



Parahyangan Catholic University
Faculty of Social and Political Science
International Relations Department Undergraduate
Program

Accredited UNGGUL

SK-BAN-PT No. 2579/SK/BAN-PT/AK-ISK/S/IV/2022

Ruskiy mir: Vladimir Putin's Strategic Narrative As
Legitimation of Russian Invasion to Ukraine in 2022

Undergraduate Thesis

By

Gabriella Alva Cayetha

6091901046

Bandung

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ABSTRACT

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The ideology of *Russkiy mir* which encompasses values of protection of compatriots, the Orthodox Church's role significance, the ethno-nationalist geopolitical position, and the revival of the Soviet Union legacy has become an integral part of Russia's national identity narrative in Vladimir Putin's third presidential term. After the annexation of Crimea, the narrative of *Russkiy mir* became one of the main defining concepts that explain how the Russia-Ukraine conflict is defined, constructed, and understood. As a socially-constructed concept of politics and culture, *Russkiy mir* must adapt in accordance with discourses in the domestic and international landscape to justify Russia's invasion on February 24th, 2022. This thesis seeks to find answer in "how the strategic narrative formation process of *Russkiy mir* was being implemented by Vladimir Putin in order to justify the 2022 Russia-Ukraine war?". This research uses the theory of the formation of strategic narrative to identify the strategic goals of a political actor for both domestic and international audience and the types of communication that the actor uses, and critical discourse analysis method is used to uncover how Vladimir Putin utilized components of discourses available from domestic and international settings to construct narratives for strategic purposes. To summarize the research finding, by analyzing the Russian Federation Presidential Address on February 24th, 2022, it can be concluded that Vladimir Putin's strategic narrative formation process of *Russkiy mir* was heavily dependent on the three-dimensional conception of discourse. Using agenda setting and policy legitimacy effort, Vladimir Putin has utilizes discourse practices of *Russkiy mir* as an ideology of cultural linkage through language, religion, and the belief of Motherland that politicize compatriots to define Russia's relations with Ukraine and the West. Socio-cultural practices in the domestic and international landscape post-Crimea annexation to the 2022 Russia-Ukraine war have also shaped the discourse components of *Russkiy mir* contained in his presidential address to be more explicit and offensive. This instance confirms that representational force became the main type of narrative communication that Vladimir Putin use to attack Ukraine and the West.

Keywords: critical discourse analysis, Russia-Ukraine conflict, *Russkiy mir*, strategic narrative, Vladimir Putin

ABSTRAK

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Judul : *Russskiy mir*: Narasi Strategis Vladimir Putin sebagai Legitimasi Invasi Russia terhadap Ukraina di Tahun 2022

Russskiy mir selaku ideologi yang menekankan nilai perlindungan pada kompatriot, peningkatan peranan Gererja Ortodoks, posisi geopolitikal etho-nasionalis, dan kebangkitan sejarah Uni Soviet menjadi bagian penting dari narasi identitas nasional di periode ketiga kepemimpinan Presiden Vladimir Putin. Setelah kejadian aneksasi Krimea, narasi Russskiy mir menjadi konsep kunci yang dapat memberikan definisi, konstruksi, dan pemahaman akan konflik Rusia-Ukraina. Sebagai konsep politik dan budaya yang dikonstruksikan secara sosial, narasi Russskiy mir harus beradaptasi sesuai dengan perkembangan diskursus dalam dan luar negeri untuk menjustifikasi aksi invasi Rusia terhadap Ukraina pada 24 Februari 2022. Di dalam skripsi ini, peneliti bermaksud menjawab pertanyaan penelitian “Bagaimana proses formasi narasi strategis Russskiy mir diimplementasikan oleh Vladimir Putin untuk menjustifikasi invasi Ukraina di tahun 2022 oleh Rusia?”. Peneliti menggunakan teori formasi narasi strategis untuk mengidentifikasi tujuan strategis aktor politik yang hendak dicapai di ranah domestik dan internasional serta tipe komunikasi yang digunakan oleh aktor politik tersebut, lalu peneliti menggunakan analisis wacana kritis untuk mencari tahu bagaimana Vladimir Putin menggunakan komponen diskursus yang tersedia di lanskap domestik dan internasional untuk mengkonstruksikan narasi untuk tujuan strategis. Sebagai bentuk rangkuman dari penemuan penelitian, dengan menganalisis Deklarasi Presiden Russia tanggal 24 Februari 2022, dapat disimpulkan bahwa proses formasi narasi strategis Russskiy mir di tangan Vladimir Putin sangat bergantung dengan model tiga dimensi konsepsi diskursus. Dengan metode agenda-setting dan upaya legitimasi kebijakan, Vladimir Putin telah menggunakan praktik diskursus Russskiy mir sebagai ideologi keterkaitan budaya melalui bahasa, agama, dan kepercayaan akan Tanah Air yang dapat mempolitisasi kompatriot untuk mendefinisikan relasi Rusia dengan Ukraina dan negara Barat. Praktik sosial budaya di lanskap domestik dan internasional paska aneksasi Krimea sampai sebelum terjadinya invasi Ukraina di tahun 2022 juga mengambil andil besar untuk mengubah komponen diskursus Russskiy mir yang tertera di dalam deklarasi presiden menjadi lebih eksplisit dan ofensif. Logika ini mengonfirmasi bahwa kekerasan representatif menjadi tipe komunikasi utama yang digunakan Vladimir Putin untuk menyerang Ukraina dan negara Barat.

Kata kunci: analisis wacana kritis, Konflik Russia-Ukraina, narasi strategis, Russskiy mir, Vladimir Putin

FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure and a deep sense of gratitude that I can present my thesis with the title of “*Russkiy mir*: Vladimir Putin’s Strategic Narrative As Legitimation of Russian Invasion to Ukraine in 2022”. This research seeks to answer the strategic narrative formation process of *Russkiy mir* as Vladimir Putin’s strategic narrative in justifying the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine by identifying various domestic and international factors that drove Vladimir Putin as a political actor to form such narrative for strategical means. With an emphasis on the constructivist approach and critical discourse analysis method, the researcher hopes this undergraduate thesis can enrich the academic discourse on Russia-Ukraine relations and the usage of strategic narrative in Vladimir Putin’s presidency.

Writing this thesis would not have been possible without the support and guidance of numerous individuals whom I wish to acknowledge. First and foremost, I would like to express gratitude to my supervisor Anggia Valerisha S.IP., M.Si., for giving me insightful academical feedback and constant motivation to finish my thesis on time. I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to my family, especially my mother and brother, for their constant encouragement and support in my academic journey. Furthermore, I wanted to thank my fellow friends and colleagues who have influenced my academic and personal growth. Lastly, I wanted to thank my partner Dio Pratama Putra, who has patiently accompanied me in my thesis research and writing journey and for giving me emotional support during challenging times.

Bandung, June 18, 2023

Gabriella Alva Cayetha

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

EU	European Union
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

It is an undeniable fact that ever since the end of the Cold War, the concept of power in the current state of International Relations study is no longer simply defined by military or economic measures or the by the outcome of tactical operations, but now is more heavily emphasized in the ability of a state to gather public support at home or within its area of operations. Soft power became an enlightening concept since it encourages non-coercive engagement in international affairs and recognizes the importance of values, culture, and policies in international relations and foreign policy.¹ Mastering this new dimension of power became increasingly appealing for various state actors, and contributing factors such as the changing nature of media and society encourage states to further engage and influence each other through non-material resources.² This marks the further alignment of the concept of communication with power, in which state actors actively seek to influence international affairs to various state and non-state audiences by methods of communication of narratives and the interaction that

¹ Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 5, 11.

² Joseph Nye, "Soft Power," *Foreign Policy* 80, (Autumn 1990): 167, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1148580>.

follows.³ Thus, a compelling narrative done by a leader can be a resource of power, since domestic and international audiences can be drawn to certain actors, events, and explanations that describe the history of a country or the specifics of a policy.⁴

During the Cold War, interactions between great powers states were largely viewed from within the lens of realism and neorealism, and the post-Cold War international system has pushed great power states to seek a new system narrative to describe an ever-changing international world order that is no longer bound by bipolar power-balancing.⁵ The heavy emphasis on establishing a new world-building narrative becomes specifically important to the United States of America and Uni Soviets after the Cold War since both great power states have intensely established narration of competing alliance structures, ideology superiority, and civilizational supremacy to their citizens.⁶ The narration of becoming the center of the international communist movement that will witness triumphant rise of proletariat movement was no longer relevant for the Soviet people ever since the overnight dissolution of Soviet Union in 1991.⁷ The sudden collapse of the Soviet Union has also

³ Laura Roselle, Alister Miskimmon, and Ben O'Loughlin, "Strategic Narrative: A New Means to Understand Soft Power," *Media, War & Conflict* 7, no. 1 (April 2014): 71, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750635213516696>.

⁴ *Ibid*, 74.

⁵ Alister Miskimmon and Ben O'Loughlin, "Understanding International Order and Power Transition: A Strategic Narrative Approach", in *Forging The World: Strategic Narrative and International Relations*, 278.

⁶ Alister Miskimmon, Ben O'Loughlin, and Laura Roselle, *Strategic Narratives: Communication Power and the New World Order*, Routledge Studies in Global Information, Politics, and Society 3 (New York London: Routledge, 2013), 67.

⁷ Kate C. Langdon & Vladimir Tismaneanu, "Putin's Totalitarian Democracy: Ideology, Myth, and Violence in the Twenty-First Century," Palgrave Macmillan (2020): 118.

turned the Eastern European region into a battleground of influence in sectors of economic, political, and security dominance by regional power states to its former republics, where the most pressing questions that must be answered by the newly-emerged states were in regards of their own cultural and national identity.⁸ The crucial need to find national identity mostly contributed to the confusion between ethnic and civic identities in each independent state, since the Soviet Union established a pre-given civic political identity with inclusive citizenship to these states, rather than nationhood based on ethnic identities associated with common characteristics of their culture, religion, language and ancestry.⁹ In the epicenter of this phenomenon, Russian Federation holds significance in determining the course of the regional identity dysphoria as the professed great power entity in the region.

Establishing a convincing and unifying national identity-building narrative for former Soviet Union states was proven to be difficult since the fall of the Soviet Union highlights the turbulent establishment of new Russian statehood in the domestic and regional landscape.¹⁰ Previously, Russia dominated the Soviet Union as the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic due to its large territorial size and significant economic participation.¹¹ Since Russia's identity was heavily dictated by its past under

⁸ Adam Reichardt, "A Battleground of Identity," *New Eastern Europe*, March 5, 2019, <https://neueasterneurope.eu/2019/03/05/a-battleground-of-identity/>.

⁹ Vera Tolz, "Conflicting 'Homeland Myths' and Nation-State Building in Postcommunist Russia," *Slavic Review* 57, no. 2 (1998): 993, 1004–5, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2501851>.

¹⁰ Richard Sakwa, *Politics and Government: Russian Politics and Society*, 2nd edition, (Routledge: London and New York, 2002), 30.

¹¹ Encyclopedia of Ukraine, "Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic," Encyclopedia of Ukraine, accessed June 5, 2023,

the Soviet empire and was ideologically defined by the Communist Party, various nationalist Russian figures stated the price of Russia's leadership in the Soviets heavily affects its cultural expression of national identity and creates an absence of its own national identity.¹² In summary, the disintegration of the Soviet Union affected Russia's great power dominance in the Eastern European region and deflated its sphere of influence, hence the leader of post-Cold War Russia must act quickly to restore Russia's influence in the region.

Following the dynamics of domestic intellectual debates of Russian statehood, President Boris Yeltsin attempted to fill the identity narrative vacuum by inserting Russian nationalist talking points of crystallization of common national identities to answer regional and local identity.¹³ He believed that by establishing the myth of Russian Federation as the homeland of Russian speaking-states in Eastern European region, he would be able to strengthen local popular support and reestablish Russian's political supremacy in the territory of former Soviet states.¹⁴ However, this Russian hegemonic narrative was disapproved by other former Soviet Union states due to the flourishing national independence and cultural history

<https://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5CR%5CU%5CRussianSovietFederatedSocialistRepublic.htm>.

¹² Ilya Prizel, *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia and Ukraine*, 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 203, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511582929>.

¹³ Tolz, "Conflicting 'Homeland Myths' and Nation-State Building in Postcommunist Russia," 294.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 1017–19.

movements.¹⁵ Not only that, Yeltsin's Russia was struggling to create a strong connection to the region due to the military invasion of neighboring country of the Chechen Republic in 1994 and the disastrous domestic financial crash in 1998.¹⁶

When Vladimir Putin served as Russian Prime Minister in 1999, he restored the Russian economy after a difficult decade under Boris Yeltsin's rule and strengthened the control over oligarchs by establishing a strong relationship with the military and security elites (more well-known as *siloviki* in Russian political lexicon).¹⁷ Being able to stabilize its economic and political condition from its debilitated post-Soviet condition, Putin's Russia is on the right track to build sufficient power and influence over neighboring states and reappear in world politics as a great power that needs to be acknowledged. As he entered presidency, Vladimir Putin continuously adopted an unique development political model which was consistent with the Russian historical tradition, distinctive from Western liberal democracy applied by his previous predecessors.¹⁸ His pride in Russia's distinctiveness and national values pushed Putin into creating a strong soft power policy with

¹⁵ Kate C. Langdon and Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Putin's Totalitarian Democracy: Ideology, Myth, and Violence in the Twenty-First Century* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 118, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20579-9>.

¹⁶ "Russia in the 1990s: Independence and the Yeltsin Years," University of Washington, accessed on September 27, 2022, https://jsis.washington.edu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Russia_Yeltsin_Years_ii.pdf

¹⁷ Nataliia Donchenko, "The Variation in Russia's Foreign Policy in Near Abroad After the Disintegration of the USSR" (City University of New York, 2017), 12, https://academicworks.cuny.edu/gc_etds/2002/.

¹⁸ Alfred B. Evans, "Putin's Legacy and Russia's Identity," *Europe-Asia Studies* 60, no. 6 (August 2008): 95, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09668130802161140>.

an attractive narrative to influence neighboring countries into a state of unity towards Russia.

His formation of Russia's soft power establishes a newfound importance of the Russian soft power concept called *Russkiy mir* or 'Russian world' targeted towards post-Soviet states or the Near Abroad. *Russkiy mir* can be described as a quasi-ideology of unity under Kremlin based on the Russian language's common history that caters to Russian and its diasporas as well as foreign speakers of the Russian language.¹⁹ He has instrumentalized and institutionalized the concept through seemingly non-hostile channels of the Orthodox Church, state-controlled media, and organizations. The involvement of the Russian Orthodox Church provides legitimacy of blessing as well as a perfect disguise to mask the political intention of *Russkiy mir*; the media produces an attractive image of Russia with creative medium, and organizations such as Russkiy Mir Foundation influence foreign public opinion through socialization process.²⁰ Putin also utilized this concept as a strategic narrative to support his argumentation about Russia's geopolitical stance as early as the 2001, where his World Congress of Compatriots Living Abroad speech, he declared that his ideology of *Russkiy mir* " extends far from Russia's geographical borders and even far from the borders of the

¹⁹ Valentina Feklyunina, "Soft power and identity: Russia, Ukraine and the 'Russian world(s),'" *European Journal of International Relations* 22, no. 4, (2016): 781, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066115601200>.

²⁰ Andis Kudors and Robert Orttung, "Russian Public Relations Activities and Soft Power," application/pdf, June 16, 2010, 2–3, <https://doi.org/10.3929/ETHZ-A-006249299>.

Russian ethnicity.”²¹ Following his statement, he then declared the need for Russian soft power to create a positive perception of the country specifically through the promotion of Russian language and culture by Russian compatriots abroad in the 2008 Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation.²²

Vladimir Putin succeeded in establishing *Russkiy mir* as a soft power concept based on the promotion of embedded identity of Russia’s neighboring states of inherited cultural features.²³ This narrative of cultural linkage held significance in the region of Ukraine since the Kremlin believes that maintaining influence and control over Ukraine became an existential imperative in how Russia conceptualizes itself.²⁴ Ukraine holds a pivotal role in the *Russkiy mir* narrative due to the cultural and symbolical significance of Kyiv as the capital of the Holy Rus mythology and its vast religious infrastructure is considered indispensable for the Russian Orthodox Church to maintain its image as a leader of the Eastern world's Christianity.²⁵ The sense of national entitlement for the existence of Ukraine as part of its ontological existence combined with the looming threat of the Western world through the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) emphasizes the urgency for Russia to assert its authority on Ukrainian identity

²¹ Vladimir Putin, “Vystuplenie Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii V. V. Putina na Kongresse sootchest-vennikov,” October 11, 2001, http://old.nasledie.ru/politvnt/19_44/article.php?art=24.

²² Kudors and Orttung, “Russian Public Relations Activities and Soft Power,” 2–4.

²³ Giuseppe Motta, ed., *Dynamics and Policies of Prejudice from the Eighteenth to the Twenty-First Century* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018), 279.

²⁴ Alexander Bogomolov and Oleksandr Lytvynenko, “Ghost in the Mirror: Russian Soft Power in Ukraine,” *The Aims and Means of Russian Influence Abroad* (10 St James’s Square London SW1Y 4LE: Chatham House, January 2012), 1–2, www.chathamhouse.org.

²⁵ Motta, *Dynamics and Policies of Prejudice from the Eighteenth to the Twenty-First Century*, 293.

discourse.²⁶ In his Foreign Policy Concept from the period of 2008, 2013, and up to 2016, Vladimir Putin highlighted its neighboring state of Ukraine as a main priority for the projection identity narrative of *Russkiy mir* to push for “deeper processes of integration.”²⁷

The claim of a greater Russian civilization that transcends outside Russian state border implied that the soft power ideology of *Russkiy mir* has an even greater implication for the political landscape of Russia and its relations with other countries, specifically with Ukraine. Understanding the formation process of *Russkiy mir* narrative is the key to understand how Russia perceive itself as a great power state with civilizational burden and to make sense of the nature of conflict in the Eastern Ukraine, which has motivated the researcher to pick this specific issue as a thesis research topic.

1.2. Problem Identification

1.2.1. Problem Statement

Since the narrative of *Russkiy mir* embodies a conscious relativism of nation-state border, Vladimir Putin has used this narrative to justify the assertive and offensive action of the Russian Federation to other post-Soviet states as a way to protect Russian compatriots Near

²⁶ Tolz, “Conflicting ‘Homeland Myths’ and Nation-State Building in Postcommunist Russia,” 1017–19.

²⁷ Joanna Szostek, “The Power and Limits of Russia’s Strategic Narrative in Ukraine: The Role of Linkage,” *Perspectives on Politics* 15, no. 2 (June 2017): 382, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S153759271700007X>.

Abroad.²⁸ Narration about Russian national identity under the *Russkiy mir* concept did not have much to do with Russia's foreign policy and national security agenda towards Ukraine until Vladimir Putin's third term of presidency. Vladimir Putin incorporated the narrative of *Russkiy mir* into official Ukrainian discourse as his response towards the tightening relations of Ukraine with the West and NATO; and his official speech referring to the 2013 Euromaidan protest in Ukraine as a "coup d'état fomented by the West on the territory of the Russian World" marked the significance of *Russkiy mir* as Kremlin's official narrative against Ukraine.²⁹ When the Russian Federation managed to successfully annex the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine in early 2014, Vladimir Putin made an explicit statement referring to the event as "the manifestation of the Russian border beyond its pre-established geography", where he drew specific attention to the Russian people as a 'divided nation' and congratulated the reunification of people in the Crimean Peninsula as "a healing step towards the reunification of the Russian nation itself".³⁰

It is an undeniable fact that after the annexation of Crimea, the narrative of *Russkiy mir* then acts as a framework for a worldview that

²⁸ Wilfried Jilge, "Russkiy Mir: 'Russian World' | DGAP," DGAP, accessed June 5, 2023, <https://dgap.org/en/events/russkiy-mir-russian-world>.

²⁹ Igor Zevelev, "The Russian World in Moscow's Strategy," August 22, 2016, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/russian-world-moscows-strategy>.

³⁰ Ammon Cheskin and Angela Kachuyevski, "The Russian-Speaking Populations in the Post-Soviet Space: Language, Politics and Identity," *Europe-Asia Studies* 71, no. 1 (January 2, 2019): 4, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2018.1529467>.

would define Putin's relation with Ukraine in the continuing future. One point of justification that Vladimir Putin stated for authorizing the execution of a special military operation against Ukraine in February 24th, 2022 was because NATO and the United States have expanded themselves to Ukraine's territories "which historically always belong to Russia".³¹ Various Russian nationalist scholars gave their full support to the special military operation in the Donbas region and eastern Ukraine echoing the same notion of *Russkiy mir*, where they justify the invasion as a way to defend Russia from "linguistic war on the Russian language, as well as an information war on the Russian collective consciousness" perpetrated by the West in the Ukraine.³²

As Russia's political and military leader, Vladimir Putin is in charge of creating a strategic narrative to legitimize war and conflict towards Ukraine. Factors such as national identity discourses, international security discourses, and domestic stability goals have affected Russia's collective national identities as well as the formation of *Russkiy mir* narrative over time; and definitive events such as the annexation of Crimea, war in the eastern Ukraine, *Novorossiia* project, and advancing EU and NATO membership proposal affected the

³¹ "“No Other Option”: Excerpts of Putin's Speech Declaring War | Russia-Ukraine War News | Al Jazeera," Al Jazeera, accessed June 5, 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/24/putins-speech-declaring-war-on-ukraine-translated-excerpts>.

³² Nina Frieß, "In the language of the enemy," *International Politics & Society*, published July 18, 2022, accessed on October 2, 2022, <https://www.ips-journal.eu/topics/democracy-and-society/in-the-language-of-the-enemy-6074/>.

Russkiy mir as a narrative with strategic means.³³ Understanding that *Russkiy mir* is a politically and culturally defined ideology that is socially-constructed, Vladimir Putin must engage closely with discursive process on the formation of *Russkiy mir* coming from the domestic and international landscape in order to develop *Russkiy mir* as a strategic narrative that offers an explanation in how the Russia-Ukraine conflict is defined, constructed and understood.³⁴ With this factors in mind, it is important to analyze the formation of *Russkiy mir* as a strategic narrative in a more updated context following the recent development of Russia-Ukraine relations from the time of annexation of Crimea in 2014 on February 20th, 2014 up to the Russian military invasion to Ukraine at February 24th, 2022.

1.2.2. Problem Limitation

This research specifically discusses the formation process of *Russkiy mir* as Vladimir Putin's strategic narrative leading up to the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, in which he is placed as the sole unit of analysis for this research. The unit of explanation for this research is to point out how domestic and international factors are taken into account in the formation process of strategic narrative by a political leader. With a focus solely on the formation process of *Russkiy mir* as a strategic narrative, this research will not discuss how Vladimir Putin

³³ Igor Zevelev, "Russian National Identity and Foreign Policy," *Center for Strategic & International Studies*, December 1, 2016, 1–18.

³⁴ Roselle, Miskimmon, and O'Loughlin, "Strategic Narrative," 79–80.

create narrative projection strategy or the intended reception of *Russkiy mir* to his intended audience. It will also specifically analyze Vladimir Putin's presidential address in February 24th 2022 on declaration of war on Ukraine, since the study of formation of strategic narratives is commonly assessed by analyzing selected presidential speeches and statements.³⁵ The time scope for this research will be limited from the time period of the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula on February 20th, 2014 up to the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 24th, 2022. The reason for this time constraint is to precisely observe the continuity and change in the *Russkiy mir* narrative after a significant Russo-Ukrainian war with independent Ukraine in 2014 and how domestic and international responses regarding this war shape Vladimir Putin's *Russkiy mir* narrative up that justify the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation in 2022.

1.2.3. Research Question

With the problem statement and problem limitation laid, the research question to be answered in this research is **“How the strategic narrative formation process of *Russkiy mir* was being implemented by Vladimir Putin in order to justify the 2022 Russia-Ukraine war?”**

³⁵ Alister Miskimmon, Ben O'Loughlin, and Laura Roselle, *Forging the World: Strategic Narratives and International Relations* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 58, <https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.6504652>.

1.3. Research Objective and Research Benefits

1.3.1. Research Objective

The objective to be aimed with the creation of this paper is to build on previous research in regards to how Vladimir Putin formed *Russkiy mir* as his strategic narrative in justifying the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine by identifying various domestic and international factors that drove Vladimir Putin as a political actor to form such narrative for strategical means.

1.3.2. Research Benefits

The researcher hopes that the findings from this research will provide several benefits in informing institutional policies and academical contribution. For policy-makers, this research presents an alternative perspective in how strategic narrative plays a substantial role in war and conflict especially in the context of Russia invasion of Ukraine. Noticing the tendencies of Russian authorities in manipulating soft power instruments to justify offensive and state-centric goals, it is also important for decision-makers to understand the symbiotic element between Russian political leader and his environment in the narrative construction process. As for international relations students and international relations scholars, this research offers a degree of contribution in the academic discourse of Russian-Ukraine conflict and strategic narrative theory which can be used as a reference for other relevant research in the future. Albeit limited by time, resources, and

academic expertise, this research seeks to provide an alternating approach to analyze the 2022 Ukraine war with a constructivist approach.

1.4. Literature Review

In order to have a better understanding to the context of *Russkiy mir* as a strategic narrative under Vladimir Putin's presidency, it is crucial to understand Russia's distinct interpretation of soft power in a constructivist approach. Alexander Sergunin and Leonid Karabeshkin's work in "Understanding Russia's Soft Power Strategy" explains the formation of Russia's soft power strategies in accordance to its current foreign policy philosophy as well as interpretation from local political elites and academics. Philosophically, the development of Russian soft power originated from the value of 'coexistence' and reformism in search of international strategies that are alternative to hard power policies.³⁶ Thus the concept of soft power produced in Russia strongly deviates from Joseph Nye's theory, where it is used to change the policy preferences of others akin to the notion of hard power.³⁷ The interpretation of soft power done by Russian international relations academics as an all-encompassing theory to complement hard power has turned Russia's soft power foreign policy to be overly pragmatic and practical.³⁸ The pure intention to pursue national interest rather than aim to

³⁶ Alexander Sergunin and Leonid Karabeshkin, "Understanding Russia's Soft Power Strategy," *Politics* 35, no. 3–4 (November 2015): 351, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9256.12109>.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 352.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

take into account international partners' interests has turned Russia's soft power policies unattractive and hostile to other countries.³⁹ The article also describes different soft power strategies of Russia to international audiences through various institutions and mechanisms and also noted that such different strategies created a mixed level of performance due to their statist origin.⁴⁰

Stefan Meister provides an understanding in how Vladimir Putin interpreted Russia's soft power policy following his political philosophy, where Putin refers to soft power as a supplement to Moscow's hard power using information tools that can manipulate, undermine, and weaken his opponents as written in his 2012 article titled "Russia in a Changing World".⁴¹ His Anti-Western philosophy inspires him to integrate the romanticization of Soviet history and Russia's historical and cultural uniqueness in Russia's soft power policy.⁴² This specific perception of soft power pushes the image of Russia as a superior state compared to the West and as an exceptional country for its neighboring countries that share similar language and cultural traits.⁴³ To spread his ideology of soft power, Vladimir Putin utilized various state-funded organizations such as the *Russkiy Mir* Foundation and *Rossotrudnichestvo* to promote the Russian language and culture abroad and

³⁹ *Ibid*, 357.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 358.

⁴¹ Stefan Meister, "Putin's Version of Soft Power," *Isolation and Propaganda: The Roots and Instruments of Russia's Disinformation Campaign*, 2016, 7. Putin's Version of Soft Power, 7.

⁴² *Ibid*, 10.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 10–11.

hijacked media ecology through propaganda and conspiracy to fabricate enemies.⁴⁴ From here on, it is established that Vladimir Putin has put specific attention in emphasizing cultural supremacy narrative in his soft power policy.

After deciphering Russia's unique interpretation of soft power, it is important to look into the utilization of Russia's soft power through the form of strategic narrative. In "The "Russian World": Russia's Soft Power and Geopolitical Imagination," Marlene Laruelle provided a deep dive analysis of the concept of *Russkiy mir* as a narrative of a geopolitical trope that can be articulated and 'adjusted' in a fluid way by the Kremlin. The Russian government utilizes *Russkiy mir* to secure national security interests and to protect the country and the current political regime from destabilization due to international or domestic influences.⁴⁵ The Russian Federation utilized the concept of *Russkiy mir* as a public diplomacy strategy for audiences in the Near Abroad and international sphere with various methods such as the promotion of memory of a shared past, media wars, market economy principles to military involvement.⁴⁶ The narrative of *Russkiy mir* establishes the importance of Russian compatriots abroad not as an actual goal, but as an instrument of securing leadership in the territory of the former Soviet Union.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 7,9.

⁴⁵ Marlene Laruelle, "The 'Russian World' Russia's Soft Power and Geopolitical Imagination" (Washington DC: Center on Global Interests, May 2015), 1–15, <https://www.ponarseurasia.org/the-russian-world-russia-s-soft-power-and-geopolitical-imagination/>.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 9–12.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 12.

Since this research specifically emphasizes on the behind-the-scene outlook of *Russkiy mir* by Vladimir Putin in addressing the turbulent conflict in Ukraine, it is important to look at the intended utilization of *Russkiy mir* narrative by Vladimir Putin and the reception of said concept from his intended audience to provide a contextual knowledge. Valentina Feklyunina researches Russia's projection of *Russkiy mir* to the Ukrainian government and society in the run-up to Russia's incorporation of Crimea in her work titled "Soft power and identity: Russia, Ukraine and the 'Russian world'(s)."
Russkiy mir acts as a soft power narrative of renegotiated collective identity that was received differently across Ukraine, where the most receptive audience were political elites with close ties to the Kremlin and the Ukrainian public in the south and east region.⁴⁸ Even though most Crimeans were incredibly supportive of the idea of the peninsula belonging to the Russian Federation (more specifically the Russian world), the Vladimir Putin regime could not advance this narrative further to the entirety of Ukraine due to competing identity framework in the Ukraine coming from the European Union.⁴⁹ The failure in creating attractiveness of *Russkiy mir* to the entirety of Ukraine made it seem necessary for the Kremlin to execute offensive action in overtaking the Crimea Peninsula under the geist of cultural reunification.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Valentina Feklyunina, "Soft Power and Identity: Russia, Ukraine and the 'Russian World(s)," *European Journal of International Relations* 22, no. 4 (December 2016): 786–88, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066115601200>.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 791–92.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 791–92.

After establishing a deeper understanding in the strategic narrative context of *Russkiy mir* to the Ukrainian audience, the researcher then looks into studies done under similar topics of formation of *Russkiy mir* by Vladimir Putin as a strategic narrative as a way to find unexplored area in the field and discover research gap. Eva Claessen found that during the period leading to the Crimean Peninsula annexation in 2014, the Russian Government has evolved its strategic narrative against Ukraine by utilizing the concept of geopolitical othering of the European Union.⁵¹ Russia conceptualized the European Union as the Other actor as a form of response to Ukraine's choice between signing the association agreement with the European Union and accession to the Eurasian Customs Union.⁵² The development of Russia's strategic narrative on the Ukraine crisis is also driven by its perception of the European Union's behavior and its understanding of how the EU represented Russia's behavior.⁵³ By inserting a spatial element in the strategic narrative of the European Union's geopolitical othering, Russia was able to advance the idea of Russia's close historic, economic, and civilizational ties with Ukraine as a form of counter-narrative.⁵⁴ In "Russian National Identity and Foreign Policy", Igor Zevelev traces back domestic intellectual discourse on Russia's national identity from the period of 2012 to 2016 and the influence it carries on Russia's foreign policy. Intellectual history and discourses were

⁵¹ Eva Claessen, "The Making of a Narrative: The Use of Geopolitical Othering in Russian Strategic Narratives during the Ukraine Crisis," *Media, War & Conflict* 16, no. 1 (March 2023): 1–3, <https://doi.org/10.1177/17506352211029529>.

⁵² *Ibid*, 10.

⁵³ *Ibid*, 6.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 15.

mostly overlooked by Vladimir Putin's predecessors but he managed to finally address it in his third presidential term.⁵⁵ With an emphasis on historical thinking, Vladimir Putin establishes the present-day role of national identity conceptualization in a historic context and its global strategy.⁵⁶ The concept of *Russkiy mir* and greater Russian civilization became the conceptual framework that both stimulated and justified Russia's approach to its political and security goals.⁵⁷ Lastly, Sarah Oates' work analyzes Vladimir Putin's article titled "On the Historical Unity Between Russians and Ukrainians" along with 19 additional Russian Federation documents to show the evolution of Russia's strategic narrative to Ukrainians which has involved elements of anti-Neo-Nazi rhetoric and promotion of the state as the communal motherland. In the months and weeks leading up to the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Putin has used methods of lies, promotion of Russian nationalist history and symbols, and a dictatorial approach to promote a strategic narrative of Ukraine to the domestic Russian environment.⁵⁸ His advancement of Russia's strategic narrative has created a portrayal of the Ukrainian government that strays from the realm of reality and made it unappealing to the Ukrainian public anymore.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Zevelev, "Russian National Identity and Foreign Policy," 1.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 8–10.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 12–16.

⁵⁸ Sarah Oates, "Nothing Is True, But It Turns Out Not Everything Is Possible: Putin's Failed Attempt to Turn Strategic Narratives into Military Success in the Ukrainian Invasion," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2023, 1–2, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4412501>.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 11–12.

All seven works of literature chosen to be reviewed for this research function to provide base understanding and supporting evidence about *Russkiy mir* and how Vladimir Putin constructed it in accordance to critical events. The last three researches presented in the literature review section provided different perception on the formation of *Russkiy mir* by Vladimir Putin as a strategic narrative, and this research will act to fill in the research gap to improve on existing knowledge. Claessen's work argues about the inclusion of geopolitical othering in Vladimir Putin's construction of strategic narrative when it comes to addressing the European Union's role on Ukraine as a response to Ukraine's closer relationship to Europe, Zevelev's work emphasizes on Vladimir Putin's clever adaptation of domestic intellectual discourse in during his third presidency that made him able to create a convincing strategic narrative, and Oates added on that Putin's strategic narrative evolved for both the Ukrainian and the Russian audience to further advance his goal in integrating Ukraine to the Russosphere. These three researches have established that as a political actor, Vladimir Putin have morphed and shaped the context of his strategic narrative (in this case also includes *Russkiy mir*) following the dynamics of domestic and international conditions. However, these three researches have not yet explored how both domestic and international responses regarding the annexation of Crimea affected Vladimir Putin to shape the *Russkiy mir* narrative that justify the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine. This specific gap of research will then be answered in this paper by conducting a discourse analysis to Vladimir Putin's

Presidential Address on February 24th, 2022 to reveal the correlation of domestic and international society with the production of a speech.

1.5. Theoretical Framework

1.5.1. Theory of strategic narrative and formation of strategic narrative

First and foremost, in order to understand the formation process of strategic narrative, it is necessary to learn how strategic narrative contribute as a constructivist improvement on the theory of soft power. The theory of strategic narrative acts as intersection on the academical fields of International Relations and Political Communication to reveal processes of narrative to influence international politics and understanding how communication and power align.⁶⁰ According to Joseph Nye, soft power can be explained as an alternative of hard power that emphasize the power of attraction as a non-material form of power through resources such as positive perception of culture, political values projected outside and inside the country's border, and legitimacy and moral authority in its foreign policy.⁶¹ Constructivists understand power as both agential and inter-subjective, and they usually question the open or taken-for-granted and 'naturalized' legitimization of power itself. Nye's conceptualization of soft power also recognizes the importance of ideas and culture in international relations and foreign

⁶⁰ Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle, *Forging the World*, 1.

⁶¹ Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, 1st ed (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 5.

policy, as well as how such soft power can influence a shared understanding with different types of interaction.⁶² With this pre-established conception of soft power in mind, Valentina Feklyunina for proposes a constructivist approach of soft power, in which the soft power of one state to another depends on how projected collective identity narrative is accepted and how much influence the international and domestic audiences have over policymaking.⁶³ Alister Miskimmon, Ben O’Loughlin, and Laura Roselle then established a concept called strategic narrative to offer more precise grasp of how communication, persuasion, and influence operate in international affairs.

According to Miskimmon, O’Loughlin, and Roselle, strategic narratives is a communication strategy employed by political actors to construct a shared meaning of the past, present and future of international politics to shape the perceptions, beliefs, and behavior of domestic and international actors.⁶⁴ There are three different types of strategic narrative that actors have to align in order to achieve a greater chance of influence: first is related to the the international system, in which a political actor express narrative that shapes the perception of the international order; second is narrative that discusses the development of policies such as the desire of political actors to

⁶² Laura Roselle, Alister Miskimmon, and Ben O’Loughlin, “Strategic Narrative: A New Means to Understand Soft Power,” *Media, War & Conflict* 7, no. 1 (April 2014): 72, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750635213516696>..

⁶³ Feklyunina, “Soft Power and Identity,” 773–96.

⁶⁴ Miskimmon, O’Loughlin, and Roselle, *Strategic Narratives*, 2.

influence international arms control negotiations or to interfere in disputes between the parties in the armed conflicts management; and the last one referring to how political actors wish to project their identity in international relations.⁶⁵ While these three levels can be distinguished conditionally for heuristic purposes, these three levels of narratives appear and operated as an interrelated narrative in the actual strategic communication.⁶⁶

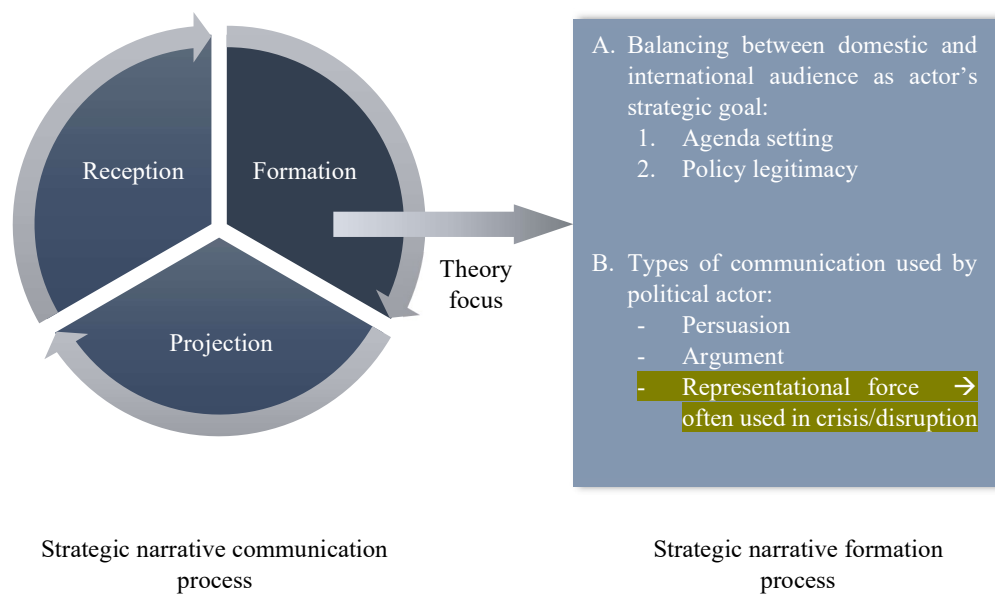


Figure 1.1 Model of theoretical framework

⁶⁵ Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle, *Forging the World*, 2–3.

⁶⁶ Holger Mölder et al., eds., *The Russian Federation in Global Knowledge Warfare: Influence Operations in Europe and Its Neighbourhood*, Contributions to International Relations (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2021), 271, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-73955-3>. Global Knowledge Warfare, 271

Strategic narrative involves three interconnected and complementary dynamics, understood as the communicative processes of narrative formation, narrative projection, and narrative reception.⁶⁷ By understanding how narratives are formed, how they are projected, and how they are received by third parties, International Relations researcher can fully understand the complexity of influence and persuasion in international politics.⁶⁸ Typically, the study of strategic narrative revolves around tracing the entire process of formation, projection, and reception or interpretation of narratives that particular actors are using to try to influence others. However, this research will be limiting its research scope to specifically to the formation of a specific strategic narrative. *Formation* is a stage of producing a new or modifying a pre-existing narrative about the current state of world affairs, which is achieved by establishing agenda setting that can be followed by international actors.⁶⁹ The study of strategic narrative formation seeks to understand the role of political actors in constructing strategic narrative and mediums such as institutions or procedures where the narrative is agreed upon.⁷⁰ In the formation stage, a political leader constructed a strategic narrative based on their analysis of the

⁶⁷ Miskimmon, O’Loughlin, and Roselle, *Forging the World*, 9.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁶⁹ Ekatherina Zhukova, Malena Rosén Sundström, and Ole Elgström, “Feminist Foreign Policies (FFPs) as Strategic Narratives: Norm Translation in Sweden, Canada, France, and Mexico,” *Review of International Studies* 48, no. 1 (January 2022): 195–216, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210521000413>.

⁷⁰ Miskimmon, O’Loughlin, and Roselle, *Forging the World*, 9.

world and what they think is normatively desirable, since narratives gives structures of meaning that shapes their perspective and behavior, which inseparably are part of an actor's identity.⁷¹ Discourse plays significance in the formation of narrative, since a political actor can only form narrative based upon the discourse available to them in their historical situation and a political actors uses discourse inside a narrative in other to influence other actor's position against other purported phenomena.⁷² In the context of strategic narrative, the formation of discourses that are generated coordinatively by political actor serve purpose to provide a common narrative through which policy stakeholders can come to agreement into constructing a policy program.⁷³

According to Miskimmon, O'Loughin and Roselle, the formation of strategic narrative is heavily determined by the strategic goals of a political actor for both domestic and international audience and types of communication that the actor uses. The factor of actor's strategic goals for both domestic and international audiences is akin to the concept of Robert D. Putnam two-level game theory, where an actor must transform their narrative to other countries to achieve favorable outcomes while also managing domestic political pressures and

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 42.

⁷² Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle, *Strategic Narratives*, 10; Olga Brusylovska, "Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in International Relations," n.d., <https://rhetoric.bg/olga-brusylovska-critical-discourse-analysis-cda-in-international-relations>.

⁷³ Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle, *Strategic Narratives*, 11.

constraints to carefully advance their political goals.⁷⁴ Researching act of balancing between domestic and international influence is relevant in discussing Russia's strategic narrative formation, since the aims of Russian strategic narratives are to mobilize and sustain domestic political support for the state's governmental policies while presenting state's official positions and policies to foreign audiences.⁷⁵

The first factor that determine strategic narrative formation process is strategic goals that an actor have made for domestic and international audience. Various forms of strategic goals that a political leader wanted to achieve from their formation of strategic narratives are agenda setting, political legitimacy, attention diversion, securing acquiescence, enhancing popularity, and mobilization.⁷⁶ Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle stated a leader typically formed their narrative for the purpose of agenda-setting and establishing policy legitimacy within a policy context for both domestic and international level.⁷⁷ Agenda-setting revolves around the ability of state actor to construct terms of debate and promotion of idea and/or meaning to affect policy decision-making process and determine how said policy will be play out.⁷⁸ In the context of strategic narrative, policy legitimacy of a leader

⁷⁴ Robert D. Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," *International Organization* 42, no. 3 (1988): 433–35, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300027697>.

⁷⁵ Mölder et al., *The Russian Federation in Global Knowledge Warfare*, 271.

⁷⁶ Miskimmon, O'Loughlin, and Roselle, *Strategic Narratives*, 11.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 11–14.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 12.

can be enhanced if they made appropriate policy that fits into a widely accepted narrative coming from the agenda of political elites and public opinion in describing problems that should and can be addressed.⁷⁹ In summary, political leader must accommodate input or contestation coming from domestic and international actors while strategically advancing their policy goals through a clever formation of strategic narrative.

The second factor that determine the formation of strategic narrative is a preferred type of communication to be conducted by a political leader. Political actors can use different types of communication in the construction of strategic narratives, which includes persuasion, argument, and representational force.⁸⁰ Miskimmon, O'Loughin, and Roselle argues that the most typical types of communication associated with times of crisis or disruption is representational force, while other types of communication are not.⁸¹ According to Janice Bially Mattern, representational force can be described as an exercise of power through the usage of language, and it exists as a blunt yet nonnegotiable threat that acts as a trap to limit the decision-making ability of actors.⁸² The harm promised with the usage

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 13–14.

⁸² Janice Bially Mattern, "Why 'Soft Power' Isn't So Soft: Representational Force and the Sociolinguistic Construction of Attraction in World Politics," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 33, no. 3 (June 2005): 602, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298050330031601>.

of representational force targets the victim's own ontological security (the fragility of the sociolinguistic 'realities' that constitute the victim's Self), and if the perpetrator managed to exploit the victim's sociolinguistic contradictions and inconsistencies through their construction of narrative, the perpetrator can trap the victim with a 'nonchoice' between compliance, or a metaphorical 'death' of the victim's own subjectivity.⁸³ Due to its forceful nature against the perception of the Self, representational force is a very effective tool for actors whose purpose is force victim into conforming to their previously established narratives in order to ensure the 'reality' status of some specific viewpoint.⁸⁴

1.5.2. Theory of ideology

Looking at the dynamic utilization of the *Russkiy mir* concept by Vladimir Putin, it is an important task for researcher to establish *Russkiy mir* as an ideology that instills the Russian community a common set of values that gives policy legitimacy. Understanding *Russkiy mir* in the simple static lens of ideology does not provide satisfactory explanation, since Russian ideologies balance the need to be coherent enough to explain what the regime is doing and why the regime is doing it with the need to be flexible enough to adjust itself while retaining legitimacy with the people.⁸⁵ Hence, it is necessary to understand *Russkiy mir* as a

⁸³ *Ibid*, 602–4.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 604.

⁸⁵ Cheng Chen, *The Return of Ideology: The Search for Regime Identities in Postcommunist Russia and China*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2016), 24.

contemporary ideology that shapes political behavior, influences policy decisions, and interacts with other ideologies in complex political landscapes. Michael Freeden introduces modern semantics and linguistics to the theory of ideology within the realm of politics. According to Freeden, ideologies are complex combinations and clusters of political concepts of thought-behaviour in sustainable patterns.⁸⁶ What this definition means is that ideologies are not fixed or monolithic entities, but are rather dynamic and evolving systems that change over time. Ideologies are not limited to political parties or specific groups but permeate society as a whole through social cycle of production and consumption; which then influence views of conscious individuals, create patterns of thinking in society, and shape overall political discourse.⁸⁷ Ideologies contain a core of concept to doctrinize individuals and/or society, and political process of idiosyncratic decontestation happened between various core concepts as a way to compete over the control of political language as well as competing over plans for policies.⁸⁸

1.6. Research Method and Data Collecting Technique

1.6.1. Research Method

⁸⁶ Michael Freeden, *Ideology: A Very Short Introduction*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 51.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 52.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 52-55.

The research approach to be conducted in this research is qualitative research, which can be described as a research approach that uses interpretation of the quality of observation or narration, which are unable to be conducted under quantitative measures that requires data numerical with absolute value.⁸⁹ Qualitative research method uses interpretive and naturalistic approach in research, which heavily emphasize observation and analysis of a phenomenon in its natural environment.⁹⁰ By placing and involving themselves in a phenomenon, the researcher thus acts as an instrument of research and places themselves in the condition or context where the phenomenon exists.⁹¹ The methodology approach of this research is exploratory in nature, since it investigates research questions that have not been studied in depth with preliminary results that lays the groundwork for a more in-depth analysis in the future.⁹³ Exploratory research typically uses qualitative data to confirm propositions not amenable to quantitative assessment or, through exploration, bring to light important recent changes in social process and

⁸⁹ Laura Roselle and Sharon L. Spray, *Research and Writing in International Relations*, Third Edition (New York: Routledge, 2020), 39.

⁹⁰ Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1994), 1.

⁹¹ Umar Suryadi Bakry, *Metode Penelitian Hubungan Internasional* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2019), 18-20.

⁹² Fiona Devine, "Qualitative Methods," in *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, edited by Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh, and Gerry Stoker, 4th edition, (London: Palgrave, 2017), 197-198.

⁹³ Robert A. Stebbins, *Exploratory Research in Social Sciences*, (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2001), 2-4.

social structure that the narrower focus of hypothesis confirmation has led researchers to overlook.⁹⁴

The research method to be used in this research is critical discourse analysis, which can be explained as an interdisciplinary approach that analyze language as a form of social practice in order to reveal structural relationship of dominance, discrimination, power and control being reproduced in texts or speeches.⁹⁵ Critical discourse analysis seeks to make visible the connection between text and social processes and relations.⁹⁶ In this research, critical discourse analysis seeks to bring to light how Vladimir Putin as a political actor use the material and features of discourse available from domestic and international settings to construct narratives for strategic purposes.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁹⁵ Jan Blommaert and Chris Bulcaen, "Critical Discourse Analysis," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 29, no. 1 (October 2000): 448, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.29.1.447>.

⁹⁶ Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2013), 131, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315834368>.

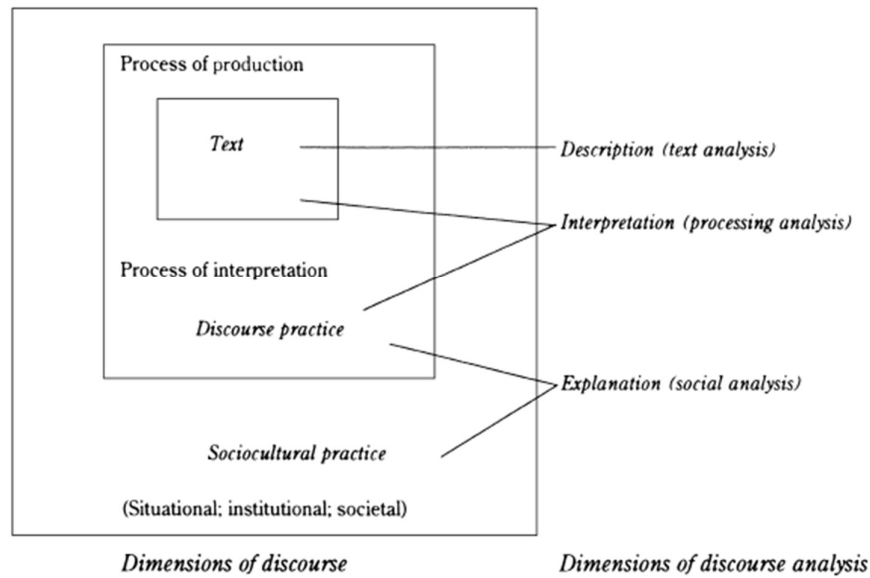


Figure 1.2 Diagram of three-dimensional conception of discourse and three-dimensional method of discourse analysis.⁹⁷

There are three-dimensional conception of discourses: object of analysis such as texts, the process in which the object is produced and received by other people, and the sociocultural practices which govern this process.⁹⁸ The method of analyzing these different conception of discourses are as to follow: the first stage is the linguistic description of language text, the second stage is called interpretation of the relationship between discursive processes with the text through discourse practice such as text production and text interpretation, and the third and final stage is explanation between discursive processes with the text by taking into account the broader social-cultural context

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 133.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 11.

of the text (which could be social, political, or economic circumstances).⁹⁹ Both conceptions and analysis are interdependent to one another and are embedded inside one another, which is illustrated under the diagram below. This method then implies that texts are manifestation of socially-regulated discourses and that the processes of formation of strategic narrative are socially constrained.

1.6.2. Data Collecting and Processing Technique

It is important to establish that critical discourse analysis does not have a strict methodological framework, but it is typically used to understand and solve problems with any theory using procedures, techniques, and processes that are relevant to solve a research question.¹⁰⁰ The data collecting technique is conducted by reading primary material of presidential address added with knowledge from secondary materials such as books, journals, journal articles, surveys, news, and opinion articles from relevant and credible sources. To conduct this research using the method of critical discourse analysis, the researcher first read the entirety of content of Address by the President of the Russian Federation in February 24th, 2022. Researcher identify dimensions of discourses available in the text by conducting retrospection of past events, which are elaborated and explored further to provide context of discourse practice and sociocultural practice.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 132.

¹⁰⁰ Dianna R. Mullet, "A General Critical Discourse Analysis Framework for Educational Research," *Journal of Advanced Academics* 29, no. 2 (May 2018): 117–18, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1932202X18758260>.

Next, the researcher conducts data reduction by selecting/extracting relevant passes and sentences from the text that will answer the questions from the research aligned with the research theory. After that, the researcher will analyze the strategic narrative formation of the pre-selected contents of the speech texts and sentences by correlating it to Vladimir Putin's discourse practices and the socio-cultural circumstances that influence the discourse.

1.7. Research Structure

This research is divided into five different chapters. Chapter one includes introduction, problem identification, problem limitation, problem summary, research objective, research benefit, theoretical framework, literature review, and lastly research methodology. In this chapter, the author seeks to underline the importance of domestic and international factors from 2014 up before the 2022 invasion of Ukraine in influencing Vladimir Putin's formation of *Russkiy mir*. This chapter also contains theoretical framework of strategic narrative which is critical to be used to analyze and explain the case on later chapter. Chapter two acts as section for data exploration, where author further discuss deep dive on the cultural and political origin of *Russkiy mir* in Russian society and how *Russkiy mir* as a soft power ideology is developed by state leaders in Russia, which will be altered more significantly as a strategic narrative specifically by Vladimir Putin through discourse practices. Chapter three provides the social, cultural, and political changes in

domestic and international landscape from the annexation of Crimea right to before he justifies war with Ukraine in 2022. Chapter four processes the data presented in previous chapter by analyzing Vladimir Putin's presidential address in February 24th, 2022 using the theory of the formation of strategic narrative with research methodology of critical discourse analysis. This chapter categorizes knowledge built from previous two chapter as discourse practice (drawn from the second chapter) and sociocultural context (drawn from the third chapter) to three-dimensional framework in conceiving strategic narrative to justify the invasion of Ukraine. Chapter five acts as the final chapter in this research and concludes the result of case discussed in previous chapters and reflect in how Vladimir Putin manages to transform strategic narrative to conduct and justify military action against its neighbor Ukraine in accordance to domestic and international environment.