EXPLORING ‘DUTERTISMO’
Duterte’s Populist Foreign Policy in the Face of the Obama-Trump Transition

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Political Science

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This thesis entitled “Exploring ‘Dutertismo’: Duterte’s Populist Foreign Policy in the Face of the Obama-Trump Transition” presented by Mr. Jose Miguelito G. Enriquez in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Political Science under the Department of Social Sciences in the University of the Philippines Manila is hereby presented for approval.

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ABSTRACT

What happens when a populist head of state controls state foreign policy-making, and how does their populist style change in response to a transition of government in countries they perceive as a threat? There have been suggestions in literature about how the controversial phenomenon of populism operates in the international level: it has shifted power relations in the regional level, clashed competing interests between fellow populist leaders, or lessened the use of multilateral diplomacy. In analyzing the case of the Philippines’ Rodrigo Duterte, this study will take the lens of populism as a political style that securitizes existential threats, and articulates such threats in their public performances that concern the United States. Using discourse analysis on speech acts from Duterte and his cabinet members, this study explores how Duterte has shifted his foreign policy strategy with the United States in the midst of the latter’s transition of government from a non-populist (Barack Obama) to a populist president (Donald Trump).

Keywords: populism, foreign policy, securitization, international relations
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Political science literature has been very lively in conceptualizing populism: it has been viewed as a “thin-centered ideology” (Mudde 2004), a discourse (Jagers and Walgrave 2007), a political performance (Moffitt and Tormey 2014), and as a political strategy (Weyland 2001). These four frameworks find little agreement on how to view the populist phenomenon and has such complicated the process of conducting research into populism outside from the consensus that populism aims to attract and appeal support from the people by employing a particular approach.

Despite this perceived conceptual confusion, the literature has widely conceded that populism has affected the very thread of how politics is done. On the individual level, populists have been seen to pursue direct and mediated relations with their chosen audience (Moffitt and Tormey 2014, Oliver and Rahn 2016, Curato 2017, Kenny 2019). On the state level, populists pursue policies aimed at simplifying what they think establishment politicians or opportunists individuals and have complicated for their own benefit (Curato 2017, Kenny 2019). But there is also a need to map how populism affects foreign-policy setting. Understanding populist foreign policy will better help us understand the over-all nature of the populist – how they decide, what they say, when they act, and how they act. For instance, in using the ideology approach, analyzing populist foreign policies would help understand the context in which populists envision their domestic unitary economic policies as opposed to support globalization (Chryssogelos 2010). In crafting a populist political style, identifying a ‘crisis’ or ‘threat’
becomes integral – a ‘threat’ that may come from domestic or foreign actors (Moffitt and Tormey 2014). Responses to these ‘threats’ in turn become part and parcel of the populist political style. For example, Hungary’s Viktor Orban has directed fears of Muslim immigrants not toward leaders in the Middle East, but to his European neighbors such as Germany (Staudenmaer 2018). The United States has also earned the ire of populists fearing imperialist action, like Venezuela’s Hugo Chavez (Sagarzazu and Thies 2018).

Surprisingly, however, there is little said about how populists in power amend their foreign policy strategy with other states given new political or economic conditions – such as a transition of power from one administration to another. Given the recent trend of how populism has sprung up in different regions in the world, it seems inevitable that populist leaders will have to interact with each other in the interstate level. However, this specific context of populist foreign policy is underexplored. The Philippines’ Rodrigo Duterte for instance, has not blinked twice in calling both Barack Obama and Pope Francis as a “son of a b---h”; in fact, Duterte’s cursing has become a signature part of his performative act (Curato 2017). But the research into Duterte’s foreign relations with the United States stops at the conclusion of the Obama administration in 2017 (Curato 2017, De Castro 2017). Not much has been said about the Duterte administration’s foreign relations strategy with the current Trump administration. Much more effort is devoted in analyzing Duterte’s pivot to China as opposed to his most recent predecessors (Bautista 2016a, De Castro 2017). But, Duterte’s apparent friendlier rapport with the new United States president, Donald Trump, as demonstrated in events such as the 2017 ASEAN Summit (‘Trump-Duterte’ 2017) should cause some speculation.

More than just filling this gap is the need to answer a crucial piece in this puzzle of populist politics in the context of foreign policy: how the populist responds to changes to the
political situations, specifically those caused by a change in government in other countries, that affects the crises or threats the populist has already previously identified and mobilized on. The research navigates through all the confusion brought by the muddy conceptualization of populism and tries to map the dynamic of populist foreign policy when responding to these changes.

**Research Objectives**

There are three objectives for this research:

1) To identify how populists’ foreign policy agendas respond to transitions of government in other states;
2) To map how a populist interacts with non-populists and fellow populists; and
3) To explore the effect of the populist phenomenon in a country’s foreign policy agenda.

**Research Question**

The main question that this research is envisioned to answer is: *How do governments led by populist heads of state amend its foreign policy strategy as a response to changing political conditions caused by a transition of government from a non-populist to a populist in another country?* Moreover, there are two sub-questions that the research will tackle to answer the main question:
1) How does a populist articulate, in their public performances, their government’s foreign policy interests against a country they perceive as a threat?; and
2) How does a populist head of state adjust their populist style in their performances in the midst of a transition to a populist head of state in other countries?
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

This research on populist foreign policy, one of the current trends in populism research (Drezner 2017), is envisioned to determine the dynamics of a populist foreign policy when another government transitions to a populist head of state. The main question of the research is: 

How do governments led by populist heads of state amend its foreign policy strategy as a response to changing political conditions caused by a transition of government from a non-populist to a populist in another country? 

To provide a strong foundation to this research, this review will be divided into three sections. First, identifying current definitions of populism and attempts to link these definitions to current paradigms in foreign policy research. Second, historicizing past trends in Philippines – United States foreign relations. Third, tracing the current state of knowledge on Rodrigo Duterte’s brand of populism and foreign policy. Finally, the review will be looking into how Donald Trump differs from his predecessors in his foreign policy strategy in the Asia-Pacific.

Defining Populism and Linking Foreign Policy

The first step in conducting research in populism is to choose the most suitable framework and definition of populism, but this first step is one of the more difficult steps to take (Drezner 2017). Numerous contentions and definitions, often competing with each other, have arisen in the past few decades, but “there is general agreement in the comparative literature that populism is confrontational, chameleonic, culture-bound and context-dependent” (Arter 2010).
This section of the review outlines the several definitions and interpretations of populism, and how each has been used in analyzing populist foreign policies.

The first framework defines populism as a "thin-centered ideology" (Mudde 2004) that considers society as divided between the people and elites (Mudde 2004), with an antagonistic relationship between the two entities (Stanley 2008). The distinction of “thin-centered ideology” is made in order to signify that populism may accommodate other political ideologies, such as socialism and conservatism (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2011), or as a ‘catch-all’ party aimed to mobilize right-wing voters or to denounce xenophobic rhetoric in the short-term (Freeden 2017).

Moreover, there is significant emphasis placed on the importance of the general will and popular sovereignty (Mudde 2004, Stanley 2008). Scholars find this interpretation objectionable because using the framework in research assigns normative values (usually negative) to populism instead of being value-neutral (Aslanidis 2016), while others see the use of division between the people and elite as insufficient to justify using populism as an ideology (Jagers and Walgrave 2007).

Early in the new populist wave, most foreign policy research in populism focused primarily on the ‘thin-centered ideology’ framework in analyzing populist foreign policies in Europe (Chryssogelos 2017). Early research revealed that populist parties in Europe, both coming from the left and the right, are shaped under the lens of the country as a Westphalian nation-state with emphasis on border security and marked by apprehension to globalization which are articulated to justify an ideology of nativism at home (Chryssogelos 2010). Moreover, the populist Tea Party Movement in the United States of the early 2010s shared a disdain for the liberal multilateralism with their European counterparts, but most of the Tea Party then still wanted to maintain America’s position as the dominant global power, instead of an ultimate withdrawal from their role as enforcers of the world order (Mead 2011). However, other studies have
disconfirmed the assumption that populist ideology has a substantive impact on foreign policy. In India, for instance, Narendra Modi’s foreign policy hinged on a rhetorical allusion to the people did not necessarily translate to his government’s insistence to protecting India’s national interest; in fact, Modi has been more willing to concede the national interest on the multilateral stage to project more power (Plagemann and Destradi 2018).

Populism has also been viewed as a discourse, more specifically, a “discursive frame” (Aslanidis 2016) or a “master frame” which is packaged to amass as much public support as possible (Jagers and Walgrave 2007), a contention similar to those who argue that populism is a political strategy hinged on the ‘power capability’ of a populist leader to construct a broad coalition of support (Weyland 2001). Users of the discourse framework argue that using this definition will lead a researcher to better understand “the cognitive aspects of the populist message” (Aslanidis 2016) and devoid of the negative connotations associated with the word “populism” which are underlying when using the ideology definition (Jagers and Walgrave 2007). Using this framework is seen to be valuable in quantitative methodology (Aslanidis 2016), as demonstrated by a time-series analysis into Hugo Chavez’ anti-imperialist sentiments against the United States, where articulating such sentiments are dependent on the prices of oil in the world market (Sagarzazu and Thies 2018). Other studies have concluded that public opinion also shapes states’ foreign policy interests under populist governments. Such was the case in Pakistan, wherein despite the fact that the military holds much of the state power, they still respond to shifts of public opinion – from generally anti-India sentiments to an antagonism of the United States’ War on Terror strategy (Milam 2013). However, if both cases are true, this would bring the approach into a chicken-and-egg dilemma: whether or not the government shapes
public opinion through its devised discourse or it amends their discursive strategy based on shifting public perceptions on foreign actors.

Still, other researchers question the reliability of using such a methodological framework, arguing that using such definition may befall to a researcher’s selection bias (Moffitt and Tormey 2014). Populism as discourse has recently been refined as Populism as a ‘political style’ which is "the repertoires of performance used to create political relations" and its influence in existing politician-constituent relations (Moffitt and Tormey 2014). These performances include a populist’s perceived ‘bad manners’ (Moffitt and Tormey 2014), as has been the case of the Philippines’ Rodrigo Duterte’s known antic of cursing world leaders, such as the United States’ Barack Obama (Curato 2017). Other scholars note that for some populists, anger is an integral part of their leadership style (Drezner 2017). The political style framework is different from the discourse framework since in the latter, almost anything can be used for discourse analysis, while the former only uses a populist’s performance (e.g. speeches) as a source of data (Moffitt and Tormey 2014).

There have been studies as to how the populist style can affect foreign policy. On the one had, there are studies that argue in favor of populism’s power to subvert the institutionalized procedure of foreign policy making. This has been demonstrated in India, wherein the head of government’s political style has led to the centralization of foreign policy agenda-setting, owing to Prime Minister Modi’s ability to directly communicate with the ‘true’ people (Plagemann and Destradi 2018). Conversely, India’s Foreign Affairs Ministry has lost much of its power to craft their country’s foreign policy (Plagemann and Destradi 2018). Other studies have shown that the ability of populist leaders to redefine their national priorities and draft foreign policies aimed against an external oppressor are an implication of their charismatic leadership to convince their
public that pursuing such policy is a nationalistic endeavor. This was the conclusion in a study scrutinizing the wave of ‘new populists’ in the Black Sea region (Bulgaria, Romania, Georgia, Ukraine) perceiving Russia as a threat, as a result of new material opportunities (i.e. support of the United States) and a shift in the ideational level (i.e. redefining their states’ national interest) (Tudoroiu 2014). Both conclusions indeed show that the populist political style has marked effects on foreign policy-making in general, but there is still a lack of exploration on what happens when the external actors (not just material conditions per se) change in the incumbency of the populist leader.

Indeed, foreign policy has been an emerging focal point of populism research since the most recent wave of elected populist leaders. However, even today, most research into this new wave of populism focuses on the domestic affairs of each leader’s country (Drezner 2017). Since the election of populist leaders in the past few years, there has been a recent trend to analyze individual-level variables in studying international relations, as opposed to using the conventional systemic approach (Drezner 2017). Under the individual approach, foreign policy decisions are seen to be made by a team of advisers appointed by the chief executive; and depending on the experience of the executive, these advisers may exert more influence in crafting decisions (Saunders 2017). However, populist leaders generally share an aversion to multilateral institutions, since such institutions operate beyond the populist’s control, or create alternative multilateral organizations that cater to populist behavior (Drezner 2017). The need to shift towards the individual state-behavior approach is borne out of a puzzling phenomenon of populist leaders pursuing high-risk and revisionist foreign policies (such as Trump’s “America First” policy) that the systemic behavior approach would not be able to appropriately answer (Drezner 2017). The inability for the latter to confidently answer the puzzle stems from its
assumption that systemic factors (i.e. liberal democratic values in multilateral organizations) would severely limit the capacity of states to enact high-risk foreign policies that go against established liberal democratic values in the world system (Drezner 2017).

But not all recent research would agree that the populist’s leadership style will be held at the mercy of establishment bureaucrats handling ministerial work. Some academics have argued that the populist’s articulation of threats form a strong basis for implementing their chosen foreign policy directions. In this case, populism is seen as a “securitizing act” (Magcamit 2017) – that is, the populist’s articulation of external threats provides a justification for the country to implement a realist foreign policy through a securitization process (Magcamit 2017). For example, Donald Trump’s brand of populist foreign policy is hinged on a securitization process to amass both popular and institutional support for his realist foreign policy, including realigning the dynamics of the relations between the United States and China (Magcamit 2017). While this theoretical framework is still in its infancy, it provides a strong claim that the populist themselves indeed has a marked effect in a state’s foreign policy.

The aforementioned frameworks have all made significant contributions in scholarly research into populism, more specifically in linking populism and foreign policy. These frameworks also have their perceived lapses. The challenge then is not to settle the long-standing debate, which would be an unproductive endeavor given the strengths of each definition, but to choose the most appropriate framework in the research at hand. However, based on all information gathered in this review, it would seem more appropriate to follow the most recent endeavors of appropriating populism as political style as the core conceptual framework for this foreign policy research. Moreover, while the framework is still fairly new, the securitization
process makes a cogent theoretical claim that mere articulation of threats by the populist can serve as a strong foundation for the state’s foreign policy direction.

**Historicizing Philippine-US Foreign Relations**

The influence of the United States over the Philippines did not cease when the Philippines was granted independence on July 4, 1946. The Philippines became an important security and economic ally of the United States in the Asia-Pacific thereafter, but this alliance has long been warned as neocolonial in nature, or to mainly serve American interests (Shalom 1986, Simbulan 2018). In this section, we trace the scope of the influence of the foreign policy tools of the United States over the Philippines since 1946.

The United States has long provided military assistance to the Philippines and has mainly served three purposes: (1) to preserve internal national security in the Philippines, (2) to persuade the Philippines to send troops when the US calls for assistance, and (3) a mechanism to maintain regime stability in the Philippines (Shalom 1986). Military assistance has taken various forms, including providing technical training (Shalom 1986), conducting joint military exercises, as enshrined in the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) and the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) (Simbulan 2018). In return, the Philippines cooperated with the military initiatives of the United States, as in the Vietnam War in the 1960’s (Shalom 1986) and the War on Terror under Presidents George W. Bush and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (‘Bush ‘upgrades’ Philippines 2003). But it is the presence of US military bases on Philippine soil that became the mark of the United States’ neocolonial influence over the Philippines (Simbulan 2018). A year after Philippine independence, the US and the Philippines signed the Military Bases Agreement
which turned over 250,000 hectares of Philippine territory for exclusive use by the US military (Simbulan 2018). Originally lasting 99 years, the agreement’s lifespan was shortened to a renewable term of 25 years; however, the agreement was terminated by virtue of a vote in the Philippine Senate in 1991 (Simbulan 2018).

The United States has also provided much-needed economic assistance to the Philippines, especially during post-war reconstruction (Shalom 1986). In this period, the US enacted the Trade Act of 1946 which ensured a normal trade relation between the two countries after Philippine independence (Shalom 1986). Moreover, the Philippines has made use of lending institutions under US control, such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, to fund government projects (Shalom 1986). However, while the United States has been generous in providing foreign economic aid, it historically has not served humanitarian purposes; in fact, more often than not, economic assistance was provided to maintain regime stability and to ward-off the communist insurgency in the Philippines (Shalom 1986).

Historically, the United States has provided regime stability to the Philippines under various methods. During reconstruction, the US’ Central Intelligence Agency supported the candidacy of then-defense secretary Ramon Magsaysay for president, who eventually won the 1953 election against incumbent Elpidio Quirino (Shalom 1986). US support was also key in maintaining the 21-year Martial Law regime of Ferdinand Marcos. The United States could have easily withdrawn military & economic support but instead increased military and economic assistance to the Philippines after the Philippine economy strengthened in the first years of Martial Law, which was good news for US corporations investing in the country (Shalom 1986). Other Philippine presidents have recognized the importance of the US-Philippine partnership, such as Corazon Aquino who hailed the US Congress as ‘democracy’s most famous home’ and a
key partner in restoring democracy in the Philippines (Aquino 1986), but Rodrigo Duterte seems to be an exception to this rule, who declared he would pursue an ‘independent foreign policy’ no longer hellbent in following whatever steps the United States would take (Simbulan 2018). Initially, this would seem to be a seismic shift in the Philippine foreign policy agenda. However, scholars have been quick to caution from jumping to that conclusion (Banlaoi 2017, Simbulan 2018).

The institutional arrangement in foreign policy decision making in the Philippines has four key stakeholders: the Philippine government, the Philippine military and police force, the business community, and civil society organizations (CSO’s) (Simbulan 2018). While the first three actors have been argued to articulate foreign interests, CSO’s have made historical successes in exerting pressure against these interests – a key victory for CSO lobbyists was the repeal of the Military Bases Agreement in 1991 (Simbulan 2018). But what do foreign policy outputs look like when the president is populist? Joseph Estrada engaged in “saber-rattling” against China when he asked for US military assistance after sightings of Chinese military structures in Mischief Reef, a disputed territory in the West Philippine Sea (Tuazon 2018a). But Rodrigo Duterte seems to be taking a starkly different policy route, especially with regards to China.

*Dutertismo in the International Stage*

Rodrigo Duterte was elected president of the Philippines in May 2016 using a populist style which has been characterized by crass language and bad behaviors (Curato 2017), which sufficiently fills the image of a populist leader with ‘bad manners’ (Moffitt and Tormey 2014).
However, Duterte’s campaign style – *Dutertismo* – is much more similar to that of Donald Trump’s presidential campaign in the United States, as both share a political style of identifying crises and using bad manners (Moffitt and Tormey 2014, Curato 2017). This is opposed to the style of previous populist leaders in the Philippines, such as President Joseph Estrada and Vice President Jejomar Binay, both of whom championed a “pro-poor” populist stance despite damaging corruption scandals (Curato 2017). Duterte has had controversial policy agendas since assuming office, such as an extremist approach on apprehending drug lords and drug users which disregards conventional human rights (Curato 2017).

*Dutertismo* has also been the subject of scrutiny and scholarly research as a foreign policy style. In the first few weeks of his presidency, Duterte declared that he would pursue an “independent foreign policy” (Simbulan 2018). Moreover, Duterte’s presidency has been marked by ‘friendlier relations’ with China (Bautista 2016b). Research has differed in the scope and gravity of this shift, with some arguing that Duterte will mark a radical realignment of security alliances from the United States to China and Russia (Bautista 2016a), others claiming that Duterte will control, or ‘hedge’, the expectations and partnerships between the United States and Russia (Banlaoi 2017), and some even arguing that Duterte is using the United States as a ‘bargaining chip’ whenever dealing with China (Simbulan 2018). What is clear, however, is that Duterte seems to conveniently discard the previous balancing strategy of the Philippines in dealing with China (De Castro 2017), the centerpiece of which was the victory in the arbitral tribunal filed by the previous Benigno Aquino administration over contested islands and waters (Bautista 2016a), in order to get favors from China, such as funding for his ambitious infrastructure program, an arrangement aimed to be mutually beneficial for both countries (Bautista 2016b). Scholars have further noted that this strategy of ‘friendlier relations’ with
China has also been practiced by previous Philippine governments, particularly that of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (De Castro 2017, Tuazon 2018a).

While President Duterte forged new connections with China, he has not been so warm with the United States, based on the ‘bad manners’ antic of swearing displayed against former President Barack Obama and former US Ambassador to the Philippines Philip Goldberg (Curato 2017). Duterte even went so far as to announce an economic and military separation from the United States (Bautista 2016a). However, the analysis of ‘bad manners’ in this context only focuses on events that happened during the Obama administration, and literature has not made any discussion on whether the ‘bad manners’ or the extreme policy pronouncements have extended to his successor, Donald Trump.

More recent literature contend that Duterte has used friendlier rhetoric when talking about the United States since Trump’s election. This contention was argued by using the framework of *mandala*, or a system where regional leaders establish personal networks of loyalty amongst themselves (Wolters 1985 in Lopez 2018) and conducting diplomacy through ‘patrimonial bureaucracy’, which involves a leader’s use of public performances to project a loyal or friendly image to a fellow leader (Wolters 1985 in Lopez 2018). However, in this study, the apparent use of friendlier rhetoric by Duterte will be analyzed in a different framework – in the context of populism. The study would help uncover why friendlier rhetoric has been pursued by Duterte on the United States based on a shift in the political climate in America: that they elected their own populist president. However, it may also be the case that the populist framework reveals that the perceived ‘friendlier’ pomp and rhetoric is not friendly at all; that, it is still in some regard unconventional.
Donald Trump’s unexpected election as President of the United States in 2016 was seen as a result of his appeal to a populist electorate who are motivated through strong senses of nationalism, nativism, and anti-elitism not only vilifying liberal Democrats but also establishment Republicans (Oliver and Rahn 2016). Trump’s rhetoric was "distinctive in its simplicity, anti-elitism and collectivism" (Oliver and Rahn 2016), and while Trump was not the only candidate who exuded populist sentiment during the 2016 election, he was rated higher than any other candidate in speech content analysis for populist rhetoric (Oliver and Rahn 2016).

There have been different arguments on how Trump’s electoral victory will affect America’s foreign policy, and specifically what it would mean for Asia, which had been the subject of a pivot strategy by Barack Obama (Tow 2017). Some have argued that Trump would spark a crisis in the liberal ‘rules-based’ hegemony that the United States has enjoyed since the 1970’s (Chacko and Jayasuriya 2017), in favor of his “America First” doctrine (Drezner 2017), which has been demonstrated by Trump’s insistence that China’s dishonest practices “have enabled Beijing to outmaneuver Washington in key economic areas during the past few years” (Magcamit 2017). But some argue that Trump in order to fulfill this “America First” doctrine, his foreign policy would have to be more transactional and pragmatic rather than altruistic in order to appeal to local populist leaders (Storey and Cook 2016) and avert a clash of competing interests of Asian authoritarian populists (Chacko and Jayasuriya 2017).

Others see that Trump would focus more on economic foreign affairs (such as trade) and less on common security issues. Trump may transform his business management experience into his strategy in foreign affairs, focusing more in imposing tariffs and other economic sanctions,
instead of pursuing new and strengthening existing collective security agreements (Tow 2017). This strategy would supposedly cater to the preferences of leaders in Southeast Asia, whose countries’ economic growth are largely dependent on the level of exports to the United States (Hamilton-Hart 2017). This economic growth is particularly important as it serves as a mechanism for local leaders to maintain popular legitimacy (Hamilton-Hart 2017). However, it is also argued that Trump should stabilize the United States’ security alliances in Asia, particularly with Thailand and the Philippines, whose relations with the United States have been strained during the Obama administration, and whose alienation may affect key defense partnerships with the United States (Tow 2017).

However, not everyone believes Trump would be populist-oriented in foreign policy. Trump’s survival instincts may bear more weight in his foreign policies than his populist tendencies (Drezner 2017). Since assuming office, Trump has appointed officials in his cabinet who have been friendlier to the now-challenged liberal paradigm in international relations (Drezner 2017). This would imply that the group decision-making process in foreign policy would also be greatly influenced by the ideological orientation of the president’s advisers (Saunders 2017).

These are all preliminary arguments looking into Trump’s foreign policy direction. However, two years into his four-year term, Trump has stepped away from key policy initiatives made by the Obama administration. Under Trump, the United States withdrew from two agreements, the Iran Nuclear Deal (‘Iran nuclear deal’ 2018) and the Paris Climate Agreement (Shear 2017), which have been hallmarks of Obama’s foreign policy. Trump also tightened travel restrictions in Cuba which have been eased under the Obama presidency (Kunovic 2017). He also has very different attitudes from Obama and George W. Bush in dealing with the Asia-
Pacific region. Under Bush, the United States pushed for normalization of trade relations with China, which further spurred economic growth in China (Panda 2016). Meanwhile, Obama pushed for his ‘rebalancing’ strategy against a surging China (also known as the Asia Pivot) under two prongs: (1) strengthening security alliances with Japan and South Korea, and (2) facilitating economic cooperation among Asian countries and the United States under multilateral institutions (e.g. ASEAN, APEC, and the Trans-Pacific Partnership or TPP) (Tuazon 2018b). Trump, however, has gone against both strategies. Not only has he withdrawn US participation from the TPP (‘Trump executive order’ 2017), he has also staged a trade war against China by imposing tariffs on as high as $200-billion worth of Chinese exports (Pramuk 2018).

However, even more puzzling than the reversal of Obama’s foreign policy achievements is Trump’s deviation from a decades-old practice of previous American presidents on North Korea. George W. Bush had classified North Korea, together with Iraq and Iran, into an “axis of evil” that the US must defeat in his 2002 State of the Union address (Miller and Sokolsky 2017). Barack Obama imposed economic sanctions against North Korea throughout his presidency, effectively shutting down any economic transactions between North Korean officials and American citizens (Davis 2016). In the beginning of his presidency, Trump used rhetoric to antagonize North Korea, similar to Bush’s strategy, and threatened nuclear retaliation (Miller and Sokolsky 2017). But eventually, he would use diplomatic channels and hold a bilateral summit between him and Kim Jong-un in an effort to denuclearize North Korea through diplomatic means – an unprecedented move no other incumbent US president had even plan to arrange (‘Trump and Kim in Singapore’ 2018).
This section of the review focused more on the different arguments of how Trump would manage his foreign policy in Asia, given the deviations it has taken from the steps of the Obama administration. However, these are all preliminary arguments – mainly conclusions drawn from Trump’s actions and speeches as presidential candidate and in his first 100 days in office. Two years into his term, we now have hard information to use to analyze how Trump’s brand of populism has affected how other countries look toward the United States.

Having identified current trends in populist foreign policy research, and historicizing Philippines-US relations, and current actions and dispositions of Presidents Duterte and Trump, the research will uncover links between Duterte’s foreign policy agenda and how he and his administration has responded to the change of leadership in the United States. Moreover, the research will find out how do populists change when they deal with one of their own kind.
Two concepts will prove to be central in conducting this study: (1) populism, and (2) foreign policy instruments. In the previous chapters, we have already established prior conceptualizations and theoretical associations between populist politics and foreign policy: it has been viewed as a “thin-centered ideology” (Mudde 2004), a discourse (Jagers and Walgrave 2007), a political performance (Moffitt and Tormey 2014), and as a political strategy (Weyland 2001). This research likewise needs a clear conceptual boundary for analyzing foreign policy through the various foreign policy tools at a state’s disposal. This chapter of the research will set the conceptual boundaries of these two terms, as well as establish the process in which populist rhetoric translate into hard foreign policy action, and the theoretical framework of understanding each leader’s foreign policy strategy.

**Conceptual Framework**

Despite being a highly contested concept (as discussed in the literature review), all conceptions of populism concede that the aim of employing populism is to attract and mobilize the people to capture positions of power and maintain popular support while in office. These frameworks diverge on how to mechanize that ability to attain public support. This research will specifically conceptualize populism as a political style, or the “*repertoires of performance that are used to create political relations*” (Moffitt and Tormey 2014). Three factors are central to this repertoire: (a) an appeal to the ‘people’, (b) an identification of a crisis or threat, and (c)
performing bad manners (Moffitt and Tormey 2014). It is important to note that in using the political style approach, populism is not judged as a binary (i.e. populist vs. non-populist), but rather that populists may appear more populist or less populist in a given context (Moffitt 2016, 46).

*Appeal to the ‘People’*. The ‘People’ are the central audience of the populist’s performance, and the true holders of popular sovereignty held in dichotomy usually against establishment politicians, or the ‘elite’ (Moffitt and Tormey 2014), but also against the entire political system or the ‘mainstream’ (Moffitt 2016, 44). It is this very ‘people’ that the populist renders that populists aim to rescue from the crisis and threat that they identify (Moffitt 2016, 44).

*Identifying Crises and Threats* which may include economic difficulties, military challenges, social injustices, and cultural change (Moffitt and Tormey 2014) are indicative of a distrust to the nature of modern governance and the complexities of policy formulation (Moffitt 2016, 45). Stemmed from the need to act immediately, populists attempt to resolve these threats by grossly simplifying the political climate (Moffitt 2016, 45), thereby also polarizing the terms of political debate.

*The Use of Bad Manners*. These bad manners are explicitly performed by populists and blatantly disregard what is considered ‘appropriate’, ‘conventional’, or ‘presidential’ (Moffitt 2016, 44). These ‘bad manners’ include the use of crass language, slang, and terms considered to be ‘politically incorrect’ or insensitive to gender identities, races, or other social cleavages (Moffitt and Tormey 2014), and visually presenting themselves in a manner considered unconventional for ordinary politics (Moffitt 2016, 60). In this way, populists are able to claim their outsider status and demarcate themselves from the elite (Moffitt 2016, 45). However, this is
not to mean that these manners are normatively judged to be *bad* - rather, the public behavior of populist is purposefully made to be *unconventional* or *unpresidential*.

Three advantages are relevant for this study to employ the conception of political style. First, it removes the obstacle of problematizing the appearance of populists across different political ideologies, a key problem in using the ideology approach in establishing the relevance of populism as a distinct political phenomenon, and instead re-focuses populism as an over-all political performance regardless of where individual leaders stand on ideology (Moffitt and Tormey 2014). Furthermore, it removes the need to identify what *broader* ideology populist leaders embrace and refine with their own brand of populism. In fact, populists can dispense with mobilizing his support through their political party and instead choose to directly mobilize their chosen support base through their public performance acts (Kenny 2019). Second, this framework places importance on how the populist’s performative style influences the support of ‘the people’ and whether this popular support is constitutive (i.e. people actively support the populist leader’s agenda) or constituted (i.e. members of ‘the people’ are built upon exogenous factors such as history, previous leaders, and the constitution) for each populist (Moffitt and Tormey 2014). Finally, the conceptualization of political style, particularly as a response to ‘crisis’ and ‘threat’, also helps link populism to foreign policy through the securitization process, which will be emphasized in the theoretical framework discussion.

For this definition, we look at an individual – the head of government of a country and their authorized representatives – as the unit of analysis. Using this definition, any political leader that meets the rubric of the populist political style as outlined in this section will be considered as a populist for the purposes of this study.
This research also needs to set the conceptual borders of foreign policy in which each case will operate. Foreign policy is the strategy employed by a state in order to pursue its domestic agenda or articulate its preferences in the international level. For the research, foreign policy tools to be analyzed will be divided into three main categories: political, economic, and military. Political foreign policy refers to the everyday conduct of foreign policy of the state through bureaucratic bodies or formal diplomatic channels. Bilateral and multilateral summits, official state visits to other countries, and state conduct (e.g. voting behavior) in intergovernmental organizations (e.g. the United Nations) are the main instruments of political foreign policy (‘Typology of Instruments’ 2018).

Economic foreign policy is the realm of foreign policy that is envisioned to protect the economic interests of the state. Economic foreign policy tools include the imposition of economic sanctions (trade barriers, tariffs, quotas) (Eland 1995) and instituting trade agreements with an arrangement of different countries (Rosen 2004, Woolcock and Bayne 2013). Military foreign policy involves the state’s exercise of military power to pursue an alliance with its allies or adverse behavior toward its enemies. Military power is also an important tool in international relations (Nye 2013) – it can be used to achieve a common security alliance or, when threatening military retaliation against another country, an instrument of political pressure. Together, these three constitute the typology of “hard power” in international relations, or the power of one country to coerce another to exhibit certain behavior (Nye 2013).

Instead of the individual level, analyzing foreign policy in this research would demand an analysis in the state level. We can say that the presence of economic trade agreements and the institution of a common security alliance through various military means such as arms trades and joint military exercises signify warm relations between two countries. Economic embargoes,
heightened tariffs, and threats of military retaliation would suggest that the two countries have cold, if not antagonistic, relations with each other.

**Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework to be employed in this study is that *populist heads of state employ their political style as a method of securitization with the aim of justifying the implementation of the foreign policy instruments of their choosing*. A variation of this theoretical framework has been used in previous populist foreign policy studies (see Magcamit 2017). This section of the analytical framework will demonstrate how securitization theory works hand-in-hand with the study’s conception of populist political style.

The contention of securitization theory is that “*mere utterance of ‘security’ effectively transports an issue away from the realm of ordinary politics into the realm of emergency politics*” (Magcamit 2017, 13). Securitizing an issue would render it the most important of all issues faced by a state, rendering all other issues irrelevant (Roe 2008). This also means that the securitizing actor is claiming an extraordinary right to handle the issue by using means outside of rules which the actor would otherwise be bound to (Roe 2008). Hence, articulation of threats is important in the securitization process; in fact, security has been described as “*a speech act*” (Waever 1995 in Roe 2008) wherein “*it is by labelling something a security issue that it becomes one*” (Waever 2004 in Magcamit 2017). The securitization process employed by populists is two-fold (Magcamit 2017): the “stage of identification” and the “stage of mobilization” (Roe 2008). The stage of identification requires articulating an ‘existential threat’ by which exercising emergency measures becomes possible (Roe 2008). This follows previous contentions where an
issue becomes ‘rhetorically securitized’ (Jackson 2006). The stage of mobilization, on the other hand, requires the actual exercise of emergency measures in response to these ‘existential threats’ (Roe 2008). While both stages need to be met for a successful securitization, it is not always the case that the securitization process will pass the mobilization stage – audiences may accept the existence of the threat but reject the leader’s policy proposals aimed at combating the threat (Roe 2008). Some leaders may even dispense with mobilization at all. As Roe (2008, 622) writes:

“*My argument here is that the relationship between actor and audience is thus constituted not only in accordance with whether the support required is either moral or formal, but also in accordance with what the audience is being asked to agree with: ‘this is a threat’ and/or ‘given that this is a threat, this is what I propose we do about it’.*”

The audience’s acceptance is important in the securitization process, since ‘*securitization is not decided by the securitizer but by the audience of the security speech act*’ (Waever and de Wilde 1998 in Roe 2008). Broadly, the ‘audience’ identified in the securitization process has been the general public, however, state leaders must also convince other government officials that the issue being securitized warrants state action. This is what is called *institutionalized securitization* (Roe 2008), wherein the only entities that need to be convinced to commence state action are government bureaucracies, parliaments, and the armed forces (Roe 2008). In fact, when securitization is institutionalized, the acceptance of the general public becomes marginal if not unnecessary (Roe 2008). This is because it is these government bodies that will provide the
formal support required to allow the securitizing actor to begin emergency action (Roe 2008). While the moral support of the public is important, without formal support of government bodies, heads of state (particularly those in liberal democracies) will not be authorized to act on the issue (Roe 2008). This study follows that context, wherein most acceptance and mobilization will have to occur with administration officials (e.g. cabinet secretaries, military generals, and diplomats) exercising foreign policy instruments at the behest of the populist head of government.

The securitization thesis works hand-in-hand with the conceptualization of populism as a political style: both beg the identification of a ‘crisis’ or a ‘threat’. Without this threat, there is no need for securitization, and the populist will have no issue in which to entice ‘the people’ to pitch their anger against. Meanwhile, the mobilization stage in the securitization process relates with the foreign policy end of this study – since this stage will beg the question of identifying the policy tools being implemented in order to suppress the ‘existential threats’ that the populist has identified.
CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

This study is envisioned to explore the populist political style between two populist leaders interacting with each other in local and international public performances, and how the resulting political style influences the foreign relations agenda between each leader’s home countries. As stated in the literature review, the discussion on how populism affects foreign relations is crucial to have a deeper understanding of the dynamics of populism; that is, the extents, and limitations on the exercise of the populist performance. Moreover, only a few studies (see Magcamit 2017) have tackled populist foreign policies since the recent wave of contemporary populists in the last few years. Hence, that is the gap that this study aims to fill.

To achieve those goals, this study used a method that enables the researcher to identify and unpack the performative aspects of the populist political style of Rodrigo Duterte, and how the transition of government in the United States – from Barack Obama to Donald Trump – has affected Duterte’s political style in approaching the United States. To sufficiently map out the dynamics of Duterte’s populist political style, a method that accurately captures the dynamics of the populist political style – appeal to the people, use of bad manners, and identification of crises (Moffitt and Tormey 2014) – while also able to identify the resulting use of foreign policy instruments (such as those identified in the analytical framework discussion) needs to be employed in this study. Hence, discourse analysis method was used in this study.

In this chapter, the use of this method shall be further elaborated. The justification for using discourse analysis, the study design, the data collection technique, and other important considerations in using the method shall be discussed.
**Study Design**

The study shall be a qualitative research. Qualitative analysis in foreign policy and international relations studies have been vibrant and crucial not only with structuralist scholars in international relations but also with institutionalists and constructivists who aims to deconstruct assumed norms, values, and rules embedded in foreign policy and international relations studies. These norms, values, and rules are considered to be ‘soft institutions’ as compared to the ‘hard institutions’ of government and international organizations (Wiener 2009). The challenge then for qualitative research in foreign policy and international relations is to uncover how meaning is enacted and how distinct patterns of meaning can be uncovered in the discourse of social practice (Wiener 2009).

These norms in international relations, specifically the fundamental norms in Western-oriented discourses (e.g. sovereignty, rule of law, democratic government, human rights) alter state behavior in the global level, but in the state level, these meanings of these norms are always challenged and contested (Wiener 2009). In this regard, social recognition is important in scrutinizing these norms – without the recognition, these norms are simply set aside and even misconstrued (Wiener 2009). Hence, the analysis of fundamental norms is paramount in conducting a cogent study in foreign policy and/or international relations. Furthermore, the use of discourse analysis can identify patterns by which these norms are continually constructed, contested, and utilized.

Discourse analysis was employed in this study. Discourse analysis has generated increasing relevance in the scholarly literature regarding foreign policy and international relations since discourse analyses "illustrate how... textual and social processes are intrinsically
connected and to describe, in specific contexts, the implications of this connection for the way we think and act in the contemporary world” (George 1994 in Milliken 1999). Discourse analysis "embraces a logic of interpretation that acknowledges the improbability of cataloguing, calculating, and specifying "real causes", concerning itself instead with considering the manifest political consequences of adopting one mode of representation over another” (Campbell 1993 in Milliken 1999). Therefore, by using discourse analysis, we go deeper than the exercise of foreign policy tools – we uncover the underlying meanings, logic, and justifications by which elites articulate and rationalize their actions to the public. This approach to study the articulation and policy outcomes of government leaders and institutions as part of discourse analysis borrows largely from Michel Foucault’s approach to determine the ‘micro-physics of power’ used in generating meaning (Milliken 1999).

In discourse analysis, the discourse is considered to be a system of signification wherein people construct and assign meanings to things using a signifier (Milliken 1999). But this meaning is not merely located in the lexical use of words - it is dependent on how people systematically assign the contextual meaning of the signifiers used, most of the time being binary opposites, such as being allies or threats (Milliken 1999). In tracing these systematic contexts, predicate analysis, or the use of verbs, adjectives to describe a thing in order to construct a meaning that the object of description eventually is assigned to is usually used (Milliken 1999). In international relations and foreign policy studies, the predicate analysis is done through scrutinizing diplomatic documents, speeches, and interviews made by government officials. This leads to a coherent, thematic, and systematic discourse wherein the context of a specific interstate relation can be understood. The validity of the use of this predicate analysis is
dependent on whether or not the addition of new texts maintain the consistency of the original theoretical category of meanings assigned (Milliken 1999).

Discourse analysis is also concerned with the *productivity* of the discourse, which is likewise crucial in conducting foreign policy research. The *productivity* here refers to how the use of language justifies state action or enables practices and course of action (Milliken 1999). In foreign policy studies, the productivity context is important since it helps unpack how the regime of truth employed by elite officials in government make possible the courses of action taken by the state, especially in the exercise of its foreign policy instruments (Milliken 1999). The system of signification, in turn, alters and limits the policy options leaders and officials choose to exercise (Milliken 1999).

In this particular study, speech acts or other declarations were gathered and coded into a spreadsheet and predicate analysis was used to discern the meanings, signifiers, and context that the head of state attributes to in their public performances. The context of the use of these descriptive words in the leader’s statements and performances then determine the discursive approach that they employ. The time and place context (e.g. in international summits or local campaign sorties) by which the statements were made were also noted for the purposes of this study.

This research used a methodological approach which has been proven to be helpful to international relations and foreign policy studies, and since the research is contingent upon the dynamics of Philippine foreign policy, the adoption of discourse analysis as a method proved helpful in tracing the articulation of foreign policy interests between two countries. However, the study takes a step forward from being a mere foreign policy research. This research is also a research on populism, specifically on the use of populist political styles. Discourse analysis also
proved helpful in thematically analyzing the populist political style of Duterte using the criteria set forth in the conceptual framework.

**Case Selection**

Determining the foreign policy strategy of the populist is part and parcel of the populist political style. This research is envisioned to determine the foreign policy strategy of populists when relating with other populist leaders. Previous academic research has contended that populists prefer to exercise their foreign policy instruments outside of multilateral organizations since such organizations limit the scope of control of the populist (Drezner 2017). Moreover, there have been contentions that a state’s foreign policy instruments are exercised more by experienced bureaucrats than the head of state (Saunders 2017). However, the present study will not merely refine these existing arguments nor test a new hypothesis. Rather, the study aims to explore the extents of populist political styles using a different focal point: foreign relations of two countries with elected populist leaders. This section shall establish the boundaries (temporal, spatial, and substantive) of the case selected to extend the state of knowledge on populist foreign policy.

Substantively, the research calls to select a case that allows the analysis of the foreign relations of a country that has elected a populist head of state. This case is then used to explore the phenomena of the effect of the populist political style into the exercise of foreign policy instruments (economic, political, and military) of their country into other countries that the populist leader perceives as a threat, and how their foreign policy responds to changes in the political conditions of the country they have perceived as a threat. The state of foreign relations
between these two countries should depend on what specific foreign policy instruments are triggered by the populist head of state based on relevant pronouncements by these leaders. The results of this study should then be applicable to similar instances – in this case, foreign relations between other populist leaders.

The case chosen for this study is the foreign relations between the Philippines and the United States. This case was selected for a number of reasons. First, the Philippines has elected its own populist head of state, in the person of Rodrigo Duterte, while there has been a shift in the political conditions in the United States – the transition of government from Barack Obama to Donald Trump – during the incumbency of Duterte in the Philippines. As described in the literature review, Trump has marked a noticeable shift in US foreign policy practices, and just like Duterte – is himself a populist (Oliver and Rahn 2016).

Second, as mentioned in the literature review, both countries have had a long history dating back to the American colonization of the Philippines in the early 20th century, and since gaining independence, the Philippines has fostered friendly relations with its former colonizer. In fact, the historical relations between these two countries have been too close for comfort; the two countries have had intertwined foreign relations with each other, and this close political, economic, and security alliance have been sufficiently demonstrated in the literature review. However, it is important to note that the study is not a comprehensive analysis of Philippine-US foreign relations, but rather the characterization is only important in considering that both countries have had active foreign relations before Duterte assumed office in 2016. Moreover, this case is important because in the early months of his term, the Philippines’ Duterte has proceeded to openly challenge this historically friendly relationship, and redirect most of the Philippine foreign policy concessions to its Asian neighbor, China. Indeed, not only is the historical context
of Philippine-United States relations important in selecting it as the case, but also the current challenges that this relationship face make the case more interesting.

Third, both countries’ governments have established bureaucracies, particularly in the realm of foreign relations, which are tasked to exercise the foreign policy agenda of their populist presidents. This substantive boundary is relevant since it would imply that the presidents of both states have similar governance structures at their disposal. This is not to say that the bureaucracy is the focal point of the study, as has been in previous studies on foreign policy (Saunders 2017), but this point is emphasized only to demonstrate the similar political processes needed by both presidents to exercise their duties as the chief diplomats of their country.

In order for the findings of the research more accurately capture the context in which it operates, this study shall be temporally bounded beginning from the day that Duterte assumed office (June 30, 2016). The pronouncements coming from the officials of the United States concerning Duterte and his government which will be considered for this study will also cover the same time period.

The causal inference studied in this research is the effect of shifting political climate of the partner state (in this case, those caused by the change of government) in the populists’ political style (in their public performances) and the resulting foreign policy strategy of the state. The study uses the within-case setup wherein the mechanism identified should be how the political style of the populist is affected by the change in the political conditions of other countries, and how those changes translate into the exercise of specific foreign policy instruments at the disposal of the head of state. Hence, the study shall be dependent on two specific conditions of the political climate in at least one of the countries. First, that at least one of the countries have elected a populist president. Clearly, both the Philippines and the United
States meet the condition. Second, that the administration of one of the states have lasted beyond a change in administration in the other state. Again, the Philippines meets this condition since the Duterte administration has served through the end of the Obama administration and the beginning of the Trump administration in the United States. This condition is sufficient to see significant effects, positive or negative, in the foreign relations between the two countries. Further, the unit of analysis of the study is the interstate level, and the focus of the observation is the foreign relations between the Philippines and the United States.

The major goal of the study is to identify whether or not the populist’s political style, more specifically the use of bad manners, will be neutralized or exacerbated depending on the transition of government in another country that the leader originally perceives as a threat, and how changes in those conditions lead to changes in the populist government’s foreign relations with that country. In order to make a conclusion, we look at the state of foreign affairs between the two countries they head. The research takes into consideration whether the Philippines has pursued warmer or colder relations as a result of the change in government in the United States. However, this study does not ascribe a moral value on populism. Warming foreign relations does not imply that populism is good; and cooling foreign relations does not imply that populism is bad. Ascribing such normative value on populism as a political style is not the business of this research.

Data Collection Techniques

The discussion on data collection is divided into two: data relevant into collecting statements and speeches by President Duterte and the data relevant in identifying the exercise of
the Philippines’ foreign policy instruments relevant to the foreign relations of the Philippines and the United States. The reason for distinguishing the data collection technique on these two fronts is firstly, that while he is the chief diplomat of the Philippines, Duterte is not always expected to the announcements of the country’s foreign policy agenda; the job of making those statements is sometimes left to cabinet secretaries handling foreign affairs and other senior administration officials. Moreover, other top executive branch officials in the Philippines who may announce the exercise of foreign policy instruments may not necessarily exercise populist political styles.

On both fronts, the manner of data collection and compilation was chronological. The data compiled was arranged from the earliest to the latest speeches or announcements and analyzed in the same chronological manner. This is an important consideration since in this manner, it would be easier to identify the evolution of the dynamic of the perception and foreign policy preferences of the Philippines towards the United States. Moreover, all speeches and documentation considered for analysis were those made anytime in the incumbency of Duterte.

For scrutinizing the declarations of the heads of state in the context of interacting with each other, the sample was obtained from a Google search of transcripts of speeches, news interviews, or statements made by Duterte. News reports of the same speeches or interviews which quote Duterte was also considered in the data collection. The pronouncements of the presidents which will be considered for this study are only limited to those where either leader makes an explicit mention to the other leader or to the other leader’s country. Hence, not all of the contents of each speech act was processed and/or coded. This delimitation is crucial for the analysis since the study operates in the context of a populist leader’s style (Duterte) responding or adjusting to the change of government in another country (the United States). The time and
place context (e.g. in international summits or local campaign sorties) by which the statements were made are also noted for the purposes of this study.

The following keywords were used in Google Search to collect the transcripts of the concerned performances:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1. Keywords to be used in searching for speech transcripts or video feeds in Google Search</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Duterte Trump”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Duterte Obama”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Duterte mentions USA”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Duterte United States”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Duterte America”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, speech and news interview transcripts, and official statements is used in uncovering specific exercises of foreign policy instruments by the Philippines. The foreign policy instruments of concern to the study have already been identified in the analytical framework discussion. Just like in the data collection technique for populist political style, the Philippines’s foreign policy agenda which have been considered in this study will only be those that are of concern for the United States, or those arrangements with other countries that government officials explicitly mention affect Philippines-US foreign relations. This means that any trade deal, military arms deals, or state visits that are not made or agreed upon between the United States and the Philippines but affect the foreign relations arrangements between the two countries will still be considered for the study. The declarations of cabinet officials or by the president determined whether such arrangements actually affect the relations between the
Philippines and the US (e.g. whether a new economic deal with another country is aimed to replace existing arrangements between the US and the Philippines and vice versa). The scope and gravity of how those arrangements affect the foreign relations between the Philippines and the United States was identified through how the Philippine government government articulates the effects, whether positive or negative, new agreements will have on the foreign relations between the two countries.

In the announcement or articulation of new exercises of foreign policy instruments, the study did not look merely to the heads of state of both governments. The scope of search expands to other senior administration officials of both governments, who are concerned with foreign policy agenda-setting and articulation. Not all of the data collected includes explicit announcements from government officials, but the data includes announcements from these government officials (or their offices):

TABLE 2. Philippine Government Officials and Offices under the Duterte administration concerned with foreign policy agenda-setting and articulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Office Holder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office of the President</td>
<td>[Office, Designation, Official]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>[Designation, Official]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of National Defense</td>
<td>[Designation, Official]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>President of the Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secretary of Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secretary of National Defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of the President</td>
<td>Rodrigo Duterte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Teodoro Locsin, Jr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of National Defense</td>
<td>Delfin Lorenzana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Security Adviser</td>
<td>Hermogenes Esperon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Trade and Industry</td>
<td>Secretary of Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ramon M. Lopez</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The gathering of these speeches and announcements regarding the two countries’ foreign policy agenda, as well as news articles which reports on the same, will also be done through a Google search, which will be compiled chronologically. The following list of keywords will be used to find and gather the information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 3. Keywords to be used in searching for speech transcripts of foreign policy announcements in Google Search</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Policy Instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Military</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A total of 38 speeches were collected, 34 of which were coded. 33 of the speeches were taken from the official website of the Philippine Communications Operations Office (pcoo.gov.ph), 3 from mindanews.ph1, and 2 from Rappler. All transcripts were readily available, hence no transcription process was done. All of the speeches were compiled into a single spreadsheet, arranged chronologically. The full list of speeches is listed as Appendix A. Meanwhile, a total of seven news reports were collected for the analysis of the foreign policy actions of the Philippine government, and was arranged in the same manner in the speech acts.

1 The sources of these transcripts were the PCOO, and were used since the original URLs in the PCOO website were dead links.
This spreadsheet served as the main database of information and guided the discussion of results in this research. The dataset for the speech acts was then loaded to QDA Miner Lite, a free qualitative data analysis software, for coding. Meanwhile, the news reports were only notated in the main spreadsheet for its consistency with the foreign policy preference of the head of state. To improve the transparency of how this study was conducted, the transcripts (full or excerpts) of all the speeches are published as appendices, and the sources by which these transcripts were recovered are cited as footnotes or in the main bibliography. The news reports on the policy actions of the Philippine government are also attached in the bibliography.

Practical Considerations and Limitations

The data that used in the study is limited on the availability of the data on Google’s search engine, and dependent on what Google’s search algorithm had shown as search results. In the absence of a more comprehensive library of data which can be used in data collection, the study is largely dependent on what search results Google’s search engine will render. However, the use of Google and its services (e.g. Google Search, Youtube, etc.) to collect the data needed does not sacrifice the analytical rigor of this study. Moreover, some transcripts were inaccessible from the official government archive. In these instances, however, transcripts from non-government archives (particularly news portals) were used in place of the official government transcript.
Upon collection of the speech acts, each speech act was scrutinized and coded, using criterion based on the analytical framework discussion. Due to the lack of populist studies using the same method and analytical framework, these keywords are self-generated. However, these keywords are taken from the discussion of the conceptual framework of populist political style and securitization and are directly attributed to the operationalization of these concepts in the literature. This set of codes was the final set used in data processing:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Code Shortcut</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appeal towards the Filipinos</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of the US President²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remorseful</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of the United States</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypocrisy</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistency</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untrustworthy</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of national problems</td>
<td>J</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undermining relations with other countries</td>
<td>K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploitation</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrogance</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² Whether the reception is positive or negative is identified via the “bad manners” exhibited by the populist head of state.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Code Shortcut</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political Issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Heritage</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Rights &amp; Extrajudicial Killings</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Restrictions</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic Issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans and Economic Assistance</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Military Issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arms trade</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense treaty obligations</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint exercises</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troops deployment</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territorial disputes</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data generated by these codes are analyzed by following two major points of analysis, in order to answer the posited research questions in the introduction:

A. The form of the populist political style used in the populist’s speech acts

1. Whether there is an explicit appeal to the Filipino people;

2. What kind of public behavior of the head of state exhibits in a certain speech act, particularly whether it includes unconventional behavior in reference to the other leader;
3. What kind of rhetorical devices the leader uses in the image-building of the other country and whether these are positive or negative portrayals; and

4. Whether the speech act explicitly identifies a crisis or a threat caused by the foreign country/leader.

B. The presence of securitization in the foreign policy strategy of the head of state

1. Whether the speech act explicitly identifies a crisis or a threat caused by the foreign country; and

2. Whether the exercise of foreign policy instruments are fueled by the identification of the security issue.
CHAPTER FIVE
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter will be divided into three major sections. The first two sections illustrates data on the discourses Duterte employed during the incumbencies of Obama and Trump, respectively. The final section will discuss the relevant foreign policy outcomes, as announced by cabinet members and administrative officials, to help explore whether these outcomes are consistent with the articulated preferences of Duterte in order to determine whether or not Duterte is committing double-talk on policy issues surrounding Philippines-US foreign relations. These findings will in turn help us answer the research questions established in Chapter 1, in order to map the populist political style as a tool of securitization and in turn, its effects in foreign policy agenda-setting.

A general observation on the data shows that these comments of Duterte are almost purely ad lib, and not part of his prepared speeches written by him or his aides. Duterte even said in a speech commemorating the anniversary of the Balangiga Massacre in 2017 that the Department of Foreign Affairs requested him to tone down his language in his speech as he admitted that he could get emotional when making ad lib comments.

Duterte on the Obama Administration

The coded data suggests that Duterte portrayed Obama in a largely negative light not only throughout Obama’s remaining months as US president, but even as late as November 2018. Duterte’s negative comments towards Obama are usually curse-filled and insult-laden, the most
common of which are calling Obama as a son of a bitch (‘putang ina’) and Duterte telling Obama (together with the United Nations) to ‘go to hell’. Table 6 shows a breakdown of the nature of Duterte’s comments on Obama:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th># Speeches</th>
<th>Earliest</th>
<th>Latest</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12 Sept. 2016</td>
<td>22 Nov. 2018</td>
<td>Notable words used: <em>Putang ina</em> (son of a bitch); go to hell; <em>maitim</em> (dark-skinned); cold; leftist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remorseful</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 Sept. 2018</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The earliest instance in the collected data where Duterte outright displayed *bad manners* in relating to Obama was when Duterte departed for the 2016 ASEAN Summit in Laos on September 2016, where he responded to a question about how he would address the concerns of the international community, particularly from Obama, on extrajudicial killings in the upcoming event:

“I am not beholden to anybody. Iyong mga kolumnista diyan, "Wait until he meets – “ Who is he(Obama)? I am a President of the sovereign state, and we have long ceased to be a colony. I do not have any master, except the Filipino people. Nobody but nobody. You (Obama) must be respectful. Do not just throw away questions and statements. Putang-inan, mumurahin kita diyan sa forum na iyan. Huwag mo akong ganunin.”
[Translation: I am not beholden to anybody. You columnists who say, “Wait until he meets (Obama)” Who is he (Obama)? I am a President of the sovereign state, and we have long ceased to be a colony. I do not have any master, except the Filipino people. Nobody but nobody. You (Obama) must be respectful. Do not just throw away questions and statements. You son of a bitch, I will curse at you at that forum. Don’t do that to me.]

The quoted text shows a few oft-repeated framing and rhetorical devices that would be the centerpieces of Duterte’s discourses in foreign policy articulation and image-building of the United States and Obama himself:

- Dismissiveness/Degrading Obama/Western Arrogance (‘Who is he?’, ‘putang ina’)
- Nationalist sentiments (‘I do not have any master, except the Filipino people’)
- Asserting sovereignty/equality of state leaders (‘You must be respectful’)

The actions of the Obama administration that earned the worst of Duterte’s ire are the US government’s criticism of Duterte’s campaign against illegal drugs. Duterte would delegitimize these criticisms by telling Obama to ‘go to hell’. However, Duterte is not merely dismissive of Obama in this issue – he portrays Obama (and the American government) as both hypocritical and arrogant, and invokes nationalist fervor to further securitize Duterte’s actions on his signature national security issue as being in the best interest of the Filipino people despite criticisms from the west, including the United States. As mentioned earlier, Duterte’s tirades against Obama’s criticisms on his anti-drug campaign continued well after Obama stepped down.
in January 2017. This comment of Duterte in Davao in July 2017 in Davao del Sur below shows the use of these framing tools:

“*Itong Obama na ito, he criticized me as if I was a federal government employee.* (...) *Kaya sinabi ko, “F*** you. You can go to hell, Mr. Obama.” Bakit mo ako... I'm just trying to protect my country. Bakit mo ako turuan kung paano... tapos sabihin mo, file-an file-an mo pa ako ng kaso. L**** ka. O ‘di mag-file ka ng kaso.”*

[Translation: This Obama criticized me as if I was a federal government employee. (...) That’s why I said “Fuck you. You can go to hell, Mr. Obama. Why would you... I’m just trying to protect my country. Why are you dictating me how to... and then you’ll threaten me with a lawsuit? Damn you. Go file a case.]

Duterte also speaks of American hypocrisy on the issue of the human rights, and at the same time invoking anti-imperialist and nationalist sentiment, in an attempt to remove any ascendancy by the US government on the discussions on human rights issues. Such was the case in this September 2016 speech where Duterte recounted American atrocities in Mindanao in the early 20th century, such as the Bud Dajo Massacre (translated from the original in Taglish):

“*Talking about human rights, who are you and what moral ascendancy do you have over me to talk about human rights? Look at these... These are the Moro people who were massacred in... [inaudible]. Both in Lanao and in Davao.*
That’s why I’ll ask America, what now? Me, you just alleged that I killed about... police, because I ordered the police to kill 1,000 criminals. What is it to the 6,000 Filipinos, men, women, and children, all at a common grave, because you were here as imperialists. You wanted to colonize my country and because you had a hard time pacifying the Moro people.”

Even when Duterte publicly apologized to Obama for his controversial statements against the former US president in a September 2018 speech in Israel, Duterte still indirectly claimed that he took offense with Obama’s criticisms of his policies by saying that he has also forgiven him (as translated from the original Taglish):

“Obama, well of course... [laughter] Well then it would be appropriate also to say at this time to Mr. Obama that you are now a civilian and I am sorry for uttering those words. No, it was just a plain talkatise (sic) also like yours. We have learned our lessons very well. We- we understand each other. So if it is to your heart to forgive, you forgive. I have forgiven you just like the – all of my girlfriends when I was younger.”

A running theme in Duterte’s political style during the term of Obama would be his repeated dismissal of the United States’ power and/or capabilities, which in turn helped Duterte make the case to make a foreign policy pivot towards China. In a speech in Beijing in October 2016, notable for his announcement of the economic and military separation from the United States, Duterte described partnering with American businesses as the ‘shortest way to losing
one’s money’, claimed that ‘America does not control the (global) economy now’, and called the American’s claim as the world’s strongest economy ‘a lot of bullshit’. These descriptions help de-securitize the Philippines’ necessity to maintain warm relations with the United States.

By dismissing and degrading Obama, Duterte is also able to frame any form of American assistance as unimportant or unnecessary. Such is the case when the American government threatened to impose sanctions on the Philippines for extrajudicial killings under Duterte’s campaign against drugs, including the removal of economic aid. In three speeches between November and December 2016, Duterte made it very clear that the Philippines can do away with the existing economic assistance provided by the United States – demonstrating that the issue of illegal drugs (a largely domestic issue) is a much more compelling security issue than the United States’ economic grants of which the Philippines is a beneficiary.

Duterte also downplayed the military partnership between the Philippines and the US. When it comes to the purchase of military equipment, Duterte made clear during Obama’s term his preference toward Russian and Chinese-made equipment over those manufactured in the United States, owing to the fact that the US cancelled an arms deal with the Philippines. In a November 2016 speech during a ceremonial send-off to captive Vietnamese fishermen, he said that the Russians and Chinese were ‘more open’ to the terms of their arms deals unlike the Americans who had recently cancelled a 26,000-rifle purchase (it was unclear in this speech why this deal was cancelled).

In this time, Duterte also painted the Americans as being exploitative in nature especially as an abuser of natural resources. In this case, Duterte used bad mining practices of multinational corporations in Mindanao and the colonial experience of the country under American rule to set up such an image. In the previously-mentioned speech to captive Vietnamese fishermen in
November 2016, Duterte recounted what the found were deceptive and exploitative actions of the Americans in Vietnam and Iraq; the latter for disguising a war for oil exploration. The framing of exploitation would be used to securitize against bilateral partnerships with the Americans, such as in defense partnerships.

The reduced importance of the military partnership of the Philippines and the United States also helped Duterte make sweeping threats to the American military, including threatening to cancel the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) which was signed in 2012, in a speech in Bacolod during the 2016 Masskara Festival. Moreover, this dismissal of the military agreement is also coupled with allusions to nationalist fervor. Most important, however, is Duterte’s observation during this time that the presence of American troops in the country is the prime cause of the Moro conflict in Mindanao and the ideological conflict with the militant left. For example, in a speech to local government heads in October 2016, Duterte recalled a conversation he had with a Moro leader who told him that for as long as the Americans are in (Mindanao), they would never negotiate for peace.

The data clearly shows that during the Obama administration, Duterte employed a populist political style that enabled him to understate the importance of the Philippines-United States foreign relations by ridiculing its head of state and invoking nationalist sentiments and speak of open hostility towards the United States. By using such a political style, Duterte was able to rhetorically de-securitize the foreign relationship and comfortably call for the repeal of existing economic and military arrangements between the two countries. The following table shows a summary of the nature of the comments Duterte made about the United States during the Obama administration:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th># Speeches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Invoking Filipino Nationalism</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypocritical</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistent</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untrustworthy</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causing domestic problems</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undermining Duterte’s China Pivot</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploitative</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrogant</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL # SPEECHES</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>3</sup> Discussing President-elect Trump.
**Duterte on the Trump Administration**

While Duterte’s treatment of Obama is mostly negative and dismissive, Duterte’s perception of Trump is much more positive. In two speeches in fact, Duterte would call Trump as his ‘kaibigan’ (friend) and ‘pare’ (close male friend). The table below shows a summary of the comments of Duterte on Donald Trump:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th># Speeches</th>
<th>Earliest</th>
<th>Latest</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>09 Nov. 2016</td>
<td>22 Nov. 2018</td>
<td>Calls Trump his ‘good friend’, ‘pare’ (close male friend), sharing similar political styles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>07 Sept. 2018</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Blames the Philippines’ high inflation on Trump’s trade war on China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remorseful</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data shows that this warmer reception for Trump is rooted on Trump’s support of Duterte’s anti-drug campaign; in fact, the lack of antagonism for Trump was clear the moment Trump became the apparent winner of the 2016 US presidential election on 9th November 2016, where Duterte was speaking to overseas Filipino workers in Malaysia, where Duterte said he did not want to earn the ire of the Americans once Trump was sworn in. In the same speech, Duterte also spoke of his personal affinity to Trump whom he claims share his controversial populist style of cursing.

The following month, in a speech in Manila, Duterte recounted his first phone call with then President-elect Trump where he claimed Trump said that he was ‘doing good’. However,
while it shows a warm reception to Trump, Duterte frames this sudden change in the country leaders’ perception of his policies as ‘double-talk’, feeding into notions of Americans being untrustworthy, inconsistent, and being unfit to be the north star of the Philippines’ moral values.

While meeting ground troops in Cagayan de Oro in June 2017, Duterte explained to the press his hesitation to ask for military assistance from the United States due to their “changing values”:

“I have not made an appeal. I said I did not even know that the American government has been providing technical [assistance]. (...) But I said my quarrel with the — is with the State Department and Obama noon who was reprimanding me in public as if I were a federal employee.

So pagdating naman sa kaibigan kong si Trump, si Donald, sabi niya: 'Tama ka. God d***. Wala kang mali diyan.' O so sino ang sundin ko ngayon? Paiba-iba ang kultura nila. All the changing values of America, I really do not know.

So we better stick to our own... Kaya ako wala akong... Totoo 'yan, I never approached any American to say that, “Tumulong kayo.””

[Translation: “I have not made an appeal. I said I did not even know that the American government has been providing technical [assistance]. (...) But I said my quarrel with the — is with the State Department and Obama then who was reprimanding me in public as if I were a federal employee.

But when it came to my friend Trump, Donald, he told me: 'You're right. God damnit. You're not doing anything wrong.' Who will I follow now? Their
culture’s always changing. All the changing values of America, I really do not know.

So we better stick to our own… That’s why I didn’t… It’s true, I never approached any American to say that, “Help us.”

The quoted text clearly shows the divergence of Duterte’s treatment of each US president: while he was calling out Obama’s arrogance to criticize a fellow head of state, he would be appreciative of Trump’s approval of the way Duterte’s running the Philippines. Yet Duterte still perceives the 180-degree turn as a net-negative, highlighting the shifting values of the Americans as a reason not to depend on their assistance. Also apparent in this text is nationalist sentiment, i.e. Duterte prefers that the Philippines tackle its national security problems ‘on their own’.

Duterte would still publicly vent out his frustration over stalled arms deals with the United States, yet this irritation is not directed to the executive department (as has been the trend in Duterte’s Obama-era speeches), but rather to American legislators who block the deal in privilege speeches. Despite the change on the subject of frustration, Duterte is still strongly-worded in his opposition to American arms deals in the Trump administration – who he sees as the historical ‘big brother’ (the US) no longer able to help the ‘little brother’ (the Philippines), such as in this April 6, 2018 speech:

“Doon sa America, you order (military equipment), one senator, one congressman raises a question of --- makes a speech there, a privilege speech --- wala na. Hindi naituloy yung ano (arms deal) because..."
Kaya sabi ko itong Amerikano, I do not care how it happened or how it came about na ganun. Basta sa akin, ang Amerikano does not have a word of honor. Period. Eh sabihin mo, “eh sabi ng mga…” Do not give me that s***. You promised to help us.”

[Translation: “In America, you order (military equipment), one senator, one congressman raises a question of --- makes a speech there, a privilege speech --- it’s over. The arms deal won’t push through because…

That’s why I said that these Americans, I do not care how it happened or how it came about. For me, these Americans do not have a word of honor. Period. And if you say, “but they’re saying…” Do not give me that shit. You promised to help us.”]

The framing of Americans as untrustworthy in this case also helps Duterte justify his pivot to purchase arms in other countries (just as in Obama’s administration). At the same time, Duterte was securing defense partnerships with Israel and Jordan, where Duterte visited in mid-2018.

Only once did Duterte negatively portray Trump: when he blamed the US president for the economic woes that the Philippines experienced, particularly the rise in inflation rates in 2018. During his meeting with OFW’s in Jordan in September 2018, Duterte claimed: “Inflation is… Dahil ‘yan sa --- kay Trump. When Trump raised the --- ‘yung mga tariff niya pati banned other items, nagkalokoloko ang… I am not apologizing. There is really inflation in the
Philippines and we are trying to control it.” [Translation: Inflation is Trump’s fault. When Trump raised the – tariffs and banned other items, [inflation] went haywire… I am not apologizing. There is really inflation in the Philippines and we are trying to control it]. It is clear in this speech that Duterte was evading responsibility for high inflation, which at the time was being blamed on his tax reform program, and used the US-China trade war as a scapegoat to evade the responsibility. However, it is noteworthy that while Duterte saw Trump’s action as causing domestic problems, Duterte did not use strong language to ridicule Trump as he did with Obama.

As in the Obama administration, Duterte’s evoking of populist nationalism would likewise be evident when talking about Trump’s policy actions. In a business forum in October 2018, Duterte revealed that Trump was planning negotiations on a new multilateral trade bloc – and immediately voiced out his reservation from entering such a deal (as translated):

“I’d like to confirm this with (Finance Secretary) Sonny Dominguez that Trump would like to have a system where he can enter a trade agreement, free trade agreement with you probably like NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement). But you have to sign a document which says that if you are in trading with America, you cannot trade with China. What would happen to you businessmen?”

It is apparent in the speech that Duterte thinks that the conditionalities of any new trade agreement with the United States would potentially be harmful towards Filipino businessmen – again evoking nationalist fervor. Also visible in this speech is Duterte’s preference that the
country’s commerce should be open to all possible trading partners, a sign that Duterte still wants to pursue an independent foreign policy. Interestingly, Duterte is not dismissive of the United States’ proposal in this instance – instead, he is merely hedging his options, possibly conceding that there is also a potential benefit in a new trade agreement with the Americans.

While Duterte’s perception of the Americans have been largely negative in both Obama and Trump’s administration, there have been instances in the collected speech acts that have Duterte speak positively of the American government and its policy actions. However, this only happened under two instances, both occurring during the Trump administration.

The first policy action that was well-received by Duterte was on the assistance the Americans provided during the battle to liberate Marawi, which Duterte spoke of twice – at his visit to the troops in Cagayan de Oro City in June 2017 (weeks after the start of the siege), and at Balangiga, Eastern Samar the following September (where Duterte also reiterated his request for the Americans to return the Balangiga Bells to the Philippines). Yet while Duterte has spoken with gratitude of the American’s assistance, he has also spoken in the same Cagayan de Oro event that it was not his preferred policy action to request for American technical assistance (as discussed previously) but was the result of the insistence of his ‘pro-American’ military officials. This washing-of-hands gambit by Duterte is indicative that he still personally maintains his populist nationalism in light of what the public might perceive as a policy action inconsistent from his articulated preference, but his words of gratitude towards the ‘unsolicited’ military aid displays that the threat of terrorism in Mindanao was a much more pressing security issue, superseding his previously mentioned dangers of maintaining the Philippines-US defense partnership.
The second act of the Americans that earned a positive response from Duterte was the formal return of the Balangiga Bells. In his 2017 State of the Nation Address, Duterte formally requested the return of these bells from the United States, which Duterte described in his speech as ‘reminders of the gallantry and heroism of our forebears who resisted the American colonizers and sacrificed their lives in the process’ – in other words, a quintessential symbol of Philippine nationalism in the face of impending colonisation. Duterte made the request just after he reiterated his policy shift to an ‘independent foreign policy’.

By the time the bells were returned in December 2018, Duterte said it was a result of a ‘generous act of the Americans’. In the same speech, Duterte quipped: ‘The homecoming of these artifacts is truly a milestone in the shared and meaningful history of the United States and the Philippines, and heralds anew and more vibrant chapter in our bilateral relations.’ Hence, it is clear that the issue of the Balangiga Bells’ return was symbolic of the current state of foreign relations between the Philippines and the United States during Duterte’s term as president. However, as demonstrated in the previous subsection, Duterte has spoken of limitations as to how willing he would be to pursue a friendlier relation with the United States.

It is clear from the data that Duterte’s treatment of Trump was much warmer than his treatment of Obama. The data suggests that this is not only sourced from Duterte’s personal affinity with Trump as a populist, but also from his divergence with Obama’s ideology. In a May 2017 speech to the Philippine Coast Guard, Duterte ridiculed Obama as a ‘leftist’ who ‘cannot even identify himself where to go’. This is in stark contrast to his description of Trump in a press conference in Myanmar two months earlier, where Duterte said Trump’s ‘realism’ could lead to more understanding relations between their countries.
While the changes in Duterte’s reception of the two presidents are apparent, it did not accompany a similar reversal of policy preferences in favor of warmer Philippines-US relationships. However, Duterte’s use of words is suggestive that he is beginning to hedge his foreign policy options, and be slightly more accommodating of the United States, yet maintaining his signature nationalist fervor and appeals to the Filipino people, indicative that Duterte is still employing a populist political style. The following table shows the coding summary of Duterte’s foreign policy speeches during the Trump administration:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th># Speeches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Invoking Filipino Nationalism</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypocritical</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistent</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untrustworthy</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causing domestic problems</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undermining Duterte’s China Pivot</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploitative</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrogant</td>
<td>4(^4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generous (warranting gratitude)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL # SPEECHES</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{4}\) 2 speeches paint arrogance toward Obama administration policy.
Assessing Consistency of Foreign Policy Rhetoric with Outcomes

The final set of data will help determine the consistency of Duterte’s populist rhetoric with the policy outcomes of the Philippine government, which are usually announced by his cabinet secretaries and other major administration officials. The data collected will be divided into two (based on the policy preferences that Duterte has articulated in the previous set of data): in military/defense, and in economics.

**Military: Joint Exercises and Reviewing Defense Treaties.** Duterte has held a very negative impression on the Philippines’ defense arrangements and partnerships with the United States since he had taken office with the exception of the technical assistance the Americans provided to help government troops retake Marawi from terrorists. As explained earlier, the data shows that the Philippine-US military arrangements is a frequent target of Duterte’s nationalist & anti-imperialist rhetoric, painting the arrangements as ‘exploitative’ and a hindrance towards lasting peace against ethnic and ideological conflict. However, the collected data reflects that the partnership has been maintained. Two answers are possible: first, Duterte’s military officials and cabinet members are still in supportive of the United States (Duterte himself has acknowledged this); and second, that the change of administration from the critical Obama to the more supportive Trump led Duterte to hedge instead of outright end his military partnership with the United States, probably signifying that Duterte thinks he could garner beneficial concessions from Trump.

For instance, in a speech to overseas workers in Vietnam in late 2016, Duterte made a sweeping statement about ending the joint exercises between the Philippines and the United States since it could potentially undermine his foreign policy pivot to China: "You (United
States) are scheduled to hold war games again which China does not want. I will serve notice to you now, this will be the last military exercise. Jointly, Philippines-US, the last one" (Ranada 2016). However, this would be immediately clarified by his National Security Adviser, Hermogenes Esperon, Jr., as being the last one for the year. Indeed, the US and the Philippines would continue the Balikatan military exercises – with its 2019 iteration held in early April (Tomacruz 2019).

The actions of his cabinet regarding the review of defense treaties and agreements with the United States seem to be consistent with the president’s pronouncements. However, the goals of the president and his cabinet in pursuing such renegotiation diverge. Early into his term, Duterte already signified his intention to review both the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT, signed in 1951) and the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA, signed under his predecessor, Benigno Aquino III). By late 2018 (once Trump has already been sworn into the US presidency), his defense chief, Delfin Lorenzana, announced that the review of the MDT would be taking place (although Secretary Lorenzana kept the possibility of cancelling the treaty in this announcement). However, the review was in order to clarify if the treaty would cover the territorial disputes that the Philippines has in the West Philippine Sea (Santos 2018). Duterte, on the other hand, has publicly voiced his reservations for pursuing such direction with the Americans, even telling members of the Philippine Coast Guard in 2018: “Would you think the rest of the world and even America would die for us?”. By March 2019, however, the disagreements within Duterte’s cabinet would become public as Foreign Affairs Secretary Teddy Locsin would remark after US State Secretary Mike Pompeo’s visit to the country that the MDT need not be reviewed, while Lorenzana reiterated the necessity to review based on new security challenges (Viray 2019). However, representatives from the US State Department would claim
that no formal request to review the treaty has been made by the Philippine government (Viray 2019).

Meanwhile, there is no significant direct policy outcome to determine the consistency of Duterte’s rhetoric on the Philippine government’s actions on purchasing military weapons from the United States – such as the Duterte administration cancelling arms deals or stalling negotiations on the matter. What is clear is that the Philippine government has purchased equipment from other countries, including Russia (Mogato 2017). Moreover, it is clear that the Philippines has accepted arms donations from the United States, such as in June 2017 to help Philippine troops in Marawi (Viray 2017) – assistance that Duterte himself would publicly recognize (and thank the Americans) in his speech acts.

**Economic: Trade Agreements.** As presented in the previous section, Duterte has voiced his reservations with pursuing further trade agreements with the United States under his administration. However, this has not precluded his administrators to pursue bilateral negotiations with their American counterparts on trade. In fact, in March 2019, representatives from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) announced that high-level talks between the two countries on trade would push through in late 2019 in light of both countries settling reservations that had been brought up in preliminary talks (Lim 2019). Moreover, the agreement being pursued is a bilateral arrangement and not a multilateral trade bloc, as what Duterte had said the United States was pursuing.

This final set of data presented the agreements and deals entered to, or being negotiated by, the governments of the Philippines and United States, and assessed its consistency with the policy preferences articulated by Rodrigo Duterte which were discussed in the previous section. The data suggests an inconsistency between Duterte’s policy pronouncements and the policy
actions of the Philippine government. Moreover, the data highlights contrasting policy positions within Duterte’s administrators. The concluding chapter will now discuss how the discourse and these policy actions are indicative of changes in Duterte’s populist political style.
CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study aimed to explore how a populist securitizes their foreign policy agenda and how populist foreign policy agendas adjust based on transitions of government from non-populists to populists in other countries. By using Philippine-US foreign relations under Rodrigo Duterte’s presidency as a case study, this study is able to map how this populist president is able to use his political style as a method of securitization, and how his foreign policy agenda has been amended in response to the election of a fellow populist, Donald J. Trump, as president of the United States.

Based on the discussion in the previous chapter, it is clear that Duterte’s populist foreign policy securitization is hinged on his invoking feelings of patriotism and nationalism. This ‘country first’ rhetoric is comparable to Trump’s very own ‘America First’ foreign policy doctrine (Drezner 2017), and consistent with the conceptualization of populism as a political style which is heavily influenced by ‘appeals toward the people’ (Moffitt 2016). Duterte’s Filipino is one who has been exploited, talked down on, and whose country has been disrespected and abused by more powerful nations in the international stage. This is the foundation of Duterte’s nationalist foreign policy: one where Duterte presents himself as unafraid, willing to stand up for the Philippines’ national interest, no matter who stands in his way.

Then, who is Duterte protecting the Filipino from? Populist political style posits that there must be an antagonism towards something or someone in order for populist rhetoric to work (Moffitt and Tormey 2014). In this case, the United States became a perfect target for such
rhetoric, for two reasons: first, the historical events of past American atrocities, such as those during the Filipino-American War at the start of the 20th century allows Duterte to portray the Americans not as benevolent, but rather as exploitative or abusive. Second, Duterte effectively portrayed the current United States government (at the time led by Barack Obama) as having interests different or outright contradict Duterte’s national security problems that he intended to solve, such as his campaign against drugs. Duterte needed to de-emphasize the benefits of the Philippine-US foreign policy partnership in order to securitize the illegal drug problem that the US government had criticized him for – in other words, the United States was the threat Duterte identified, key in the populist political style (Moffitt 2016). Clearly, Duterte was selling the idea that if the ‘beneficial’ partnership of the Philippines with the United States would hinder the solution to what Duterte sees are urgent national problems, he would be more than willing to sever ties with the United States and pursue friendlier relations with other countries, such as China.

Duterte’s populist political style in foreign policy during the Obama presidency was one that antagonized both Obama (as president) and US government agencies (such as the State department). By framing them as having disjunct policy interests from him, Duterte employed frames of dismissal and went as far as to degrade these institutions in order to render their partnership unimportant and unnecessary to pursue the Philippines’ national interest. Duterte was not shy to curse at Obama and other US agencies and officials, an observation that is not unique to this study (see Curato 2017). Indeed, Duterte’s ‘bad’ manners political style (Moffitt 2016) is his use of curse words and other insults. Duterte’s propensity to insult individuals and institutions is not exclusive to the United States: he has used the same rhetorical tools against the
United Nations, the European Union, and even the local political opposition in the Philippines, all three having criticized Duterte at one point for what they say are his authoritarian tendencies.

However, by the time that Donald Trump was elected president in late 2016, there was a change in tone in Duterte’s rhetoric. The difference in Duterte’s public performances was very clear. There was no more vile language insulting the new president. The day Trump was elected, Duterte publicly said he no longer wanted to cause a rift with the Americans – fearing that he would earn the ire of Trump. Duterte’s allusions to protecting the national interest in discussing Trump’s foreign policy actions was not as striking as he was discussing Obama’s policies. Indeed, Duterte was still talking negatively of the American government – but Duterte’s rhetoric already shifted from outright dismissiveness to raising doubts on the Americans’ consistency in their foreign policy actions. In fact, outside of arms trades (which were stopped not by Trump but by the US Congress), there was no foreign policy offers or assistance of the Trump administration that Duterte definitively declined.

This laid the groundwork for a new discourse dictated by Duterte’s foreign policy strategy of hedging the expected benefits of Philippines-US foreign relations, confirming the arguments in previous literature of the expected foreign policy strategy of the Duterte administration in the Trump era (Banlaoi 2017). It is unclear whether or not Duterte thinks that Trump’s foreign policy strategy is one that is beneficial for his own, but what can be concluded in so far as Duterte’s speech acts can show is that Trump is not as threatening to Duterte’s conception of Philippine national security as much as Obama was. There was no need for Duterte to securitize Trump’s actions because he was ideologically different from Obama who insisted in maintaining liberal democratic values, such as preserving human rights, as the key value in his foreign policy approach with Duterte. In contrast, Trump praised Duterte’s policy approach in
illegal drugs, as Duterte would repeatedly recount in his speech acts. Hence, Duterte’s affinity for Trump is not merely by their similar brands of populism, but by Trump’s ideology that is compatible with Duterte’s national security agenda.

In so far as translating policy articulations into policy outcomes are concerned, no direct link can be established showing that Duterte’s preferences have materialized. While the small number of data is indicative (although assertive) that Duterte indeed lessened the interactions between his government and the United States, the available data on policy outcomes mostly show a 180-degree turn from Duterte’s public pronouncements. This could mean two things: first, that it is indeed the cabinet ministers and not the head of states that impose the greatest influence in foreign policy agenda-setting (Saunders 2017), or second, that consistent with the conclusions in other populist foreign policy researches, the populist’s use of appeal to people does not directly produce populist policy outcomes (Plagemann and Destradi 2018).

This study shows that the populist phenomenon has a very limited effect in foreign policy agenda-setting when compared with foreign policy outcomes. The lack of the link is suggestive that Duterte might also be practicing the same double-talk and hypocrisy that he has called the United States for in his public speech; however this study does not make a normative judgment that such double-talk is bad. Nonetheless, what can be concluded is that consistent with the conceptualization of populism as a political style, this study shows that Duterte’s brand of populism is mostly performative. Duterte’s appeals to nationalism and stoking public clamor in his tirades against the United States does not assure a material foreign policy outcome, but is only used by Duterte to sustain the public support of the coalition that brought him to power in June 2016. It is also indicative that, guided by the theoretical framework dividing the securitization process between the stage of identification and mobilization, Duterte’s foreign
policy is much more effective in identifying threats and not in pursuing actions to neutralize those threats.

Future research on this topic can explore other facets of populism and its foreign policy effects: an analysis of Duterte’s foreign policy including other countries outside of the US can determine whether or not his foreign policy articulation, in general, is only performative or if his actions toward the US are outliers in his greater foreign policy scheme. Second, succeeding studies can use a different theoretical framework, such as using foreign policy theories of realism, in order to have a unique understanding of Duterte’s foreign policy actions and potentially find new insights that this research is limited to uncover. Finally, succeeding research can further explore the dynamics of the mediated relations between the populist as a leader and the people being appealed to by the leader by exploring the effects of Duterte’s discourses on the image of the United States both to those people who are critical and supportive of the president.
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## APPENDIX

### APPENDIX A. List of President Duterte’s speech acts used in data analysis

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