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Public material in operational code analysis: An assessment

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Introduction

International leaders communicate in a myriad of ways. They give speeches, interviews, hold press conferences, write letters and participate in meetings. It is not surprising that this abundance of verbal material has functioned as the way in which international leaders are studied (Dyson, 2001; Dyson, 2010; He & Feng, 2013; Marfleet, 2000).

Operational code analysis is one of the methods developed to assess international leaders (George, 1969; Walker, Schafer & Young, 1998; Walker & Schafer, 2006). Leaders' verbal communication is used to infer their beliefs on the international system (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.26). The beliefs of international leaders indicate how the leader views the international system (George, 1969, p.197). For example, does the leader think that conflict is an inherent feature of that system? Moreover, what is the best means to obtain one's goals internationally? The key assumption behind the method is that what leaders say and how they say it, is indicative of what they believe (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.26). How often certain words or phrases are used in their communication on foreign policy issues indicates how the actor thinks about the international system. Thus, it is assumed that verbal material represents the psychological content of international leaders (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.26).

However, questions have been asked about the use of public material in operational code analysis, since what leaders say in public may not match what they say in private (Dyson & Raleigh, 2014; Renshon, 2009). For example, if an actor uses a public speech act to control their public image, will this affect the operational code (Renshon, 2009, p.652)? Moreover, if public speech is used by international leaders to deceive the public, how will the deceit affect the actor's operational code (Dyson & Raleigh, p.2; Renshon, 2009, p.658)?

Due to the lack of private material, like transcripts of government meetings with advisors or letters, many studies in the body of literature on the operational code have made use of international leaders' public material (Feng, 2005; He & Feng, 2013; Özdamar &

Canbolat, 2017; Robison, 2006). However, the validity of public material in operational code analysis remains difficult to assess due to the lack of private material. The use of public material should be evaluated for the international leaders where enough private material is available. This thesis aims to assess the use of public material by comparing the public material of Margaret Thatcher with her private material to see whether significant differences occur between the public and private operational codes. The following research question will be answered:

What is the effect of using public material on an actor's operational code?

Theoretical framework

Why is it important to understand the role of international leaders in international relations? Accurate knowledge of international leaders and their role within international relations is necessary in order to explain real-world political events better.

The role of individual leaders in international relations has often been overlooked by grand theories. In neorealism, for example, the anarchic nature of the international system has been emphasized (Waltz, 1979). Due to anarchy in the international system, security is the main goal of states. Since foreign policy is aimed at maximizing security, states' foreign policy options are constrained. It is assumed that there is no role for individual capabilities since the leader will always act in a way that maximizes security (Waltz, 1979, p.65). Moreover, in constructivism, the most important factor in international politics is not anarchy, but the culture of a state. How a state deals with anarchy in the international system is determined by its political and institutional culture, and not by the capabilities of an individual leader (Wendt, 1992).

However, some scholars have pointed out that although these approaches were more accurate in explaining the behavior of states during the cold war, the international system has changed significantly since then (Hermann & Hagan, 1988, p.125; Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.4). The international system is increasingly more complex and interdependent, caused by the rise of new major international players, the increased influence of international organizations and increasing globalization of market economies. In turn, the increased complexity has paved the way for interpretation, innovation, misunderstanding and miscommunication in the international system, which increases the role of international leaders (Hermann & Hagan, 1988, p.125). International leaders are the decision-makers in this system, and their individual capabilities influence international events (Byman & Pollack, 2001). Thus, it is important to assess when and how international leaders influence international affairs.

If an actor-centric approach is continuously left out of international relations, it will become more and more difficult to explain international events properly. Since international relations is grounded in individual and group decision-making, which are social and psychological processes, it is extremely important to develop approaches that grasp these processes, and the role of political leaders within these processes (Hudson, 2005, p.1). In order for international relations to not fail as a discipline, actor-centered theories that grasp the social and psychological processes behind individual and group decision-making must be developed (Hudson, 2005). By looking at international events through a domestic lens, we will be able to grasp how the international system is influenced by local considerations, which, in turn, enables us to explain international political events more accurately (Bueno De Mesquita, 2002, p.7). Thus, it is important that the methods developed to grasp the role of international leaders can contribute to our understanding of international affairs.

The operational code has been used to explain foreign policy decisions by leaders (Dyson, 2010; He & Feng, 2013; Schafer & Walker, 2006). The fundamental assumption behind the method is that the verbal communication of international leaders is representative of their psychological content (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p. 26). Verbal communication allows us to infer the beliefs of leaders. Consequently, those beliefs can be used to explain foreign policy decisions of international leaders.

Some scholars have raised questions about the use of public material in operational code (Dyson & Raleigh, 2014; Renshon, 2009; Schafer, 2000). International leaders' public speech may not match their private speech. For example, leaders might use public speech in order to employ impression management tactics (Renshon, 2009, p.652). Impression management refers to attempts to control one's public image (Tetlock & Manstead, 1985, p.62). Moreover, leaders may use public speech acts to deceive the public. In short, public speech may be used for strategic purposes.

If it is the case that public speech is used for strategic purposes, then it might be that public material is not helpful in assessing the beliefs of international leaders (Dyson & Raleigh, 2014, p.2; Schafer, 2000, p.514; Tetlock & Manstead, 1985). In turn, the operational code's ability to explain foreign policy decisions would be affected, since it would be uncertain which type of material is better suited for operational code analysis. The contribution of operational code analysis towards our understanding of the role of the beliefs of international leaders would be limited if it is uncertain which type of material better grasps an actor's operational code.

Moreover, due to the limited availability of private material of international leaders, operational code analysis has depended on public material (He & Feng, 2013; Feng, 2005; Özdamar & Canbolat, 2017; Robison, 2006). Past contributions of operational code towards

the knowledge of international leaders would be called into question if public material turned out to be invalid.

Consequently, it is important that the use of public material in operational code analysis is evaluated. The question of whether public material is valid in operational code analysis ultimately remains an empirical question (Dyson & Raleigh, 2014, p.2), since the use of public material can only be evaluated by comparing public speech acts with private speech acts in order to assess whether significant differences occur. This thesis will compare Margaret Thatcher's public speech acts with her private speech acts in order to evaluate the use of different material will result in significantly different operational codes.

Private material does not represent the 'true' beliefs of international leaders. It is still possible that leaders use private material for strategic purposes (Dyson & Raleigh, 2014, p.6). Leaders can still control their social image towards their advisors or colleagues or deceive colleagues. If one would want obtain the true beliefs of international leaders, then intimate material might be the best material to infer these beliefs from (Dyson & Raleigh, 2014, p.6). Examples of intimate material are autobiographical material, letters to close family and friends and diary entries.

However, since the operational code is aimed at explaining foreign policy decisions and international events (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.4), I think it is not as relevant to look at intimate material since it does not reflect the international leader within their role as leader. Ultimately, foreign policy decisions are made by international leaders in their role as leader.

In this thesis, public material will refer to verbal communication of leaders that is expressed in public and are publicly accessible, such as speeches, press conferences and interviews. Public material is spoken or written by leaders from their role as leaders, not as private individual. Examples of public material are speeches, interviews and press conferences.

Private material refers to material that was not publicly accessible at the time and are characterized as behind-the-scenes material. Since this thesis aims to assess the public material of international leaders in their role as leaders, and not as leaders as private individuals, the private material will not refer to diaries or personal letters. Examples of private material are letters sent as leader, transcripts of meetings with advisors, government officials and aides, and transcripts from telephone calls. With this operationalization, earlier research on the use of public material in operational code analysis is followed (Renshon, 2009; Dyson & Raleigh, 2014).

The operational code assesses the belief system of an actor about the fundamental nature of the international system (George, 1969, p.197). For example, what does an actor believe about conflict in the international system? Does the actor think that conflict is inherent in the international system? Moreover, what does the actor believe is the best strategy to realize his political goals?

The beliefs of leaders are important when attempting to understand foreign affairs better, since a beliefs system guides an actor's decision-making (Holsti, 1962, p.244). On the one hand, the belief system contains the actor's perceptions of reality, and on the other hand, the belief system contains the actor's values, his ideas of what should be (Holsti, 1962, p.245). The combination of these two parts of the belief system guides the actor's decision-making (p.245). Thus, what happens in international relations is based on how international leaders view other states and the international system (George, 1969, p.190). Consequently, it is relevant to look at the belief systems of international leaders, since it can explain foreign policy decisions by international leaders and increase our understanding of their decision-making (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.48).

However, the belief system of an actor is not the only determinant in decision-making. It would be an oversimplification of international relations to state that an actor's belief system is the only relevant factor in decision-making. Many factors are at play simultaneously, and an actor's belief system is one of those factors (Dyson & Raleigh, 2014, p.6; Schafer, 2000, p.513). Although the operational code provides insight on how the actor in question might approach a political problem, it does not provide a fixed rulebook for how an actor will act (George, 1969, p.190).

George (1969) formulated 10 questions whose answers reflect an actor's belief system. The beliefs can be found in table 1. George's questions are divided in philosophical beliefs and instrumental beliefs (George, 1969, p.199). An actors' philosophical beliefs refer to his assumptions about the nature of the political system, political conflict, political opponents, and control on the course of events (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.4). The instrumental beliefs reflect the beliefs the actor has about instruments and tools at hand, and the best course of action to obtain one's goals (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.4)

The answers to these questions are attained by analyzing the verbal communication of an actor (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.26). Consequently, the operational code is an at-a-distance method since it does not rely on direct or experimental psychological tests, but rather on indirect data to analyze its subjects (Schafer, 2013, p.1).

There are a number of reasons why at-a-distance methodology is necessary to analyze political leaders. First, international leaders are not directly accessible test-subjects due to their busy schedules and wariness of clinical poking (Hafner-Burton, Hughes & Victor, 2013, p. 368; Schafer, 2013, p.3). However, international leaders speak in public in a variety of ways, which makes the data for the analysis of political leaders easily obtainable

Table 1: The Philosophical Beliefs in an Operational Code

P-1. What is the "essential" nature of political life? Is the political universe essentially one of harmony or of conflict? What is the fundamental character of one's political opponents?
P-2. What are the prospects for the eventual realization of one's fundamental values and aspirations? Can one be optimistic, or must one be pessimistic on this score; and in what respects the one and/or the other?
P-3. Is the political future predictable? In what sense and to what extent?
P-4. How much "control" or "mastery" can one have over historical development? What is one's role in "moving" or "shaping" history in the desired direction
P-5. What is the role of "chance" in human affairs and in historical development?
The Instrumental Beliefs in an Operational Code
I-1. What is the best approach for selecting goals or objectives for political action?
I-2. How are the goals of action pursued most effectively?
I-3. How are the risks of political action calculated, controlled and accepted?
I-4. What is the best "timing" of action to advance one's interests?
I-5. What is the utility and role of different means for advancing one's interests?

Table 1. Source: Walker & Schafer (2006, p.8)

Secondly, verbal behavior serves as a good basis for inferring psychological content, since the way an individual speaks tells us something about his or her state of mind (Schafer, 2013, p.3). Thirdly, verbal behavior allows for systematic content analysis. Researches may look for certain patters of words that allow for the inferring of psychological content. How often certain words are used and what kind of connotations those words carry tells us about the subject's state of mind (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.26).

Thus, the key assumption behind the operational code is that psychological content can be inferred from verbal behavior (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.26). How a leader speaks about a certain foreign policy issue or political opponent is indicative of their beliefs about that issue or opponent (p.26). Consequently, by analyzing the content of verbal communication like speeches, interviews, press conferences or letters, the beliefs of leaders can be inferred. All sorts of verbal communications can be used for operational code analysis,

like speeches, interviews, press conferences, and letters. However, in order for the operational code to be representative of the beliefs of the actor's beliefs on the international system, all material must be on the subject of foreign policy (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.44).

In contemporary operational code analysis, the *Verbs in Context System* (*VICS)* is used to attain the beliefs of international leaders from verbal communication (Feng, 2005; Walker, Schafer & Young, 1998; Yang, Keller & Molnar, 2017). VICS is a content analysis scheme that provides quantitative variables for each philosophical and instrumental belief by analyzing the verbs and their context (Walker, Schafer & Young, 1998). For example, the verbs *praise* signifies a different message about state action than *attack*. Variables for each belief are attained based on aggregated coded verbs. How high or low a leader scores on the index for each belief, is indicative of their beliefs about the international system. A complete overview of the beliefs and corresponding index can be found in appendix A.

The resulting quantitative variables enable political scientists to make useful comparisons across time, countries, political system, belief change of an actor and determine the effects of different types of material (Renshon, 2008; Renshon, 2009; Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.27; Schafer, 2013, p.2).

Not every speech act is suitable for analysis. Walker & Schafer (2006) have formulated a few criteria that speech acts must meet in order to be useful in operational code analysis. First, the subject of speech acts must be on foreign policy in order to obtain the beliefs of international leaders (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.44). Secondly, the speech acts must contain 20 codable verbs in order for the speech act to produce meaningful values for each belief (p.44). Third, the speech act must be verbal communication from the leader himself. All verbal communication must be spoken or written by the actor in question (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.46).

One might argue that my operationalization of public material does include 'prepared' material, which has not been written by the actor itself, but rather by speech writers. Using prepared materials would be at odds with Walker & Schafer's (2006) requirement that the leader himself is the author of the material used (p.46). Prepared material might affect the operational code, since not all material will represent the psychological content of Margaret Thatcher, but rather her speechwriters (Schafer & Crichlow, 2000; Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.47). Consequently, if any significant differences between public and private material are found, it is possible that that differences occurred because prepared material has affected the operational code. Due to the inclusion of prepared material, the public operational code will not grasp Thatcher's psychological content and cannot be accurately compared with a private operational code.

However, I do not think that using prepared materials is a problem in the case of Margaret Thatcher. Thatcher herself was heavily involved in the writing of her speeches. John 'O Sullivan, her speech writer during her time in office, stated that Thatcher would comment on every single draft of the speech. Usually about five drafts would be drawn up before the final Thatcher speech was ready because she would meticulously analyze every sentence of the speech ('O Sullivan, 2013). In Thatcher's case, the use of speech writers would not affect the prepared material of Margaret Thatcher, since she was heavily involved in the process itself. The speeches can be said to represent her psychological content (Dille, 2000, p.538).

In the past, two studies have assessed the use of public material in operational code analysis by comparing public with private material.

Renshon (2009) assessed the use of public material in operational code analysis by comparing public and private material of John F. Kennedy. Renshon's rationale for

investigating the use of public material was the problem posed by impression management (p.652). Impression management is a strategy employed by an actor to influence their public image (Tetlock & Manstead, 1985). If verbal communication is used for strategic purposes like impression management, then the material might not be useful for assessing the psychological characteristics of leaders (Tetlock & Manstead, 1985). With public material, Renshon referred to a collection of speeches and opening remarks of news conferences, while the private material consisted of transcripts of policy meetings with advisors (p.655).

The sample frame for public and private material was limited to material from June 1 to September 1, 1962 (Renshon, 2009, p.655). The motivation for this choice was to remove 'potentially confounding elements' from the data (p.652). Potentially confounding elements are elements that result in a larger divergence from public and private material than normal (p.652). For example, using public data from different time frame than the private data, or using material from crisis situations, since Renshon assumed that public and private material differ in those situations. Thus, Renshon selected a sample frame where no crises occurred (p.655). The public side of the data had a sample size of 6, and the private side of the data had a sample size of 4 (p.657).

After the material was collected, Renshon (2009) used the VICS content analysis system to analyze both the public and private material (p.654). The coding process was carried out by the ProfilerPlus website (profilerplus.org), an automated content analysis software. The resulting public and private operational codes were compared with a two-tailed Student's t-Test (p.657).

Renshon (2009) concluded that both the private and public operational code give very similar beliefs for president Kennedy (p.657). Both operational codes indicate that Kennedy is optimistic about the nature of the international system and optimistic about realizing his political goals. Moreover, Kennedy displays low confidence in the predictability of

international events, and believes he has low control over international events. Cooperation is Kenney's preferred strategy. Furthremore, Kennedy displayed a low tolerance for risk. Additionally, he displayed a medium level of flexibility in shifting between cooperation and conflict and between words and deeds (p. 657). Statistical analysis did not show significant differences for any belief at $p < .05$ (p. 657). Only one belief, P-3, is statistically significant at $p < .1$. Kennedy displayed a very low predictability of the political future in public, and a low predictability in private (p.656).

Renshon (2009) concludes that the operational codes are strikingly similar in both public and private contexts, which provides some conformation of the validity of the use of public material in operational code analysis (p.658). The small but significant belief change in philosophical belief P-3 is dismissed due to its small magnitude and significance of $p < .1$. These findings enable scholars working within the method of operational code analysis to proceed with greater confidence in the method (p.658). Furthermore, Renshon suggests that further research is needed to assess whether his findings hold in crisis situations and times of war (p.658).

However, Renshon's (2009) study is not without problems. First, what Renshon means by crisis situation is unclear. Consequently, it is uncertain under what conditions his conclusions about the use of public speech hold up. What constitutes a crisis event? How should these crisis situations be taken into account when selecting data for operational code analysis?

Secondly, Renshon's (2009, p.652) exclusion of 'potentially confounding elements' from the public data by selecting a small sample frame, free of crisis situations, makes his findings hard to generalize. Various studies within operational code analysis often include material from larger time periods than Renshon's three months. For example, the sample frames are often longer than a year (Dyson & Raleigh, 2014; Özdamar & Canbolat, 2017;

Schafer & Crichlow, 2000; Walker, Schafer & Young, 1998). It is plausible that in these sample frame's, events have been included that Renshon would have defined as a crisis situation. How does the use of public material affect the operational code of an actor when such events are included? Although Renshon himself argues that his findings assert the validity of the use of public speech in operational code analysis (p.658), it remains unclear how public speech affects an actor's operational code when a larger sample frame is included and when crisis situation have occurred in the sample frame.

In addition, Dyson & Raleigh (2014) have looked into the validity of the use of public material in at-a-distance methods. If public speech is manipulative and strategic, and if leaders' decisions are driven by the private sphere, is public material of value (p.2)? Dyson & Raleigh asked the question whether the public speech acts of dictators of closed regimes were representative of their beliefs by looking at the public and private speech acts of Saddam Hussein. The issue of whether we can trust what dictators say has always been subject of discussion, since closed regimes offer us little information on private deliberations (p.2).

Dyson & Raleigh (2014) used both the *Leadership Trait Analysis (LTA)* by Margaret Hermann (1980, 2005) and the operational code to test whether private beliefs could be inferred from public material. LTA is an at-a-distance method designed to measure the personality traits of international leaders (Hermann, 1980, 2005). However, Dyson & Raleigh did not use both methods strictly, but adopted key variables from both methods that were proven to be useful in explaining foreign policy behavior (p.3). From the operational code, three variables were adopted: image of other (P-1), image of self (I-1), and belief in ability to control events (P-4). From the LTA, Dyson & Raleigh adopted the variable conceptual complexity, which refers to the sophistication of an actor's cognition (p.3).

For public material, the study used Hussein's speeches on international relations, ranging from 1977 to 2000. These speeches have resulted in 330,000 words included in

analysis. (Dyson & Raleigh, 2014, p.3). The private material of Saddam Hussein were transcripts of his conversations and phone calls with advisors, also ranging from the years 1977 to 2000. Around 58.000 words of private material was collected. Public and private material was translated into English, and relates to various foreign policy issues (p.3).

After the data was collected, the indices for each variable were calculated using the automatic content analysis software provided by the ProfilerPlus website (profilerplus.org). Dyson & Raleigh (2014) distinguished between Saddam's worldview overall, which included material on all various foreign policy issues, and specific views on the US, Iran and Israel. The public and private scores were thus compared in four categories: Saddam's general worldview, views towards the US, towards Israel, and towards Iran (p.4).

Overall, Dyson & Raleigh (2014) conclude that the private and public scores for each variable show a similar actor, except for conceptual complexity (p. 5). In public, Saddam displayed significantly less conceptual complexity than in private. However, in public and in private Saddam showed the same image of other. Saddam's image of self did differ a little in public (0.35) compared to private data (0.26), as was the case with the control over historical events, with a score of 0.64 in public and 0.55 in private (p.5).

Saddam's traits concerning the US, Iran and Israel show differences between public and private data. The beliefs are similar to Saddam's overall views, but in private he perceived a lower ability to influence events towards Israel than he displayed in public. Moreover, he described the US as more hostile in public than in private, and displayed much higher conceptual complexity in public than in private. Moreover, when talking about the US, he portrayed Iraq's actions as much less hostile than in private. Dyson & Raleigh conclude that these differences point to impression management tactics (p.4).

According to Dyson & Raleigh, the results contribute towards the validity of the use of public material in operational code analysis. The beliefs revealed in public material match

those expressed in private (p.5). However, the study offers some evidence for the existence of impression management due to the difference in conceptual complexity in private and public and differences on specific foreign policy issues (p.6).

However, the conclusions of Dyson & Raleigh (2014) are only applicable to three operational code beliefs. Not all operational code beliefs have been measured in this study. Instead, three key variables have been used by Dyson & Raleigh (2014, p.3). However, it is possible that significant differences could have occurred in the beliefs that have not been measured. Knowing whether these differences have occurred or not is important in assessing the validity of public material in operational code analysis. Consequently, he study does not contribute entirely to the validity of public material in operational code analysis.

Moreover, it is debatable whether Dyson & Raleigh's (2014) positive conclusions are warranted. Out of the 16 possible categories where public and private material could have diverted, five categories displayed significant differences (p.5-6). Dyson & Raleigh (2014) argue that the differences found in Saddam's views towards the US, Isreal and Iran are not completely different from Saddam's general worldview. The beliefs remain in the same categories, and differ only in degree. However, most of the differences are of a large degree. For example, Saddam's image of self towards the US is measured at 0.05 in private and 0.4 in public. Moreover, Saddam's conceptual complexity in his views towards the US is measured at 0.45 in public, and at 0.65 in private. These findings also suggest that private material may be better suited for operational code analysis.

The body of literature on public and private material of international leaders has its limitations. Although Renshon (2009) has contributed to the validity of pubic material, it remains unclear how the inclusions of material on crisis situations affects an actor's operational code. Moreover, Dyson & Raleigh (2014) have not looked into the use of public

material for all operational code beliefs. Consequently, the limited body of literature on the use of public material in operational code analysis emphasizes the need for further research into this issue. In turn, the importance of this thesis' research question is underlined.

Theoretical expectations

I do not expect to find significant differences between Thatcher's public and private operational codes.

First, Walker & Schafer (2006) have argued that, although leaders are deceptive in certain speech acts, it would not skew the resulting operational code (p.47). I concur with Walker & Schafer's view. If a leader is intentionally deceptive in their speech acts, the actor would only need to change a few verbs in order to change the perception of the public (p.47). The few verbs that would be changed by the international leader would not result in changes in the operational code, since the operational code is based on a much greater number of utterances. Many of those utterances are unaffected by impression management or deception, and would not influence the VICS analysis. Deception or impression management would not affect our ability to infer beliefs of leaders drawing from public material (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.47).

Moreover, Walker & Schafer (2006) point towards the 'locking-in' effect of public speech (p.47). International leaders are constrained by their public speech, because they can be accused of lying if their actions do not match their speech. Thus, international leaders' public behavior is constrained by their public image (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.47). Their public actions will match their beliefs (Renshon, 2009, p.652).

Moreover, Renshon (2009) has contributed somewhat to the validity of the use of public material in operational code analysis. He found that Kennedy's public and private image were strikingly similar in both the public and private context.

Methodology

In order to assess the validity of the use of public material in operational code analysis, a comparison must be made between an operational code based on public material and one based on private material. For both the public and private operational code, the selected material will be analyzed by applicating the VICS content analysis scheme. The operational codes will be compared by means of an independent samples t-test.

The difficulty in assessing the use of public material is the limited availability of private material of international leaders, like transcripts of meetings with advisors, letters or other types of communication with colleagues or aides. This type of behind-the-scenes material is oftentimes not released until years after the fact, if it is released at all (Renshon, 2009, p.652). However, there are some leaders where this type of material has been made available. One example is Margaret Thatcher, Britain's prime minister from 1979 – 1990. The British government keeps extensive records of all forms of communication within the government. Moreover, Margaret Thatcher kept records of all files that passed her desk during her premiership. Every year, declassified documents are released to the public and transferred to various national archives.

The Margaret Thatcher archive (www.margaretthatcher.org/archive) has collected all documents related to Margaret Thatcher and has published them online. The Margaret Thatcher archive contains a vast collection of declassified government files during Thatcher's time in office, including letters sent to her international colleagues, transcripts of phone calls

with her colleagues, notes of meetings with advisors and policy documents. Moreover, the archive has collected all of Thatcher's public statements, like speeches, interviews and press conferences. The Margaret Thatcher archive offers an enormous source of material that can be the subject of operational code analysis. Consequently, the readily available public and private material assures that Thatcher is an interesting subject of analysis to assess the validity of the use of public material in operational code analysis.

This thesis aims to construct a general operational code of Margaret Thatcher on both the public and private side. Thus, no distinction will be made between the various foreign policy issues that marked Thatcher's time in office. All speech acts, whether it be on East/West relations, the invasion of Afghanistan, the negotiation of Hong Kong or apartheid in South-Africa, will be included in public or private material.

The Margaret Thatcher archive contains an immense amount of her public speech acts. It was not within the scope of this thesis to include each suitable speech act in analysis. Instead, a suitable selection was made of public material from the Margaret Thatcher archive.

For each entry in the archive, the various topics of each speech acts are marked up. This proved very useful when searching the archive, since speech acts on foreign policy could be found easily. All public speech acts from Thatcher's time in office on foreign policy could be found by using the search function of the archive. The following search command was entered in the archive's search function:

- Time period: '1979 – 90: Prime Minister'
- Source type: 'Speeches' and 'Press'
- Subject: 'Foreign Policy (general discussion)'

The search command resulted in nearly 300 speech acts, far too much for all of them to be included in analysis. Consequently, two speech acts per year were chosen, one from June 15th

and one from December 15th. Maintaining an interval of six months between data points guarantees that a foreign policy issue that dominated one particular point in time does not disproportionally affect the operational code. Moreover, the selection of speech acts by their date ensures that the speech acts are chosen randomly, which excludes the possibility of bias in the data.

However, some speech act from these dates were not suitable for analysis since the criterion of length were not met (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.44). Moreover, not every June 15th and December 15th resulted in a speech act. If there was no speech act of that date, or the speech act was not suitable, a suitable speech act from the nearest date was selected.

A complete overview of used public material can be found in appendix B.

On the private side, collecting the data was not as straightforward. First, the archive was browsed to orientate on the available types of private material on foreign policy.

Overall, notes of government meetings were not suitable for analysis. The British government did not make transcripts of meetings, but took minutes of what was said. The comments of Margaret Thatcher were summarized, and did not represent what she actually said in the meeting. Thus, government notes were excluded from analysis, since it did not meet Walker & Schafer's (2006) requirement of authorship (p.46).

However, a valuable source of material proved to be her correspondence with other heads of state. The correspondence was often in the form of letters, telegrams and transcripts of phone calls. Especially her written correspondence with President Carter and Reagan proved useful. These letters covered various foreign policy issues and often contained enough codable verbs to meet the cut-off point of 20 coded verbs (Walker & Schafer, 2006, p.44). Moreover, some private speeches were found in the archive that were given at private government meetings by Thatcher that were suitable for analysis due to them being delivered

behind the scenes. Thus, the private material contains letters, telegrams and transcripts of phone calls, and speeches at private government events. The following search command was used to find these speech acts:

- Time period: '1979 – 90: Prime Minister'
- Source type: 'Archive'
- Subject: 'Foreign Policy (general discussion)'
- Key words: 'MT letter', 'telegram', 'phone call', 'speech'

After discarding the speech acts that did not contain 20 coded verbs, 23 private speech acts were selected. A complete overview of private material can be found in appendix B.

Both the public and private sides covered enough different foreign policy issues to be able to make a general operational code of Thatcher's beliefs.

After all the material was selected, the content analysis was carried out by applicating the VICS coding scheme. The scheme assesses the intensity and direction of the spoken verbs (Walker, Schafer & Young, 1998, p.183). For example, when a leader says 'Russia invaded Ukraine' or 'we praise Russia for its intervention in Ukraine', the verbs *invade* and *praise* signify very different messages about the state. Each verb can be coded on the following scale: Punish (-3), Threaten (-2), Oppose (-1), Support (+1), Promise (+2), and Reward (+3). In addition, the verbs are coded for direction, i.e. the actor is talking about themselves or the other (p.183). Consequently, each sentence can be scored for intensity and direction, resulting in a score of, for example, *-3 other* or *+3 self.*

Based on these coded verbs, the variables for each belief can be calculated (Walker, Schafer & Young, 1998). Each belief is calculated differently, but an example is useful. For belief P-1, the corresponding variable can be calculated by detracting the percentage of negative other attributions from the percentage of positive other attributions (Walker, Schafer

& Young, 1998, p. 178). For some beliefs, the index ranges from 0 to 1, while for others, the index ranges from -1 to +1. A complete overview of the index for each belief can be found in appendix A.

ProfilerPlus *v. 7.3.2* (https://profilerplus.org) is used to analyze both the public and private phase. ProfilerPlus is an automatic coding program that applies the content analysis scheme to the data. ProfilerPlus analyzes the verbs for direction and intensity. The indices for each belief are calculated on the basis of the ProfilerPlus output as prescribed by Walker, Schafer & Young (1998). The indices are compared on the basis of an independent samples t-test. A students t-test is used. If Levene's test indicates violated test assumptions, a Welch t-test is used instead.

Analysis

How does using public material affect an actor's operational code? Table 2 shows the results from statistical analysis. The left column displays Thatcher's operational code based on public material, and the right column indicates the operational code based on private material, with t-statistics in brackets. Statistically significant differences are highlighted.

Whether public or private material was utilized did not result in a significant difference in most philosophical beliefs. Both operational codes convey Thatcher's belief that the political universe is somewhat friendly (P-1). Moreover, both operational codes show Thatcher's somewhat optimistic attitude towards the realization of political values (P-2), the low control over historical development (P-4) and the high role of chance in the political universe (P-5).

Table 2: Operational Code of Margaret Thatcher

		Public material (N=22)	*Private material (N=23)*
P-1	Nature of Political Universe	.287	.326 *(.509)*
P-2	Realization of Political Values	.133	.124 *(-.145)*
P-3	Predictability of Political Future	.124	**.171** ***(2.447)******
P-4	Control over Historical Development	.250	.279 *(.915)*
P-5	Role of Chance	.959	.953 *(-.585)*
I-1	Strategic Approach to Goals	.619	.682 *(.677)*
I-2	Tactical Pursuit of Goals	.261	.280 *(.336)*
I-3	Risk Orientation	.360	**.523** **(2.228)***
I-4	*Timing of Action*		
I-4a	Cooperation/Conflict	.850	.802 *(-1.255)*
I-4b	Words/Deeds	.871	**.801** **(-2.188)***
I-5	*Utility of Means*		
I-5a	Reward	.169	.112 (-1.585)
I-5b	Promise	.008	**.036** ***(2.220)******
I-5c	Appeal	.633	.694 *(1.068)*
I-5d	Oppose	.100	.097 *(-.025)*
I-5e	Threaten	.007	.017 *(.868)*
I-5f	Punish	.088	.0.043 *(-1.640)*

*T-statistics are indicated in brackets. Significant results are bold: * p ≤ .05, **p ≤ .01, *** p ≤ .001*

However, a significant difference can be found in Thatcher's belief in the predictability of the political future (P-3). In private material, Thatcher conveys a higher belief in a predictable political future than in private. However, both in public and in private, Thatcher's belief in the predictability of the political future is classified as low. Thus, the change is not of a large magnitude.

As for the instrumental beliefs, both operational codes display her cooperative strategies (I-1), her somewhat cooperative intensity of tactics (I-2), and her high flexibility between employing cooperative and conflictual strategies is maintained by Thatcher (I-4a).

However, some significant differences occurred in Thatcher's instrumental beliefs. In private, Thatcher displays significantly less flexibility in shifting between verbal and operational tactics than in public (I-4b). Nevertheless, both indices of belief I-4b still indicate a high flexibility of tactics. Furthermore, Thatcher, in private, displayed a greater preference for utility of means 'promise' than in public (I-5b). However, the difference between the utility of means in public and private is a minimal difference. Both in public and in private, the preference for utility of means 'promise' is still classified as very low.

However, the most striking difference between the public and private operational code is Thatcher's risk orientation (I-3). In public, Thatcher has a low risk orientation, but in private, her risk orientation is significantly higher and is thus classified as 'medium'.

Discussion

This thesis found four significant differences between the public and private operational code of Margaret Thatcher. Three of those changes were of a small magnitude, but Thatcher's risk orientation was much lower in public than in private.

Renshon (2009) found no significant differences in Kennedy's public and private operational codes, except for Kennedy's belief in the predictability of the political future (p.657). That difference, however, was of a very small magnitude. According to Renshon, his findings contribute to the validity of using public material in operational code analysis (p.658). Public material can be used with confidence in operational code analysis (p.658).

However, this thesis did find some significant differences, which indicates that when using a longer sample frame, public material might not always be accurate material for inferring the beliefs of leaders from. Especially an actor's risk orientation may not be represented well in public material. The findings of this thesis do suggest that using public material might affect an actor's risk orientation.

Dyson & Raleigh (2014) conclude that their study has contributed to the validity of the use of public material due to the little differences in Saddam's public and private worldview (p.5). When focusing on specific topics, they did find evidence of impression management (p.5). However, this thesis has only looked into Thatcher's general worldview. In the general worldview, differences can be found between her public and private operational code. This indicates that beliefs of leaders cannot always be accurately inferred from public material, contrary to what Dyson & Raleigh (2014) themselves conclude. Moreover, this thesis has found some evidence for impression management due to the large difference between Thatcher's public and private risk orientation, corresponding with Dyson & Raleigh 's (2014) conclusion.

However, this thesis has not distinguished between the various different foreign policy topics, like Dyson & Raleigh (2014) have. Their evidence of impression management was mostly found when distinguishing between Saddam's views of the US, Israel and Iran. If this thesis would have distinguished between Thatcher's general worldview and, for example,

views of the Soviet-Union, more evidence for impression management might have been found.

It seems that Walker & Schafer (2006) theory of the 'locking-in' effect of public speech acts is incorrect. It does seem like international leaders are not as constrained by their public speech acts as Walker & Schafer have argued (p.47). The difference between Thatcher public and private risk orientation does demonstrate that, in private, Thatcher was more willing to take risks than she portrayed in public. Moreover, the findings of this thesis suggest that Walker & Schafer's (2006) suggestion that the strategic use of public speech act does not affect the VICS analysis, is not correct. It seems that when public speech acts are used for strategic purposes, it can affect the operational code of an actor, and sway the VICS analysis.

However, this thesis has only looked into the differences in public and private material for one leader. It is plausible that, when other international leaders are studied on the differences between public and private material, no significant differences are found. These findings would implicate that the differences found in this thesis are the result of Thatcher as a leader, and not of private material being used strategically. Thus, further research on the validity of public material in operational code analysis for other international leaders should be conducted.

Conclusion

The main concern of this thesis was to evaluate the validity of the use of public material in operational code analysis. The analysis was carried out by comparing an operational code of Margaret Thatcher based on public material with one based on private material. The results indicate that, overall, public material does not always represent an actor's beliefs accurately. Thatcher's beliefs proved to be more difficult to grasp, since four beliefs differed

significantly when the operational code was based on private material. Although three of the four significant differences were of a small magnitude, Thatcher's risk orientation in public was much lower than in private.

Why is the difference between public and private material attributed to public material, and not private material? It is possible that actor's engage in deception or impression management in private, behind-the-scenes material too (Dyson & Raleigh, 2014, p.6). Thus, we cannot say that an actor's 'true' beliefs are reflected in either public or private material. However, it does seem more plausible that international leaders speak more freely on foreign affairs in private, with advisors and colleagues, than in public. Consequently, private material is most likely a closer reflection of an actor's true beliefs than public material is. Thus, it is very plausible that the private material represents the beliefs of international leaders better, since the actor speaks more freely on matters than in public.

The public and private operational codes of Thatcher did not show significant differences for most beliefs. Especially in Thatcher's philosophical beliefs, no significant differences were found except for the predictability of the political future. In her instrumental beliefs, more significant differences were found, but most of a very small magnitude. However, the significance of the difference between Thatcher's public and private risk orientation should not be minimized. In public, Thatcher displayed a low risk orientation, but in private, it seems she was far more risk orientated.

Public speech being used strategically can serve as an explanation for the differences between beliefs. It is possible that Thatcher's public speech acts were uttered for strategic purposes like deceit or impression management tactics. Consequently, her psychological content was not represented well (Tetlock & Manstead, 1985). For example, the findings indicate that Thatcher wanted to appear very flexible in shifting between verbal or operational tactics, yet risk averse and aware of the unpredictability of the international

system. In private, however, she was more risk acceptant because she believed the international system to be more predictable, and thus preferred verbal tactics over taking action. Thus, the results indicate that if public material may disproportionally affect an actor's operational code due to the strategic use of public material.

However, the body of literature on impression management tactics in politics is very limited. Many studies are related to the employment of impression management tactics in elections (De Landtsheer, de Vries & Vertessen, 2008; Jackson & Lilleker, 2011), and not on the employment of impression management tactics by political leaders and how those affect our ability to infer beliefs. Thus, it is useful to look into the employment of impression management strategies by international leaders in relation to the operational code. A suggestion is to use Thatcher for this research due to the differences between public and private material found in this thesis. When focusing on, for example Thatcher's views on the Soviet-Union, do differences occur in her public and private views? If so, can we see evidence of decision-making on the deployment of impression management tactics in private material?

Deceit is also named as a possible strategic use of public material, however, its relation with impression management remains unclear. When a leader employs impression management tactics, does it fall under deceit? Or when a leader is purposefully deceiving the public, does this count as the employment of impression management tactics? Thus, more research into deceit the influence on deceit by international leaders, and its influence on the operational code, should be conducted.

This thesis does not disprove the use of public material in operational code analysis entirely. Some differences were found in the beliefs of Thatcher based on public or private material. However, a large disparity between public and private material was only found in Thatcher's

risk orientation. The findings call into question the validity of using public material in operational code analysis because the findings do suggest that an actor's risk orientation cannot always be accurately inferred from public material.

However, I recommend that further research is conducted to evaluate the use of public material for more international leaders for whom enough private material is available. It is possible that the difference found between public and private material is the result of Thatcher as a person, but this can only be assessed by comparing these findings with other international leaders. If it is the case that public material does not always accurately represent the beliefs of international leaders, it is important to know under what conditions the use of public material is not valid and how its invalidity can be avoided.

This research is highly relevant for operational code analysis, since the method has depended on public material (He & Feng, 2013; Feng, 2005; Özdamar & Canbolat, 2017; Robson, 2006). In order for the operational code to contribute to our knowledge of international leaders and our understanding of international relations as a whole, it is important to know whether public material generally reflects the beliefs of international leaders. Although the findings of this thesis are not enough to fully assess whether public material is valid or invalid in operational code analysis, it does suggest that public material is not always accurate for inferring the beliefs of international leaders. Consequently, the importance of more research into this issue and into the employment of deceit and impression management strategies by international leaders is emphasized.

In sum, the findings of this thesis suggest that public material does not always represent the psychological content of international leaders due to public material being used for strategic purposes like impression management or deceit. Consequently, public material that have been used for strategic purposes may affect the operational code of an actor in such a way that not all beliefs can be accurately inferred from public material.

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Appendix A

P-1: Nature of the Political Universe

HOSTILE								FRIENDLY
Extremely	Very	Definitely	Somewhat	Mixed	Somewhat	Definitely	Very	Extremely
–1.0	–.75	–.50	–.25	0.0	+.25	+.50	+.75	+.10

P-2: Realization of Political Values

PESSIMISTIC								OPTIMISTIC
Extremely	Very	Definitely	Somewhat	Mixed	Somewhat	Definitely	Very	Extremely
–1.0	–.75	–.50	–.25	0.0	+.25	+.50	+.75	+.10

P-3: Predictability of Political Future

Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
0.0	.25	.50	.75	1.0

P-4: Control Over Historical Development

Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
0.0	.25	.50	.75	1.0

P-5: Role of Chance

Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
0.0	.25	.50	.75	1.0

I-1: Direction of Strategy

CONFLICT								COOPERATION
Extremely	Very	Definitely	Somewhat	Mixed	Somewhat	Definitely	Very	Extremely
–1.0	–.75	–.50	–.25	0.0	+.25	+.50	+.75	+.10

I-2: Intensity of Tactics

CONFLICT								COOPERATION
Extremely	Very	Definitely	Somewhat	Mixed	Somewhat	Definitely	Very	Extremely
–1.0	–.75	–.50	–.25	0.0	+.25	+.50	+.75	+.10

I-3: Risk Orientation

RISK AVERSE				RISK ACCEPTANT
Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
0.0	.25	.50	.75	1.0

I-4a: Flexibility of Tactics (between Cooperation and Conflict)

Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
0.0	.25	.50	.75	1.0

I-4b: Flexibility of Tactics (between Words and Deeds)

Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
0.0	.25	.50	.75	1.0

I-5 Utility of Means (Appeal/Support, Promise, Reward, Oppose/Resist, Threaten, Punish)

Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
0.0	.08	.16	.24	.32

The descriptor categories are borrowed from Renshon (2009, p.661)

Appendix B

Phase 1: Public material

25-6-1979: TV interview for the Central Office of Information
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104097

18-12-1979: Speech to the Foreign Policy Association
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104199

26-6-1980: Press Conference for American Correspondents in London
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104389

3-12-1980: House of Commons Statement
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104453

12-6-1981: Interview for Jewish Chronicle
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104476

15-12-1981: Speech to the Board of Deputies of British Jews
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104762

10-6-1982: Press Conference after NATO Summit
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/104963

23-12-1982: Questions in the House of Commons
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/105078

7-6-1983: Speech at Fleetwood
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/105385

1-12-1983: Press Conference after Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/105485

12-6-1984: House of Commons Statement: London G7 Summit
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/105705

7-12-1984: Press Conference for American Correspondents in London
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/105810

29-6-1985: Press Conference after Milan European Council
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/106082

17-12-1985: Radio Interview for BBC Radio 3
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/105934

19-6-1986: Interview of Sunday Telegraph
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/106269

6-12-1986: Press Conference after London European Council
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/106530

22-6-1987: Interview for Politica Exterior
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/106659

22-12-1987: Interview for Jewish Chronicle
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/107002

8-6-1988: Speech to Press Association
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/107258

30-12-1988: Interview for TV-AM
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/107022

4-12-1989: Press Conference after NATO Summit
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/107837

8-6-1990: Joint Press Conference with Soviet President
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/108107

Phase 2: Private material

10-5-1979: Speech at private opening German visit
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/source/prem19/prem19-0058

11-5-1979: Speech at private luncheon for Chancellor Schmidt
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/117692

15-5-1979: Letter to Carter
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/112211

10-1-1979: Letter to Carter
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/112684

3-3-1980: Letter to Carter
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/112690

1-4-1980: Letter to Ohira
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/115737

27-4-1980: Letter to Reagan
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/121518

24-4-1980: Transcript of phone call with Giscard

https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/118722

5-6-1980: Letter to Denis Howell MP
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/119811

23-2-1981: Letter to Indira Ghandi
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/138647

31-10-1981: Letter to Reagan
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/210214

29-1-1982: Telegram to Ronald Reagan
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/137548

28-5-1982: Letter to Reagan
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/123339

23-9-1982: Letter to Ramphal
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/152436

18-4-1983: Letter to Lord Bethell
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/132327

27-9-1983: Letter to Andropov
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/132004

1-12-1983: Letter to Robert
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/152857

22-12-1984: Letter to Reagan
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/131592

5-7-1984: Letter to Sultan Qaboos
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/152961

23-7-1984: Message to President Zhao
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/152964

12-9-1985: Letter to Reagan
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/143042

11-2-1986: Letter to Reagan
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/200455

27-2-1986: Letter to Gorbachev
https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/200422