Thabo Mbeki’s time as president he never really acted on Robert Mugabe and his policies, he calmly argued
that he was the elected president and therefore was Mugabe the right person to lead Zimbabwe. Mbeki tried to push for that it would be unethical to intervene in Zimbabwe since Mugabe had been elected by a democratic process. He also pushed for that there was differences between Africa and the rest of the world hence could there only be African solutions to African problems. During his time as president of South Africa did his discourse gyrate around that statement, there should be a neutrality towards Zimbabwe. At the same time did Jacob Zuma attack Mugabe for being undemocratic and that there was no other alternative to democracy. One could however argue for the case that Zuma only criticized Mugabe to gain popularity among the people who did question Mbeki’s quiet diplomacy. This is due to that Zuma as soon as he was elected president stopped to criticize Mugabe and instead talked about him as a friend. Zuma as soon as he became the new president of South Africa endorsed the quiet diplomacy. Zuma started to talk about that the only way to develop Zimbabwe was to help and to aid Mugabe. To continue to condemn him and put embargos on him and Zimbabwe would only hurt the “little” man. As long Zuma remained as president the tighter has his relation with Mugabe become. Now he is only referring to him as a friend and claims that the situation in Zimbabwe is wrongly pictured. The two presidents of South Africa have tried to dominate the international debate regarding Robert Mugabe trying to normalize him and his actions. Pushing that he is the democratically elected president and that he has the “rightful” claim to be president of Zimbabwe due to the fact that he is elected by the people of Zimbabwe.

After looking into the discourse that these actors have used to try to dominate the debate regarding Robert Mugabe is it easier to compare how they have tried to dominate the international debate with it. First of all, can one see that they have in their discussion about him decided to put focus on totally different things. The Chinese discourse tends to support Mugabe and has an overall positive discourse towards him. Their discourse tends to highlight actions that paints a positive picture of Mugabe. One thing that the author has noticed is that Chinese actors tend to talk about Robert Mugabe’s action in Zimbabwe in an historical context. They talk a lot about him as the liberator of Zimbabwe and that he has been a driving force in the destruction of imperialism. They see it as a justification for him being the strong leader who will bring development to Africa. The discourse from the United Kingdom however tend to focus on the action taken by Mugabe today, they do not focus at all on the liberation struggle. Instead do
they focus on decisions that he has taken that has direct or indirect caused harm to the people of Zimbabwe. They do not agree with his authoritarian way of controlling Zimbabwe and has in their discourse time and time again condemned his way. South Africa’s discourse tends to be quite friendly towards Robert Mugabe. Their view of Mugabe clashes somewhat with the British view, they argue for him being a democratically elected president who has been chosen by the people of Zimbabwe. External actors should not intervene in Zimbabwe unless Robert Mugabe directly asks for help, otherwise should no external actors act inside the sovereign state of Zimbabwe. They have through their discourse pushed for that Zimbabwe is a sovereign state and that one need to have trust towards them to be able to develop by themselves. South Africa’s and China’s discourse regarding Robert Mugabe can sometimes be very similar, both actors when talk about him use a quite friendly discourse using words such as friend, brother and partner.

5.6 Three Dimensional Power
The three dimensional power is clearly present in the case of how different actors are viewing Robert Mugabe. As one understood above do the actors have different views on however Mugabe is or is not the right leader for Zimbabwe. There is the issue of the United Kingdom condemning Mugabe and talk about him as an undemocratic dictator and that there has to be an intervention in Zimbabwe while China and South Africa to some extend sees him as the leader for Zimbabwe. It can be seen as a Latent Conflict where talks are taking place on occasions but there are no real actions is taken. These actors talk a lot about how Zimbabwe should develop and what should be done in the country. With the U.K. suggesting external intervention to get rid of Mugabe, China suggesting aiding Mugabe with money and development and South Africa arguing for African solution for African problems. This has lead to that there has not been any real intervention in Zimbabwe, the countries have acted by themselves or refused to acted. However, is the potential of the conflict still present with the view of Mugabe so diversified among the actors. The powerful actors are doing their best to dominate the debate and to support their interests in Zimbabwe, while the actors talk about their interest in Zimbabwe could one argue that they do exclude the people living in the country for not listening to what they have to say. These actors are trying to push their own ideological preferences on to the country without even discussing with the people who will be effected by them.
6 CONCLUSION

To conclude this thesis and answerer the research question presented in chapter one has this thesis has found that the chosen actors have used different types of discourses when talking about or describing Robert Mugabe. When they have talked or described Mugabe have they chosen to focus on different specific events or happenings as their base for the discourse they are conducting. The discourse that the Chinese actors have conducted, have been focusing on describing Robert Mugabe as hero and the rightful leader of Zimbabwe. They have based their discourse in a historical perspective focusing on the liberation struggle talking about him being the person who freed Africa from the imperialists. All through their discourse can one identify words that describes Mugabe in a very positive way, friend, hero and brother. The United Kingdom has used an other discourse when talking about Robert Mugabe. They have focused on describing him as an undemocratic leader who is doing everything he can to manipulate the system to remain in power. Their discourse has its base in Mugabe’s actions that he has conducted during his time as president of Zimbabwe. Keywords that they have been using are Mass murderer, dictator and tyrant. However, South Africa used a more neutral discourse when talking about Robert Mugabe. Mbeki were quite restricted in his public statements about Mugabe talking about him being a democratically elected president. His successor, Jacob Zuma, gave more public statements on Mugabe, before and after he got elected. However, his statements were contradictory both criticizing Mugabe and endorsing him. But after he became president of South Africa has his discourse been very positive towards Mugabe. Both Mbeki and Zuma has described Mugabe as a democratic leader, friend and brother. When comparing the keywords can one notice that the both Chinese and South African actors tend to use the same words when describing their relation towards Robert Mugabe such as friend and brother.

These three actors have used their discourse as a power tool when talking or discussing about Robert Mugabe. As they emphasis on different things when talking about Robert Mugabe are trying to create a picture of Robert Mugabe that not necessarily reflects the total truth of who he actually is. In the public debate have these three actors tried to dominate the international debate surrounding Mugabe using very specific words when describing him. The actors do not agree on who Mugabe is and they are through their
specifically chosen discourse trying to influence the international debate how other actors view him.

The three actors have through their discourse tried to influence the international debate regarding Robert Mugabe by talking about him with specifically chosen discourse. The actors describe Mugabe with specifically chosen words that has an implicated meaning. Words such as hero, tyrant, friend, mass murder and dictator are words used to describe him which have an implicated meaning and will influence how people view Robert Mugabe. By using this discourse are they influencing the picture of Mugabe creating a picture that reflecting the actor’s truth but not necessarily the “real” truth. The three actors have tried to influence the debate regarding Robert Mugabe so that the picture of him better fit into the reality of that actor.
7 REFERENCES


